GOOD PRACTICE AND AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE

Building an Effective, Modern Organisation for the NDIS

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, who are the Traditional Owners of the land on which the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne is located, and pay our respect to their Elders past and present. We are honoured to recognise our connection to Wurundjeri Country, history, culture, and spirituality through these locations, and strive to ensure that we operate in a manner that respects and honours the Elders and Ancestors of these lands. We also respectfully acknowledge Swinburne's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, alumni, partners and visitors.

We also acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners of lands across Australia, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures, and heritage, and recognise the continuing sovereignties of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations.

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The Centre for Social Impact Swinburne

Established in 2014, CSI Swinburne is a highly industry-engaged, practice-oriented research and teaching centre, based in Swinburne's School of Business, Law and Entrepreneurship (SoBLE) and is one of four university-based nodes of the highly respected CSI national network.

CSI Swinburne is focused on people and technology working together for a better world, exploring the intersection between social entrepreneurship and technology, in areas such as social enterprise, social business and social finance; community services innovation; employment access and equity; and impact evaluation and measurement.

Acknowledgements

Disclaimer

The opinions in this report reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Centre for Social Impact or One Good* Day.

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About this Resource

This resource is informed by evidence from the evaluation of One Good* Day – an organisation providing Recovery Coaching services to Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants with psychosocial disability. We draw on this research to illustrate how effective organisation design can enable NDIS Provider organisation leaders to build an engaged workforce, deliver good services, and achieve sustainable growth.

This summary section highlights the following elements of the broader resource:

1. The operational context for NDIS organisations

2. Key capabilities for NDIS organisations

3. Examples of strengths and organisation design features that contribute One Good* Day's success

4. A spotlight on supporting people and capability through designing for team wellbeing and building an inclusive workforce

For further detail on any of the information presented, you can visit the relevant section of this resource. The final section of this resource includes an overview of key takeaways (page 44).

One Good* Day's model was intentionally designed to support positive outcomes for team members, NDIS participants, and the growth and success of the NDIS. To One Good* Day's Co-founders, success means:

- Creating good careers, a permanent team focused on values and culture, and a great workplace where people can thrive and be their best;

- Providing excellent services to NDIS participants;

- Achieving financially sustainable operations – thinking in terms of long-term sustainability and ensuring the balance between practitioner satisfaction, client satisfaction and financial health is balanced.

- Scaling operation and impact - beyond a small, boutique organisation.

Who this Resource is For

This resource may be most useful to other emerging leaders of organisations operating within the NDIS, who share some of the above goals and want to explore examples of implementing good practice.

We will assume an existing knowledge of the basic underlying requirements of operating as a NDIS service provider. This information is widely available through existing resources like the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) Provider Information Pack, which contains the relevant legislation, rules and policies, NDIS Practice Standards, and NDIS Code of Conduct that NDIS businesses should be aware of (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2022).

Operating Within the NDIS Context

Building an effective organisation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) context comes with specific market conditions that organisation leaders need to plan and design for to deliver their social value proposition.

Organisations operating within NDIS markets need to contend with the usual requirements of business operation alongside NDIS-specific regulatory and quality requirements, codes of conduct, and practice standards (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021). In addition, NDIS providers to be familiar with the operating requirements for their intended service type, with guidelines for NDIS providers (National Disability Services Provider Toolkit 2015, p.3) suggesting that emerging organisation leaders consider and plan for:

- Strategy

- Corporate governance

- Client and market focus

- Financial sustainability

- People and capabilities

- Information and knowledge management

- Safeguarding and quality management and improvement.

NDIS service pricing is regulated, which means organisations are not able to adjust their pricing in the same way that a standard commercial business would. Instead they have to back-solve what is included and afforded in services based on what is funded and enabled by NDIS pricing. Success within the unique constraints of this context requires creative thinking around lean organisational design, as well as ensuring that systems and processes are closely tailored to enable effective and sustainable operations. Developing and sharing resources that support capacity building among emerging NDIS organisations, managers and leaders is one way to help enable this kind of success and is a key objective of this research.

Foundational Capabilities for Building an Effective NDIS Organisation

There are specific frameworks that outline foundational capabilities for business excellence and workforces within the NDIS context (National Disability Services, 2015; NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021). These share some commonalities with social entrepreneurship more broadly (Centre for Social Impact Swinburne, 2020), including the aims of:

- meeting a social need for disability service provision; through

- trading as a business and receiving income from providing disability services.

The capabilities and factors that NDIS service provider organisation leaders need to consider in designing and developing their organisations include:

- A well-thought out business strategy and effective branding;

- A clear governance and management structure;

- Meeting a specific market need through delivering a strong product or service value proposition to clients;

- Detailed financial modelling to understand feasibility and potential sustainability, and appropriate capital to start or grow the business;

- Recruiting, developing and supporting the required people and capabilities; and

- Effective operational systems and processes, including information and quality management (Centre for Social Impact Swinburne, 2020, p.18 and National Disability Services, 2015, p. 3).

One Good* Day Organisational Capability Strengths

Some of the key strengths of One Good* Day's approach are:

Strategic approach to market

Designing for practitioner wellbeing

People and capabilities

Client focus

Effective systems and processes

Sustainable growth

One Good* Day is different from more traditional organisational structures under the NDIS. The organisation was built with a focus on team wellbeing and a cell-like structure or 'pod model' (One Good* Day 2022).

Pods are small teams intended to:

- Support each other in challenging work and provide team coverage to support clients;

- Build strong links with local communities;

- Be agile and self-organising; and

- Be efficient by having a number of small teams where Senior Recovery Coaches (senior workers) mentor and coach workers, but also maintain a caseload of clients, reducing fixed or semi-variable management costs (One Good* Day 2023).

Figure 1 outlines how the pod model combines with other key ingredients of effective organisation design, based on our case study of One Good* Day.

Strategic approach to market

Understanding the market
Focused strategy and service
Engaged leadership
Careful planning
Monitoring and evaluation

Designing for wellbeing

Permanent jobs
Pod model
Layered supports
Values-based culture
Team connection
Flexibility

Sustainable growth

Clarity of values
Self-funded and
self-paced growth
Lean
management
structure

People and capabilities

Connecting to
relevant training
Skilled workforce
Strong on lived
experience and
specialist
knowledge

Effective systems and processes

Technology that enables connection
and efficiency
Standardised induction
Practice guidance and training
Clear Key Performance Indicators
Templated processes

Client focus

Responding to unmet need
Leading with quality
Recovery-oriented,
relationship-based,
person-centred service

Figure 1 - One Good Day key organisation design features*

The organisational capability strengths that came through most clearly in research with One Good* Day were four interconnected features:

- A clear strategy and market opportunity;

- Strong alignment with both the people and capabilities that One Good* Day could draw on and build from;

- The ability to meet identified needs through delivering client-focused services;

- A focus on effective and financially sustainable operations.

Figure 2 illustrates the factors that support these interconnected organisational capabilities.

Strategy and Market
- Understanding the market
- Forming a focused strategy
- Careful planning
- Organisation design for team wellbeing
- Engaged governance and a lean management structure

People and Capabilities
- Co-founder relationships and experience
- Recruiting and training the right team members
- Systems and processes that support people and capability, including pods

Financial Sustainability
- Initial financial modelling and starting small
- Sustainable self-funded growth
- Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Client Focus
- Responding to unmet needs
- Leading with quality
- Recovery-oriented, relationship-based, person-centred service

Figure 2 - One Good Day organisational capability strengths*

Spotlight: People and Capability - Designing for Team Wellbeing and Building an Inclusive Workforce

People and capability are identified as key factors supporting success as a NDIS organisation (National Disability Services, 2019), and the need to build a diverse disability workforce is noted by both government and scholars (Australian Government, 2019; Mellifont, Smith-Merry, & Bulkeley, 2023; National Press Club of Australia, 2023).

In July 2020, Recovery Coaching was introduced as a support item available through the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Agency 2022a). While lived experience related to mental health is not a requirement for Recovery Coaches, one of the aims in providing funding for this type of support was to create opportunities for participants to access recovery-oriented support from a Recovery Coach with lived experience if they wished to (National Disability Insurance Agency 2022a).

In partnership with One Good* Day, the Centre for Social Impact Swinburne embarked on a research project to understand the experiences of One Good* Day's Recovery Coaching clients, as well as the experiences of One Good* Day employees providing Recovery Coaching. This research found that lived experience was valued by clients, and was embraced and supported within the organisation in ways that team members had not often experienced in other workplaces.

Drawing on the One Good* Day model and evaluation findings, we discuss some examples of how One Good* Day has developed good practice and an engaged workforce, through:

- Designing for team wellbeing (practitioner wellbeing is a central focus, not an afterthought);

- Recruiting and training the right team members; and

- Implementing systems and processes that support people and capability.

