

# Creating an inclusive workplace in a supported employment setting



# A bit about me...



**Marisa Kouts, Chief People Officer**

***Start with reframing your thinking around the concept that working is a human right and supported employees are like every other person in a workplace - we all simply crave fairness, purpose and respect***



## **Mission**

**To create employment opportunities for people  
with disability**

## **Vision**

**To transform workplaces and society through  
disability employment**

# Diversity of our people

## FY 24/25

**404**

people with disability employed

**47.5%**

workforce with a disability



**363**

people with disability (including employees) completing or completed a traineeship, training or Academy program



**27**

people with disability supported to obtain employment outside of Good Sammy



**191**

volunteers

**57**

corporate and school volunteering groups

## @ 30 April 2026

**867 Headcount**

**395 People with Disability (45 %)**

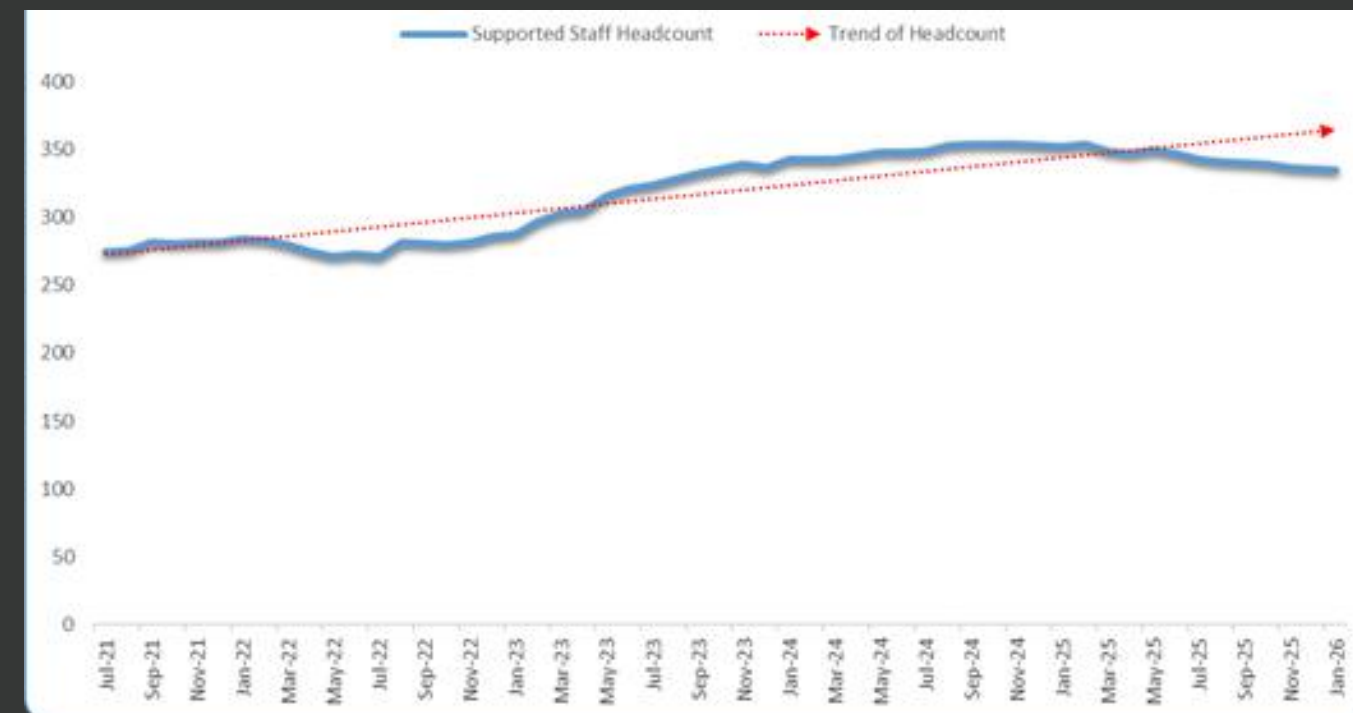
**346 Supported (40% of workforce)**

## Headcount figures 2021 - 2026

- **649** → **867**

## Supported Employment figures 21 - 26

- July 21 - **275**
- Now **346** with ongoing growth
- **< 58 FTE Supported vacancies** to fill



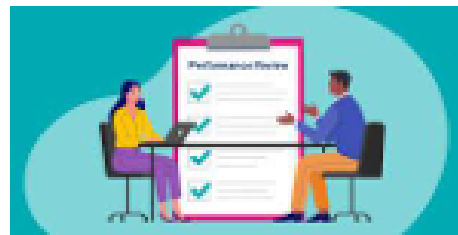
# **The inclusion of supported employees in all typical workplace practices**

- **Creation of one Good Sammy Induction that all employees and volunteers attend plus online option available**
- **Amalgamation of 2 Enterprise Agreements into one Agreement covering all employees - one transparent set of employment conditions for everyone**
- **Extension of mandatory training to all employees - modified delivery method but included in all KPI's**
- **Inclusion of supported employees in the annual performance and development review process and integrate with support planning**

# Creating positive workplace culture through quality conversations with direct managers



## What is a Performance Review



A Performance Review is a chance to talk about

- What you have done at work
- What you have achieved at work
- What support you need
- What you want to do next

## Activity 1 Plan

Planning is between July and August

You and your manager will talk about:

- What your job goals are
- What support you need
- Your learning and development
- Your Support Plan