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended as a useful resource for leaders of organisations that operate within the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). It is informed by a broader research project conducted by the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) Swinburne about One Good* Day (OG*D) - an organisation providing Recovery Coaching services to people with psychosocial disability (disability related to a mental health condition).

The overall aims of this research were to understand how One Good* Day's organisation model:

- Enables a happy, healthy workforce through positive work experiences for employees (e.g., team members feeling engaged and satisfied with work, and with the supports provided);

- Models good practice and supports positive outcomes for clients; and

- Demonstrates an effective organisation design and approach to service delivery, and articulates unique organisation design elements that could potentially be used to support service innovation and positive outcomes in other contexts.

This resource covers the following topics:

- What is required of organisations to operate effectively in the context of the NDIS?

- Foundational capabilities for building an effective organisation within this context – drawing on relevant frameworks for NDIS providers, social entrepreneurship and business.

- What One Good* Day does particularly well, including a focus on designing for team wellbeing and building an inclusive workforce.

- How the One Good* Day case study illustrates tangible examples of good practice, and what goes into creating this.

Within their training on redesigning disability service organisations for a modern context, National Disability Services (2019, slide 12) states that attracting and keeping good staff, and realising the human capabilities of employees is one of the key factors for an organisation's success.

> *"There's no doubt that one of the biggest issues disability organisations are grappling with is the ability to attract and retain good staff and have them operate at their fullest potential."*

> *"Being a successful organisation today is really going to come down to two factors. One will be leveraging these exponential technologies that are underpinning the next productivity breakthroughs. The second factor... is in realising the full potential of an organisation's people in terms of their most quintessentially human capabilities."*

This resource on *Good Practice and an Engaged Workforce* shares evidence-based learnings to outline aspects and approaches of One Good* Day's model that other emerging organisations and leaders could draw on. In particular, this resource is designed for organisation leaders to add to their own understanding of building an effective NDIS service organisation with a satisfied and engaged team who can perform to their best potential.

OPERATING IN THE NDIS CONTEXT

Organisations operating within NDIS markets need to contend with the usual requirements of business operation alongside NDIS-specific regulatory requirements, codes of conduct, practice standards, and price guidelines (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021). Research suggests that the true costs of delivering good quality support are not always reflected accurately in centrally set prices (Carey, Malbon, Weier, Dickinson, & Duff, 2019), and there can be hidden costs for organisations that take on shared accountability for activities over and above core service delivery, such as building sector capacity (Malbon, Carey, & Dickinson, 2018). This requires deliberate and thoughtful decision-making from organisation leaders about how to best deliver quality services, recruit and support employees, and operate sustainably (Foster et al., 2022) - without being able to draw on usual commercial strategies such as increasing service prices in line with costs.

Price limits set by the NDIA place boundaries around what is achievable for organisations operating in or hoping to enter the NDIS market (Foster et al., 2022). Considerations that affect viability include the relationship between high regulation and compliance requirements, and high service quality expectations, with price setting at agency level (Carey et al., 2019; Malbon et al., 2018), which is based on the most efficient 25 percent of NDIS service providers (NDIA 2021). A 2017 Productivity Commission review of NDIS costs found that the majority of NDIS service providers (75 percent) were running at a loss (Productivity Commission, 2017), which could ultimately present risks of market failure (Carey et al., 2019). More recently, a National Disability Services report on the state of the sector found almost 3 in 5 providers were concerned about the viability of continued NDIS service provision (National Disability Services, 2022, p.13).

Success within the unique constraints of this context requires creative thinking around lean organisational design. This means ensuring that systems and processes are closely tailored to enable effective and sustainable operations that support employee wellbeing and performance and deliver positive outcomes for NDIS participants. Developing and sharing resources that support capacity building among emerging NDIS organisations, managers and leaders is one way to help enable this kind of success.

Drawing on our evaluation research with One Good* Day, an organisation providing Recovery Coaching for NDIS participants with psychosocial disability, this resource briefly outlines some general capabilities for building an effective NDIS organisation, then explores illustrative examples of how One Good* Day has used specific organisation design features and strategies to enable good practice and a highly engaged and well-supported workforce.

One Good* Day's model was intentionally designed to support positive outcomes for team members, NDIS participants, and the growth and success of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. To One Good* Day's Co-founders, success means:

- Creating good careers through a permanent, supportive team focused on values and culture, and a great workplace with clear policies and processes to support autonomy, where people can bring their best selves to their roles;

- Providing excellent services to NDIS participants;

- Achieving financially sustainable operations – thinking in terms of long-term sustainability and ensuring the balance between practitioner satisfaction, client satisfaction and financial health is balanced.

- Scaling operation and impact - beyond a small, boutique organisation.

This resource may be most useful to other emerging NDIS organisations and leaders who share some of the above goals for success, and want to explore illustrative examples of implementing good practice.

We will assume an existing knowledge of the basic underlying requirements of operating as an NDIS organisation, as this information is widely available through resources like the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission) Provider Information Pack, which contains the relevant legislation, rules and policies, NDIS Practice Standards, and NDIS Code of Conduct that NDIS businesses should be aware of (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2022).

FOUNDATIONAL CAPABILITIES FOR AN EFFECTIVE NDIS PROVIDER

In the lead-up to the roll-out of the NDIS, National Disability Services developed a NDIS Provider Toolkit, intended to build capacity among organisations entering the market as a NDIS provider (National Disability Services, 2015). This toolkit drew on existing business frameworks, situating these within the context of NDIS reforms to identify the organisational capabilities required for developing or adapting organisations to provide NDIS services (National Disability Services, 2015).

While the NDIS Provider Toolkit was designed to support existing organisations transitioning to NDIS service provision, the framework is also useful for new or emerging organisations starting out as NDIS service providers. The seven broad capability domains identified in the framework are outlined in the box below. The NDIS Provider Toolkit also contains a self-assessment framework that organisation leaders can use to explore their organisation's current capabilities.

National Disability Services Business Excellence Framework (National Disability Services, 2015, p. 3)

1. **Strategy:** How does our strategy allow us to be agile, flexible and responsive to the changes in our sector?

2. **Corporate governance:** Do our decision-making processes allow us to effectively manage the key risks, challenges and opportunities facing our business?

3. **Clients and market focus:** How will we differentiate ourselves to retain and attract clients in an increasingly competitive market?

4. **Financial sustainability:** What impact will individualised funding have on our business and the way our services are costed, priced and funded? What changes do we need to make?

5. **People and capability:** How will we attract, recruit and retain staff with the right values, skills and capabilities to support the changing needs of our clients and our business?

6. **Information and knowledge management:** Do we have the right information systems in place to respond to the reforms? How will our systems support the necessary changes to our business, clients, operations and finances over the next decade?

7. **Safeguarding, quality management and improvement:** How do our systems, processes and people help us to maintain and improve our safety, quality and performance? How will we know when we are doing well, or at risk?

Many of the organisational capabilities required of NDIS organisations are common to those required by other forms of social entrepreneurship (Centre for Social Impact Swinburne, 2020, p.18), including:

- A business strategy that aligns with a specific need and market;

- A clear governance and management structure;

- Detailed financial modelling to understand feasibility and potential sustainability;

- Appropriate capital to start or grow the business;

- A clear social and product or service value proposition and branding;

- Recruiting the required people and capabilities; and

- Effective operational systems and processes.

Austin, Stevenson & Wei-Skillern's Social Entrepreneurship Framework (see Figure 3) illustrates how internal organisational capabilities and opportunities are always situated within the particular operating context of an organisation, and influenced by factors like the regulatory and tax environment, the political and sociocultural atmosphere, the macroeconomic situation, and the population demographics within a particular location (2006, p. 17).

All of these factors inevitably influence the value proposition organisations can create, and the people, opportunities and capital available to organisations to deliver on this (Austin et al., 2006). While organisations operating in the NDIS context are diverse and may sit across a spectrum in terms of their degree of social and commercial focus, all must be socially entrepreneurial, and are required to navigate a market that is shaped by forces beyond supply and demand (Austin et al., 2006; Green, Carey, & Malbon, 2022).
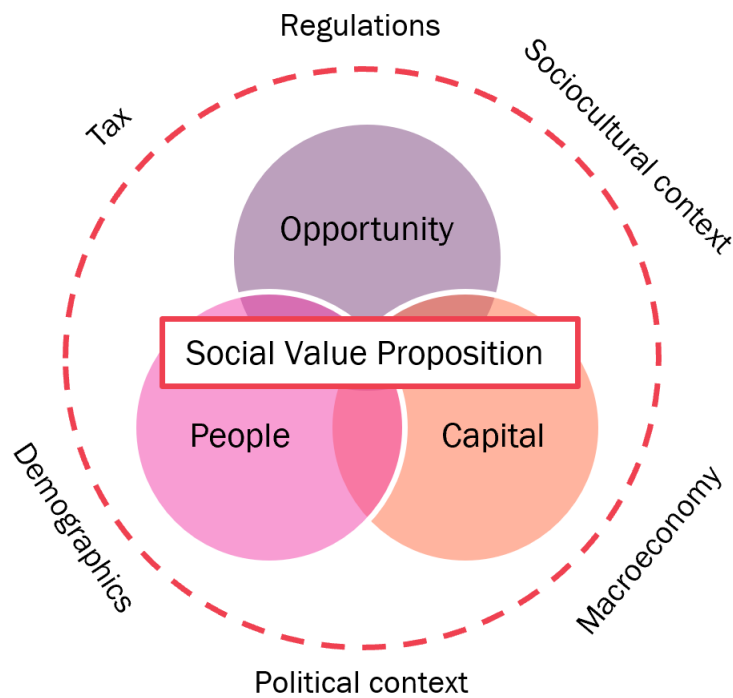
Figure 3 – Social Entrepreneurship Framework (adapted from Austin, Stevenson and Wei-Skillern 2006, p. 17)

Operating within the particular context of the NDIS market, and the requirements upon emerging NDIS organisations and leaders that come with this, requires specific knowledge, learning and care that can differ from what is required of businesses in a purely commercial market. Seeking a wide range of information on the organisational capabilities required to build an effective NDIS organisation, and considering how you will achieve these within your particular context and organisation goals is important. However, getting from the point of knowing what is required, to understanding how to implement good practice can be challenging.

This resource aims to support new and emerging leaders who are at the stage of thinking through their own implementation questions as a NDIS service provider organisation. We do this by sharing some specific examples of good practice based on research with NDIS Psychosocial Recovery Coaching organisation, One Good* Day.

While all capabilities for effective practice should be seen as interconnected, and each aspect supports and depends on others, this resource will focus in particular on four organisational capabilities that stand out most strongly from research with One Good* Day, including:

- A clear strategy and market opportunity;

- Strong alignment with both the people and capabilities that One Good* Day could draw on and build from;

- The ability to meet identified needs through delivering client-focused services; and

- A focus on effective and financially sustainable operations.

In particular, we provide a detailed exploration of one of these – people and capability. Human capability has been identified as a core requirement for success for modern disability organisations (National Disability Services, 2019), and NDIS and scholarly sources have identified a particular need to build and diversify the disability workforce in order to best serve NDIS participants (Australian Government, 2019; Mellifont et al., 2023; The Hon Bill Shorten MP, 2023).

The Need for a Diverse and Inclusive Disability Workforce

Australia's NDIS workforce and broader disability workforce are under pressure, and there is a need to improve working conditions to support sustainable workforce growth to meet demand (Australian Government, 2021). Without sufficient workforce numbers, service providers will not be able to adequately meet the needs of participants, and participant outcomes will be at risk (Australian Government, 2021, p.5). Attracting and supporting human capability within disability services is identified as a key challenge for the disability sector (National Disability Services, 2019). This requires both increasing the disability workforce, and effectively supporting people to succeed in their work.

NDIS service providers need a workforce that is suitably skilled and supported in order to be sustainable and deliver quality services and good outcomes for participants (Hurley & Hutchinson, 2022; Olney et al., 2022). Existing research suggests that workers with specialist disability knowledge and expertise (including lived experience) could contribute to better service access and experiences for NDIS participants (Barr, Duncan, & Dally, 2021; Devine et al., 2022; Gilroy, Dew, Lincoln, & Hines, 2017; Treloar, 2021; Wilson, Campain, Pollock, Brophy, & Stratford, 2022).

There are ongoing calls to engage people with lived experience of disability at all levels of designing and delivering disability services (Carey, Malbon, & Blackwell, 2021), but degrees of progress on this vary (Davies & Butler, 2022; Mellifont et al., 2023). While employing a diverse workforce (including people with disability) is identified as an important part of ensuring a responsive NDIS service system (Australian Government, 2019), research suggests that change remains slow (Mellifont et al., 2023) and is often focused on differentiated (identified roles) for people with disability, rather than broader changes in work inclusion at all levels.

Decades of collective efforts from people with lived experience, within mental health organisations and academia, and through government inquiries and consultations (Our Future Project Partnership, 2021), have paved the way for specific funding, strategies and guidelines to support the development of a Lived Experience Workforce in mental health (Byrne et al., 2021a; Lived Experience Workforce Strategies Stewardship Group, 2019; Victorian Government, 2021).

Recent Australian research shows that employment opportunities specifically inviting applicants with lived experience of mental health challenges are much more common compared with jobs recruiting for other kinds of lived experience (e.g. different disabilities) (Davies & Butler, 2022). While changes are occurring to improve training, opportunities and supervision for people with lived experience working in mental health (Our Future Project Partnership, 2021; Victorian Government, 2023), knowledge building and sharing is still in progress and broader changes are needed to expand opportunities across the disability sector.

One required change is to build improved and more explicit links between training and jobs overall (Australian Government, 2021). Structured training (such as a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work) provides an important pipeline of specialised team members, but training must be relevant to the end-job, as well as suitable to, and promoted to people with lived experience. In addition to better connecting specific training and job role pathways, there must be opportunities for people with lived experience to take up diverse roles at all levels of organisations, and across all types of work, including leadership positions (Australian Government, 2019).

There is a long tradition of designated peer roles in the mental health sector (Our Future Project Partnership, 2021). Importantly, the One Good* Day model adds another approach in addition to designated peer roles, by recognising the potential and value of lived experience within all roles (non-designated). The intentional nature of this approach appears new and presents an interesting case study in terms of how One Good* Day has built an organisation with a strong focus on people, capability and wellbeing.

Drawing on research into One Good* Day's model, we explore aspects of this model that may be transferable to the general workforce in disability services and support (NDIS workforce), by being intentional about how to recruit, train and support people with lived experience of disability as part of an inclusive workforce. These strategies could also apply to other areas of the disability workforce (and include carers as people with lived experience). This guide seeks to highlight the intentional design features that support people and capability within new and emerging NDIS organisations, and share learnings of how this works in practice.

OVERVIEW OF ONE GOOD* DAY

One Good* Day (OG*D) is an organisation that delivers Recovery Coaching services to participants of the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) with a psychosocial disability.

Recovery Coaching was introduced in July 2020 by the National Disability Insurance Agency, as a 'Recovery Oriented' support intended to assist people with psychosocial disability to work toward their own goals (National Disability Insurance Agency 2022a). Goals of Recovery Coaching participants vary by individual, but might include things like building a coordinated support network, taking part in community activities, working, or managing challenges in life.

OG*D currently has a sole focus of providing Recovery Coaching services and specialises in mental health. Many OG*D Recovery Coaches (approximately 75 percent) have lived experience related to mental health, in addition to experience gained through formal education and professional work backgrounds.

In July 2021, OG*D started offering Recovery Coaching in Victoria with eight team members providing services to 73 clients. The organisation subsequently experienced strong growth to 63 team members in five states (Victoria, NSW, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia) and 705 clients, as at June 2023 (One Good* Day 2023).

One Good* Day's organisational design is different to many more traditional organisational structures under the NDIS. One Good* Day was built with a focus on team wellbeing and a cell-like structure or 'pod model' (One Good* Day 2022). Pods are small teams intended to:

- Support each other in challenging work and provide team coverage to support clients;

- Build strong links with local communities;

- Be agile and self-organising; and

- Be efficient by having a number of small teams where Senior Recovery Coaches (senior workers) mentor and coach workers, but also maintain a caseload of clients, reducing fixed or semi-variable management costs (One Good* Day 2023).

OG*D experienced early growth and potential to scale. In its first full financial year of operation (FY22), OG*D generated a small (2 percent) net profit and a 3 percent operating profit, of which the majority of income was from Recovery Coaching revenue, via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Figure 4 below shows a synthesis of the One Good* Day organisational model, drawn from an analysis of company documents provided by OG*D, along with an interview and subsequent conversations with the organisation's co-founders between November 2022 and July 2023.

Strategic approach to market
Understanding the market
Focused strategy and service
Engaged leadership
Careful planning
Monitoring and evaluation

Designing for wellbeing
Permanent jobs
Pod model
Layered supports
Values-based culture
Team connection
Flexibility

Sustainable growth
Clarity of values
Self-funded and self-paced growth
Lean management structure

People and capabilities
Connecting to relevant training
Skilled workforce
Strong on lived experience and specialist knowledge

Effective systems and processes
Technology that enables connection and efficiency
Standardised induction
Practice guidance and training
Clear Key Performance Indicators
Templated processes

Client focus
Responding to unmet need
Leading with quality
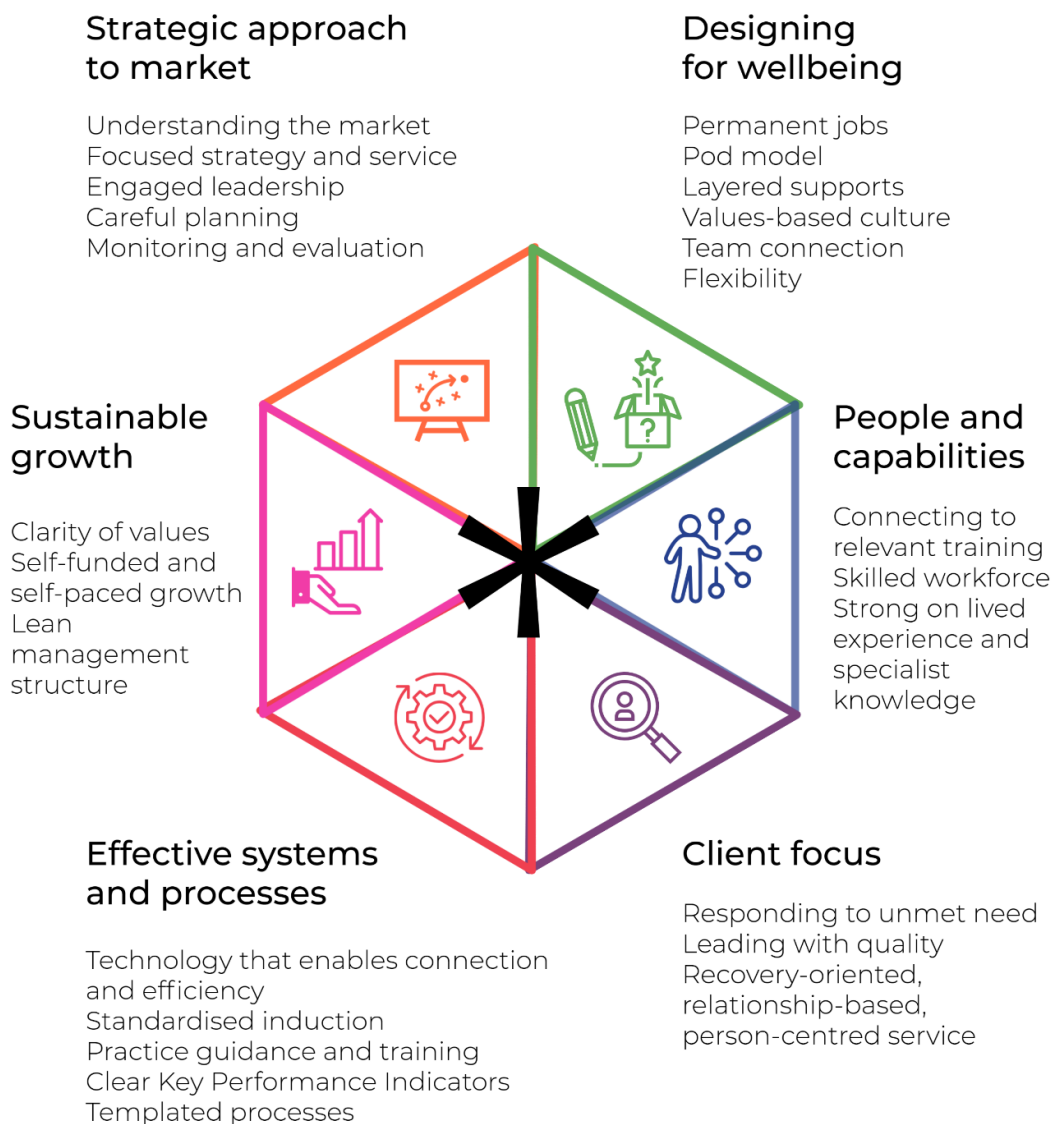Recovery-oriented, relationship-based, person-centred service

Figure 4 - One Good Day organisation design*

Strategic Alignment of Opportunity, People and Capabilities

The organisational capabilities that came through most strongly in research with One Good* Day were four interconnected features:

- A clear strategy and market opportunity;

- Strong alignment with both the people and capabilities that One Good* Day could draw on and build from;

- The ability to meet identified needs through delivering client-focused services;

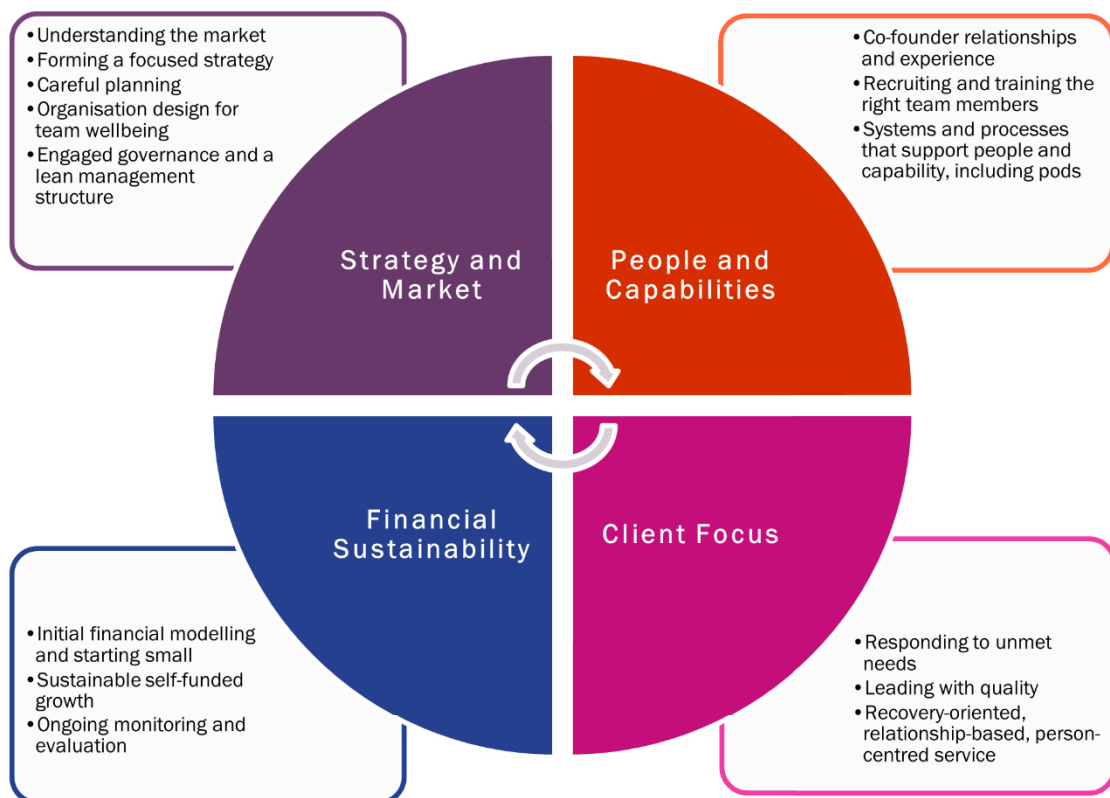- A focus on effective and financially sustainable operations.

Figure 5 - One Good Day organisational capability strengths*

This section discusses these aspects of One Good* Day's approach to effective practice.

Strategy and Market

Understanding the Market

One Good* Day's co-founders were attuned to developments within the market for NDIS services and were well placed to respond when the NDIS introduced a specific line item for Psychosocial Recovery Coaching. There was a knowable potential market for Recovery Coaching services, with approximately 10 percent of NDIS participants having a primary psychosocial disability (National Disability Insurance Agency, 2022b, p.161).

Forming a Focused Strategy

One Good* Day's co-founders chose to build an organisation with a focused strategy that drew on their existing expertise in mental health, and aimed to deliver market-leading Recovery Coaching, while also providing a positive and supportive work environment for team members. This was based on the co-founders' recognition of the need for quality Psychosocial Recovery Coaching support, and the role of employee wellbeing in supporting good outcomes for clients, the team and the organisation. Starting out with a strong awareness of their existing knowledge, skillsets and values enabled One Good* Day to develop an organisation with strong alignment between their purpose and business strategy.

Careful Planning

Though it involved a rapid response to a NDIS market opportunity, OG*D's development has also been the result of thoughtful, strategic planning and implementation, utilising what the co-founders describe as 'calm and methodical' growth. From the time of the NDIS announcement of Recovery Coaching services, the co-founders undertook six months of planning before implementing their plans.

> *"Even though we were excited to get started we knew it was important for us to take the time to get everything lined up right before we were going to open our doors.... we really put together the backbone what One Good* Day turned out to be, and it took probably six months until we felt confident and reassured that we had everything documented and in place to open the doors and start delivering a quality service."*

Organisation Design for Team Wellbeing

One Good* Day's relatively flat organisation structure means that Recovery Coaches and their direct supervisors (Senior Recovery Coaches) are closely connected, working together in pods. A management team with strong experience and expertise in mental health offers additional layers of support to team members, and One Good* Day has worked to actively build a culture that values lived experience, and encourages inclusion and open communication.
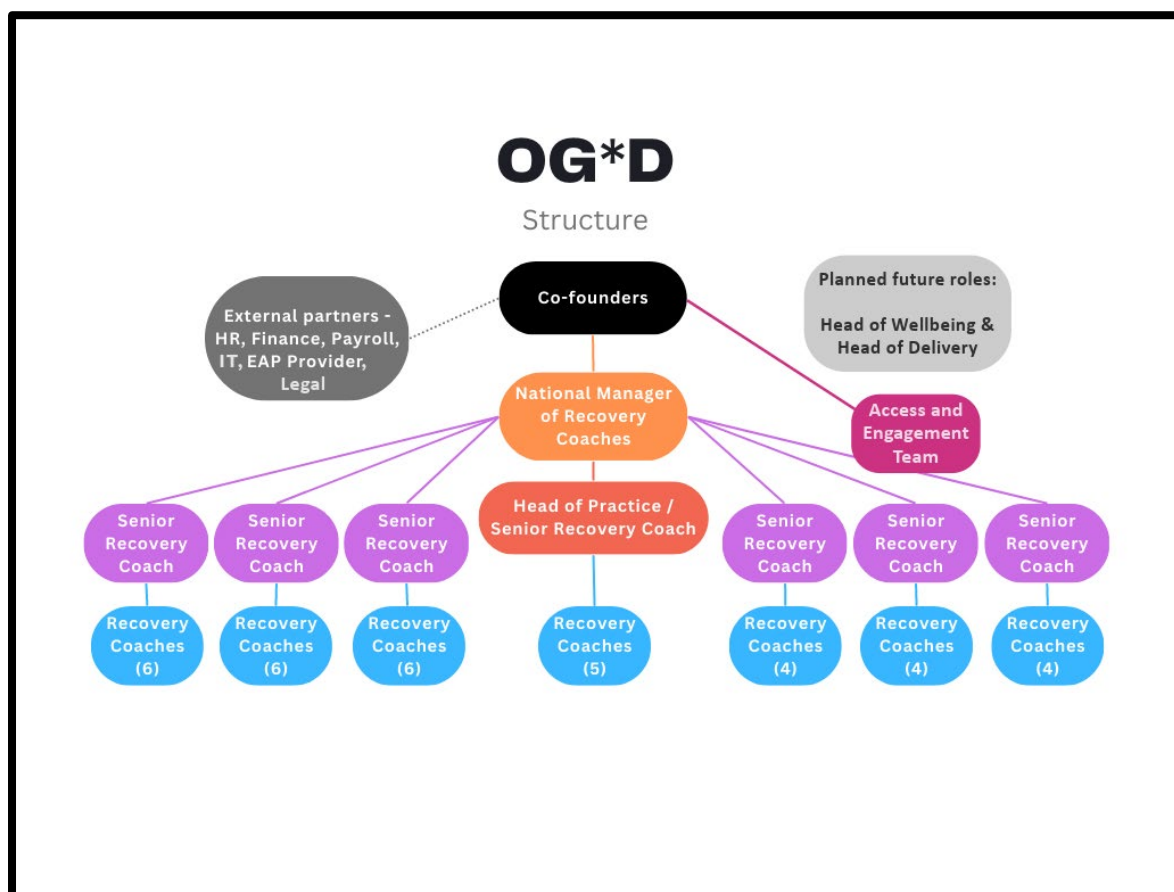
Figure 6 - One Good Day organisation structure*

Engaged Governance and Decentralised Management Structure

One Good* Day has a relatively lean, decentralised management structure that reduces fixed and semi-variable costs. This allows senior team members to be closely connected to the direct practice context and able to understand and support others through challenges at work. Non-core work that is not part of service delivery is outsourced where appropriate, including IT, Payroll, Finance, Legal, Human Resources, and an Employee Assistance Program. From early on, One Good* Day embedded regular reflective practice sessions with supervisors to support team wellbeing, and undertook simple employee net-promoter score surveys to track team engagement and satisfaction over time.

How these Strategic Choices Contribute to Organisation Outcomes

One Good* Day's focused strategy and service offering was a specific choice to do one thing very well. Overall, research shows that this focused strategy has contributed to good practice, including:

- Team members having a strong collective knowledge base and capability in mental health and the available supports clients can access, and being able to learn from and support each other to do their best work; and

- Clients reporting that OG*D's specialisation in mental health gave them more confidence to engage with OG*D, and in many cases their Recovery Coach has been able to help them navigate NDIS and access appropriate supports that they were not previously aware of.

As one client commented:

> *"I think to have just an exclusively mental health provider is really important, because there's a lot of people out there who say they do mental health, but they don't... Yeah, it really needs to have a provider that's like One Good* Day that just deals exclusively with that... it's like [if you had] a brain tumour, and you can just get a general surgeon to do your surgery, or you can get a neurosurgeon... they'd probably both get the job done, but I'd prefer a neurosurgeon if you're going to operate on my brain, and that's the same thing. The other companies, they might have been fine, but I just felt like, I've got a mental health issue and so I want someone that knows how to do mental health, and that's all they do."*
> *- OG*D Client 2022*

This illustrates how the interconnection of strategy, a strong client focus, and investment in people and capability contributes to an attractive service offering and effective delivery.

People and Capability

One Good* Day has leaders and team members with strong expertise in mental health, including many (approximately 75 percent of the team) with their own lived experience. People and capability are a particular strength for One Good* Day. Following the overview presented here, this resource goes into further detail on this aspect of organisational capability, and how One Good* Day has actively cultivated a diverse, inclusive and skilled workforce.

Co-founder Relationships and Experience

A critical aspect of OG*D's development is the relationship between the co-founders and the knowledge, networks and experience that each brings to the organisation from their community services, quality and public health backgrounds. Their alignment in a commitment to creating a positive working environment and providing good service to people on the NDIS is evident:

> *"I think we connected on two things. One is we had some experiences of previous workplaces that had been great to work in and we just loved, and some other workplaces that we worked in that we just didn't really feel that flow and enjoyment. So that was one thing we just seem to be really aligned on - a great place for people to be their best. And I think the other one was wanting to see people with psychosocial disability and the NDIS overall succeed."*

Recruiting and Training the Right Team

Early on in business development, One Good* Day was able to connect with a pipeline of qualified potential team members through the Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work (in this case, at Swinburne University of Technology). A One Good* Day co-founder had worked with the Course Coordinator before, and reached out early on in One Good* Day's development to talk about a potential partnership. Being able to offer paid work placements to students created an additional steady pool of uniquely qualified workforce (alongside open recruitment) and attracted new team members to the organisation.

A strategic focus on a single service type or cluster of service types within a market means that an organisation can target particular training pipelines to recruit the right workforce or possibly offer customised, focused training to team members. It also means that organisations can build in collegial support that is highly relevant for team members given the similarity in job roles across the organisation's workforce.

Systems and Processes that Support People and Capability

To deliver on their strategy and support their people and organisational capability, One Good* Day has implemented a range of systems and processes, such as:

- Standardised induction, commencement and operating processes, including:

  o Drawing on existing information and knowledge to create evidence-informed policies and procedures;

  o Templating processes to help streamline and standardise work;

  o Access to dedicated online training specific to mental health work (MHPOD);

- Stacking processes to increase efficiency (e.g. recording of work hours and activity notes also trigger billing processes); and

- Using monitoring systems to track client enquiries and engagement, service use, and financial performance including billing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

While Key Performance Indicators are necessary in the NDIS service context, One Good* Day's focus was on doing this well. The co-founders acknowledge that organisations and leaders need to put a lot of work into messaging and management to ensure KPIs are a source of clarity and confidence, by setting people up to consistently achieve them. One Good* Day's view was that KPIs don't have to be a source of anxiety and constant stress, but should become an automatic habit that is just part of the work. Getting this right frees people up to focus on other impactful things like practice, culture, wellbeing, and values.

Other systems and processes that One Good* Day put in place to support good practice and team wellbeing were:

- A strong focus on layered support systems for team members, including:

  - Pods – close-knit teams of 5-6 practitioners embedded in communities;

  - Buddy pods, paired up to provide additional support at pod-level, especially when a Senior Recovery Coach is away. This is a way to ensure Recovery Coaches always have someone to call for support and always know who to call;

  - A National Manager of Recovery Coaches and Head Of Practice, who also provide support to team members;

  - Cohorts of new team members are recruited at the same time so that groups are starting together – ensuring collegial support and relationships from day one; and

  - Technology supports team communications, and remote work is localised to specific service areas so that teams can still connect in person as needed.

- A strong focus on both formal and informal support processes:

  - Regular, structured reflective practice/supervision from more experienced practitioners (e.g. Senior Recovery Coaches);

  - Multiple ways for team members to connect informally (e.g. Through shared pod days in the office together, or through online chat);

  - Documented wellbeing plans for all team members, which are developed and reviewed during reflective practice; and

    o   An EAP program aligned with organisation needs that includes free anonymous counselling, management advice and support line, and critical incident debriefing.

In addition to this broad range of support systems and processes, OG*D also uses probation and review processes to ensure that recruitment results in the right fit for the clients, employee, and for the organisation.

Client Focus

Responding to Unmet Needs

One Good* Day's focus on providing quality specialist Recovery Coaching services aligned well with the market for NDIS-funded Recovery Coaching. One Good* Day's value proposition of specialising in mental health Recovery Coaching fit into an existing market gap for Recovery Coaches with strong expertise in mental health, including Recovery Coaches who could support clients by drawing on their own lived experience.

Leading with Quality

One Good* Day developed clear branding, identifying the organisation as uniquely able to understand and meet people where they are in terms of their mental health and recovery goals. Evidence from clients suggests this is influential within the market for Recovery Coaching services.

> *"They just approach you like non-judgementally... that's how they come across - where they get the situation I'm in, and work really hard to not have stigma, and leave biases and things like that at home. They kind of address the situation for what it is, not for an expectation of, 'You should be sitting here' or 'This is what you should be', all those sorts of things. It's just taking it as it comes."*
> *– OG*D Client 2022*

Recovery-Oriented, Relationship-Based, Person-Centred Service

One Good* Day's person-centred, holistic and authentic branding reflects their strength in lived experience, recovery-oriented practice, and understanding of broader system issues related to compartmentalised service responses that do not treat people as individuals or respond effectively to the whole person.

"I truly appreciate people who look at me on a holistic level and who see me and value me as a person that is going through difficulties and struggles, but is also OK to have those moments and... my Recovery Coach then, you know, can help me sort of come out of that space as well, which is really nice."
– OG*D Client, 2022

Financial Sustainability

Initial Financial Modelling and Starting Small

One Good* Day was started with a Directors' loan, and the pod-model enabled a kind of prototyping stage allowing the organisation to begin small (with one pod team) and focus on getting things right before growing the organisation further.

Organic Self-Funded Growth

One Good* Day's co-founders made the decision not to seek external investment, but to fund growth through a "working capital snowball" – building pod growth and client base to the point where some surplus is generated that can then fund the next expansion of pod/s. This process involved clear feedback loops from team members about growing demand in areas with existing pods, or new areas not already serviced by the organisation, where enquiries came through indicating potential demand for expansion into new regions.

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing financial performance is tracked closely through dashboard systems and quarterly reporting, and One Good* Day also implemented monitoring systems and team surveys early on to track key performance measures and employee satisfaction. Independent evaluation was sought once funding was available to support this.

Alignment of Strategy, Opportunity, People and Capabilities

Overall, OG*D's approach reflects an extremely focused strategy (on a single service type) within a specialised and new market for Recovery Coaching, characterised by stable and predictable investment from the NDIA. Forming a viable focused strategy requires an understanding of the NDIS market, current and projected demand for services, and on development of a new organisation's capability to meet the market's needs.

For emerging organisations, this might mean focusing on an already identifiable area such as Support Coordination, or newly crafted roles within existing areas (e.g. disability support work, or employment support), where an organisation is strategically well-placed to develop a niche product such as 'peer-led social participation', or 'job networking' or 'micro-business support', reflecting the needs of the clients and market they hope to serve, and the organisations' capabilities to deliver this.

Evidence of How One Good* Day's Model Works

Good Practice and Positive Client Outcomes

Many of the organisational features highlighted here enable One Good* Day to deliver on good practice and positive experiences for clients. Findings from client interviews (10) and a survey (49 respondents in total) identified the following positive client outcomes and experiences of OG*D Recovery Coaching:

- Improved sense of feeling valued and respected (79 percent of survey responses)

- Improved sense of meaning and purpose (74 percent of survey responses)

- Understanding and using the NDIS funds I have (73 percent of survey responses)

  o Client comments indicated that these outcomes were supported by Recovery Coaches sharing their knowledge of the NDIS, assisting with NDIS navigation, and encouraging participants' self-advocacy to receive needed supports.

- Improved sense of social support (70 percent of survey responses).

Client feedback suggested that Recovery Coaching supported clients with building strategies and feeling more able to get through difficult times; connected people with needed services such as cleaning, gardening, occupational therapy or respite; and supported clients in their recovery journey, including regaining more independence and working toward goals.

Comments from interviews and surveys with clients indicated that clients felt confident in the quality of support they receive in part due to One Good* Day's focused strategy and specialisation in mental health. The vast majority of clients had positive experiences with their Recovery Coach match and relationship quality. Clients often expressed feeling well understood and supported by their Recovery Coach, in part due to the Recovery Coach having lived experience related to mental health, as well as learned experience and understanding of the mental health and disability service system. One survey respondent commented:

"My Recovery Coach has been amazing. Helpful and fast with responses and organising supports and researching anything I want to look into such as activities and other supports both NDIS and non-NDIS related. I am so grateful to have my Recovery Coach's support. She has her own lived experience and really understands my needs and gets me." – OG*D Client 2023

Client experiences align with what is set out in NDIS Recovery Coaching guidelines. Of the specified aims and activities of a Recovery Coach (NDIA 2020), those that were most evident throughout the client interviews and survey were:

- building a recovery-enabling relationship based on hope;

- supporting the person with their recovery planning;

- supporting engagement with the NDIS; and

- coaching to build on knowledge, skills, resilience and decision making.

An Engaged and Satisfied Workforce

Interviews (9) and a survey of 28 One Good* Day team members have provided strong evidence indicating that the intentional organisation design and the working conditions and culture at One Good* Day support positive outcomes for team members, including:

- Feeling that they are treated fairly (100 percent of survey respondents);

- Feeling that their work is meaningful (100 percent of survey respondents);

- Feeling supported by peers and senior team members (97 percent of survey respondents);

- Experiencing high levels of work engagement (79/100, where 100 is the maximum level of work engagement). The average score in international research is 67 (Burr et al. 2019, p.9);

- Experiencing high job satisfaction (an average of 8/10, where 10 is the maximum level of job satisfaction); and

- Feeling recognised and appreciated for their work (86 percent of survey respondents).

Early Financial Sustainability

In addition to positive outcomes for team members and clients, One Good* Day has been able to achieve financial sustainability and self-funded growth within its first two years of operating. In its first full financial year of operation (FY22), OG*D generated a small (2 percent) net profit and a 3 percent operating profit, of which the majority of income was from Recovery Coaching revenue, via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Contextual Factors that Support this Model to Work

As noted earlier in this resource, several contextual factors impact an organisation's opportunities, engagement of people and possibilities for success (Austin et al., 2006). In part, the introduction of NDIS funding for Recovery Coaching and the aim of enabling participants to choose a Recovery Coach with lived experience created new opportunities for the entry of people with lived experience into this workforce (National Disability Insurance Agency 2022a).

As a case study, One Good* Day illustrates how NDIS service provider organisations can open up new pathways for employment of people with lived experience, but it's important to acknowledge that change also requires adequate political will, funding and investment, and training opportunities for new workforces (Byrne et al. 2021a).

The following section delves further into One Good* Day's focus on designing for team wellbeing, and how they have approached people and capabilities through building an inclusive, engaged and supported workforce.

SPOTLIGHT: DESIGNING FOR TEAM WELLBEING AND BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

The NDIS identifies specific workforce capabilities that organisations and workers need (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021). Organisational capabilities relating to people are summarised in the box on the following page.

This section goes into further detail on One Good* Day's approach to people and capability, linking back to some of the NDIS workforce capabilities identified by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The aim is to present information that is useful to other emerging leaders who are seeking to build a sustainable NDIS organisation designed to support team wellbeing and capability while delivering positive outcomes for participants.

NDIS Workforce Capabilities

(NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, 2021, page 29-30)

LEADERSHIP LEVEL

Create an Enabling Work Environment

Establish and embed NDIS values in organisational culture and practice.

Set up and communicate business values and workplace culture to promote and reinforce the principles of the NDIS, such as upholding human rights, celebrating diversity and respecting the voice of those with lived experience.

Build Consistent Good Practice

Ensure organisational policies and procedures enable, support, and reinforce good practice.

Establish processes to measure and adjust services to continually improve the quality and reliability of support.

Establish Systems to Support Health and Manage Risk

Design approaches to manage health and risk, consistent with the rights of people with disability to take and learn from risks, NDIS and organisational values, and the right of workers to a safe work environment.

Establish a Learning Culture to Support Workforce Capability

Create an organisational environment that sets and meets high quality service standards, promotes life-long learning and development and supports career development for workers in disability and the wider care sector.

DIRECT MANAGEMENT LEVEL

Model and Reinforce Values in Organisational Culture and Practice

Support and model a culture that promotes the principles of the NDIS, such as upholding rights, celebrating diversity and respecting the voice of those with lived experience.

Promote Quality Through Consistent Good Practice

Set clear expectations of what best practice looks like, provide access to support and coaching, and develop worker awareness and capabilities to deliver quality supports and services.

Support Health and Manage Risk

Implement policies, procedures and systems for effective health and risk management so that workers know their roles and responsibilities, look out for their own safety, and balance dignity of risk with duty of care when supporting participants.

Foster and Develop a Capable Workforce

Support workers to understand capability expectations at different levels, provide constructive feedback, and create informal and formal opportunities for them to develop their capabilities and build a career.

Establish a Learning Culture to Support Workforce Capability

Connecting with Skilled Potential Employees

Recruiting and retaining an appropriately skilled workforce for delivery of NDIS services is essential, and has been a challenge for the disability sector due to a range of issues including the casualisation and relatively low remuneration of disability support work, alongside limited career progression opportunities (Hurley & Hutchinson, 2022). Despite significant government investment in growing the disability workforce, evidence suggests that these issues remain (Hurley & Hutchinson, 2022). Given that disability work can be emotionally demanding, adequate support is crucial in retaining employees over time, as is sufficient training to develop the knowledge and range of skills required to support clients in NDIS navigation, and effectively enable clients to exercise choice and control (Hurley & Hutchinson, 2022).

One Good* Day's co-founders were aware of the need for deliberate strategies to grow and connect with the emerging Recovery Coaching workforce.

Partnering with Relevant Training Programs can Benefit Emerging Workers, Organisations and Education Providers

Early on in establishing One Good* Day, the co-founders developed a work placement partnership with a Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work program (in this case, at Swinburne University of Technology). Students nearing course completion could undertake a paid work placement with One Good* Day and successful work placements provided an additional pipeline of qualified employees, alongside those moving into Recovery Coaching from other mental health sector roles. This kind of partnership has multiple shared benefits, as it:

- Creates opportunities for existing and emerging mental health and disability workers;

- Supports organisations in building a qualified workforce to meet service demands; and

- Enables education providers to benefit from current industry input into the skills and knowledge employers need from graduates.

Create an Enabling Work Environment

Offering Meaningful, Fair and Safe Work

The foundations of any enabling work environment are safe and fair work and employment conditions. This is the base to build on and employees won't thrive without it (Byrne et al. 2021b).

Permanent Employment Benefits Employees and the Organisation, and Addresses Workforce Casualisation Issues

Providing permanent (non-casual) employment opportunities is a specific strategy that One Good* Day has used to encourage sustained employment, cultivate connection and support among colleagues, and enable effective workload planning and consistency of service delivery for clients.

Building a permanent workforce gives people stability and regular paid leave, which supports wellbeing. It also means OG*D can build a team and culture with shared values, in contrast to a collective of sole practitioners connected through a platform, or working alone.

One Good* Day's approach of offering permanent employment also aligns with calls to address issues of casualisation within the Disability and Lived Experience workforces (Byrne et al. 2021a).

Alongside offering permanent employment, the One Good* Day model expects and encourages everyone to take leave as part of a proactive approach to mental health. Policies and practices that support this include:

- Not requiring medical certificates for personal leave;

- Pods offering team-based coverage for anything urgent if a team member is away; and

- A culture that strongly encourages people to take leave when they need it, and be their best when they are working.

As well as encouraging team members to look after their own wellbeing, this approach ensures clients get team members who are operating at full capacity as often as possible, which supports service quality.

Creating a Culture that Embraces Lived Experience

Approximately 75 percent of One Good* Day employees identify as having lived experience related to mental health.

Increasingly, engagement of workers with lived experience of mental health or disability is recognised as important in delivering quality services that meet participants' needs (Australian Government, 2019; Carey et al., 2021; Victorian Government, 2023). Yet, issues remain in terms of resources and opportunities to build a Lived Experience Workforce and cultures that segregate those with and without lived experience (either through designated roles, or limiting attitudes or working conditions) (Victoria State Government Department of Health, 2022).

Building a thriving, diverse and inclusive workforce that embraces lived experience takes care and effort, but the potential rewards for people and organisations are significant, including:

- Better service experiences for clients, from workers who 'get it'

- Employees feeling valued and able to bring their authentic selves to work.

One client who was interviewed as part of our research said:

> *"I think it makes a big difference [having a Recovery Coach with lived experience]... to have the understanding and go, 'Yeah, I know what it's like to have a really shit day where you can't get out of bed, I understand that.' Rather than be like, 'Oh yeah, you should just try harder,'... they're like, 'Yeah, I definitely get what that's like. Let's try and find one thing that's going to make things easier.' It makes a lot of difference. It makes you feel supported and understood."*
> *– OG*D client 2022*

Another client who was surveyed gave a clear outline of what they deemed the four most significant ways in which OG*D contributed to the outcomes they achieved, highlighting the value of lived experience in supporting a meaningful and supportive Recovery Coaching relationship:

1) *"Helped connect me with support services as outlines in my NDIS plan.*

2) *Provided support with a coach that had personal experience of mental health issues & recovery - could relate to my experiences and offer encouragement.*

3) *Non-judgmental & could provide support outside of the medical model/framework.*

4) *I think the most beneficial aspect is having a support worker who "feels like a friend", respectful and with professional boundaries, but a close and meaningful relationship." – OG*D Client 2023*

Interviews with team members illustrated examples of how One Good* Day created a culture that embraces lived experience, including valuing lived experience as an asset that team members bring to their role, accepting people as they are, treating people holistically, and responding with compassion if mental health (or other life factors) arise that impact work.

One Recovery Coach described the inclusive and supportive environment at One Good* Day in relation to having lived experience related to mental health, contrasting this with their experience in other organisations:

> *"[In other workplaces, having a mental health condition is] always like kind of perceived as a risk... And so it's something kind of keep to yourself, even if things aren't going well, you don't really feel the supports are in place... This is the total opposite. It's been really supportive. I think just as an organisation, One Good* Day is quite supportive. There are a lot of tools in place. There is an ongoing and open conversation about how we're feeling and how that can be supported."*

One Good* Day's approach aligns strongly with recommended strategies to support the Lived Experience Workforce (Byrne et al., 2021a, p.19-21; Lived Experience Workforce Program & Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, 2018, p.5), including:

- Embedding lived experience roles across the organisation;

- Valuing lived experience as an asset;

- Creating an inclusive culture that supports the lived experience of all team members and celebrates diversity;

- Policies that support workers taking leave as needed for mental health reasons;

- Flexibility in working arrangements;

- Intentional promotion of wellbeing;

- Consistency in wellbeing support processes and remuneration for team members with and without lived experience related to mental health;

- Offering secure (non-casualised) jobs; and

- Providing networks for people to connect and collaborate with other workers with lived experience.

Build Consistent Good Practice

Setting Expectations and Sharing Resources for Success

One Good* Day has a structured induction and orientation process designed to build clarity about role and work expectations, as well as to connect team members to resources and supports to help them work effectively and build confidence in their role. Clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set from the beginning of employment and reviewed on a regular basis. Role clarity and clear KPIs are of noted importance in enabling effective work (Byrne et al. 2021a).

One Good* Day has actively built templates and processes to support their approach to working with clients. As the co-founders explain:

> *"We've got quite a structured templated approach to the work that we do with our clients... So there's a documented foundation of how we practice and we've got the Team Handbook and Leaders Handbook and we've spent a lot of time developing written resources."*

Practice templates supporting the team's work and interactions with clients include:

- Client information and consent forms;

- Privacy statement;

- Service agreement;

- Client charter of rights;

- Complaints and feedback forms;

- Information on accessing an advocate;

- Intake assessment form;

- Home risk assessment;

- Recovery Action Plan;

- 3-month review form;

- Flourishing scale;

- My disaster readiness plan; and

- Holiday wellbeing plan (for service shut down over break).

In addition, some practice templates used by team members to support staff wellbeing include:

- Team member wellbeing plan;

- Team member Reflective Practice template; and

- Leadership Reflective Practice template.

Providing Ongoing Professional Development Opportunities

One Good* Day's recruitment process is open and competitive, and connecting with a pool of already qualified workers (whether through the Cert IV in mental health peer work training pipeline or other avenues) is one strategy that helps ensure appropriate knowledge and skillsets among new team members at the commencement stage.

One Good* Day's approach to ongoing training includes tapping into existing online training tools - in particular, the Mental Health Professional Online Development (MHPOD) portal, which provides highly relevant content and enables enough flexibility to tailor additional training to team needs. This enables One Good* Day to adaptively recognise specific learning needs relating to the role, and provide access to continued learning opportunities through structured training, as well as through scaffolded learning on the job (e.g. observing other team members, conducting supported practice, then progressing to autonomous practice). In addition, team members are supported by a senior practitioner within their team, with access to the wider team's collective knowledge.

Establish Systems to Support Health and Manage Risk

Designing a Supportive Team Work Environment

Our focus in this section is to look closely at how supportive practice can work well within an organisation and to provide examples from our research with One Good* Day as an organisation that has been designed for employee wellbeing from the outset.

One Good* Day is structured with layering of multiple types of support, from senior practitioners, Recovery Coaches' pod teams and recruitment cohorts, and from a National Manager of Recovery Coaches and Head of Practice. There are also multiple ways of accessing support, including online chat, structured reflective practice, and onsite coworking days to reconnect.

Support from Peers

Pod Days where Team Members Attend a Shared Office Workspace with their Pod

There is one pod day per week where all team members are expected to attend a shared workspace to build rapport. This day is in the middle of the week, which works well because it allows team members to 'reset' and refresh mid-week, do some research and make phone calls to clients. Feedback from team members indicates that pod days with shared office time are a positive practice and build group cohesion.

Recovery Coaching can be a high stress job and the pod day provides an important opportunity to give and get support and build solidarity through shared experiences. Team members indicated that OG*D do this well compared with other organisations.

One Recovery Coach said:

> *"You do spend a lot of time working on your own and you know, problem solving yourself. There's always people you can ask, but it's good that we have the team [pod] day… it is a chance to come together."*

Another Recovery Coach echoed the positive impact of connecting with other team members.

> *"When you come into the office and you just have a brief conversation or like, 'you know what, this is what I'm going through'. And then it's like, suddenly, hang on… You'll [realise] you've been overthinking it… or here's a quicker way to get to that. So that's good."*

Data from a 2023 survey of One Good* Day team members showed that 97 percent were always or often able to get help and support from their colleagues when needed.

The average colleague support score across One Good* Day team members was 91. In comparison, the average score found in international research across six countries and a mix of workplaces is 68, with a mean range of 57-81 (Burr et al. 2019, p.9).

These scores on support from colleagues indicate that:

- The vast majority of team members at OG*D report having good access to support from colleagues;

- Overall, the average score for colleague support is very high; and

- One Good* Day's average score for ability to get support from colleagues when needed is higher than the average score found in international workplace research.

One Senior team member said:

"...especially given the nature of the work that we do, which is bloody heavy going sometimes... We can always have a laugh. And then, as soon as you need it to be serious, or you're struggling with something... they immediately go into, like, focus: 'What's going on? What do you need?' And I do that with my team as well. And so... I love the laughter and the camaraderie, and especially with my team, I feel like we've got the most beautiful group of humans together in a team, and we care about each other. And we support each other. And I certainly feel that from above as well."

Support from a Senior Practitioner

As part of a survey of One Good* Day team members, an overall score for access to supervisor support was calculated based on guidelines for the Copenhagen Psychological Questionnaire (COPSOQ III), which is an international research instrument designed to assess and improve workplace conditions (COPSOQ International Network 2020).

The average supervisor support score across One Good* Day team members was 84. In comparison, the average score found in international research across six countries and a mix of workplaces is 69, with a mean range of 55-82 (Burr et al. 2019, p.9).

These scores on support from supervisors indicate that One Good* Day's average score for ability to get support from a supervisor when needed is higher than the average score found in international workplace research.

In relation to accessing support from senior team members, one Recovery Coach commented:

"...It's quite a horizontal culture. So... there's quite a short line to Senior Recovery Coaches, Head of Practice, National Manager and like even a Founder... which is quite the opposite from the conservative organisations I've worked where you very much have a hierarchy."

A Senior team member also commented:

"I know there's always someone I can go to, to have support - emotional support, if I need it. So yeah, I feel like... speaking for myself, my wellbeing is, absolutely very much considered in every conversation that I have with management."

Support from the Organisation

Team members were asked through a survey about the main ways that One Good* Day supports them to manage their health and wellbeing. People could select as many options as applied, and were able to add their own option if they chose.

The most commonly identified aspects of support from One Good* Day that contributed to team members' health and wellbeing management included:

- Flexibility around work hours or time off (93 percent)

- Having support as needed from my colleagues (79 percent)

- Feeling that my work makes a difference to other people (71 percent)

- Having support as needed from my senior or manager (68 percent)

- Being part of an organisational culture that embraces lived experience as a strength alongside learned experience (68 percent).

In addition, team members commented that One Good* Day supported them by "practicing the values they preach" and by making team members feel welcome.

Flexibility

Our survey findings identified the importance of flexibility to team wellbeing, with 93 percent of team members naming flexibility as one of the key ways in which One Good* Day supported their ability to manage their health and wellbeing.

For full-time team members (more than half the team), once they have passed a qualifying period, they can apply to work their full-time hours across 4 days. As discussed above, one of these days is a nominated 'pod day' for all team members to be based in their local office to enhance team exchange and support. Part time team members work 0.8 of full-time equivalent hours (FTE) over four days, including the 'pod day' in the office. Many team members work predominantly at home/remotely.

One Senior team member commented on the scope for flexibility and autonomy at One Good* Day, and how this contributed to a positive experience for them and for the organisation.

> "It took a while to trust that I wasn't going to be in trouble for having the flexibility. And I'm well and truly settled in it now. But yes, that's also something quite unusual, I think, to be trusted so autonomously with our own roles. And I think we've talked about this as a team a lot. That trust makes us perform so much

better and makes us reliable because we know that we're trusted to be
responsible and accountable. So therefore we are."

One Good* Day's organisation model was designed with the intent to provide a uniquely supportive environment for employees, with small 'pod' teams supported by a Senior Recovery Coach, and colleagues encouraged to stay connected and support each other as well. The flexible working conditions, layers of support available to team members, meaningful work and positive and inclusive work culture all help people to maintain their health and wellbeing while contributing positively as part of One Good* Day.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Operating effectively in the context of the NDIS requires creative thinking around lean organisation design, along with systems and processes that support good practice, workforce longevity, and sustainable operations. Some of the capabilities and factors that NDIS service provider organisation leaders need to consider include:

- A well-thought out business strategy and effective branding;

- A clear governance and management structure;

- Meeting a specific market need through delivering a strong product or service value proposition to clients;

- Detailed financial modelling to understand feasibility and potential sustainability, and appropriate capital to start or grow the business;

- Recruiting, developing and supporting the required people and capabilities; and

- Effective operational systems and processes, including information and quality management (Centre for Social Impact Swinburne, 2020, p.18 and National Disability Services, 2015, p. 3).

The organisational capabilities emerging most strongly in research with One Good* Day were:

- A clear strategy and market opportunity;

- Well aligned with both the people and capabilities that One Good* Day could draw on;

- Ability to meet identified needs through delivering client-focused services;

- All contributing towards effective and financially sustainable operations.

The One Good* Day case study provides insights into some of the design and implementation decisions that contribute to building an effective, modern organisation for the NDIS and that support the delivery of quality services while maintaining an engaged workforce.

Attracting and supporting human capability within disability services is a key challenge for the sustainability of the NDIS, and the wider disability sector (National Disability Services, 2019). This requires both growing the disability workforce, recruiting people with the relevant skills and expertise (including lived experience), and effectively supporting people to succeed in their work. Any organisations hoping to achieve sustainability and impact have an imperative to start with the wellbeing of their workforce, and try to create the best possible places to work and practice.

Building a workforce that is suitably skilled and supported is key to acheiving good outcomes for participants (Hurley & Hutchinson, 2022; Olney et al., 2022) and is one of the key factors for success of a modern disability organisation (National Disability Services 2019, slide 12). People want workplaces with opportunities for autonomy, a sense of competence, connection and contribution (Martela & Riekki, 2018).

One Good* Day's approach provides examples of how an organisation can effectively build and support their people and capability, through:

- Designing for team wellbeing, including:

    o Offering permanent jobs, with meaningful, safe and fair work;

    o Providing a supportive work environment with layered formal and informal supports through pods, senior staff, managers, and recruitment cohorts;

    o A values-based culture with flexible working practices and leave policies.

- Connecting with skilled potential employees to recruit and train the right team members:

    o Partnering with a relevant training pathway provider alongside open recruitment;

    o Valuing lived and learned experience; and

    o Supporting continued training and development of team members.

- Implementing systems and processes that support people and capability, such as:

    o Clear practice guidance and templates that support success;

    o Wellbeing plans for all team members and regular reflective practice, and

    o Facilitating connection and shared learning via technology and time together.

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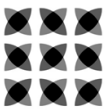Victorian Government. (2021). Victoria's mental health and wellbeing workforce strategy 2021–2024. Victoria, Australia: State of Victoria. https://www.health.vic.gov.au/strategy-and-planning/mental-health-workforce-strategy

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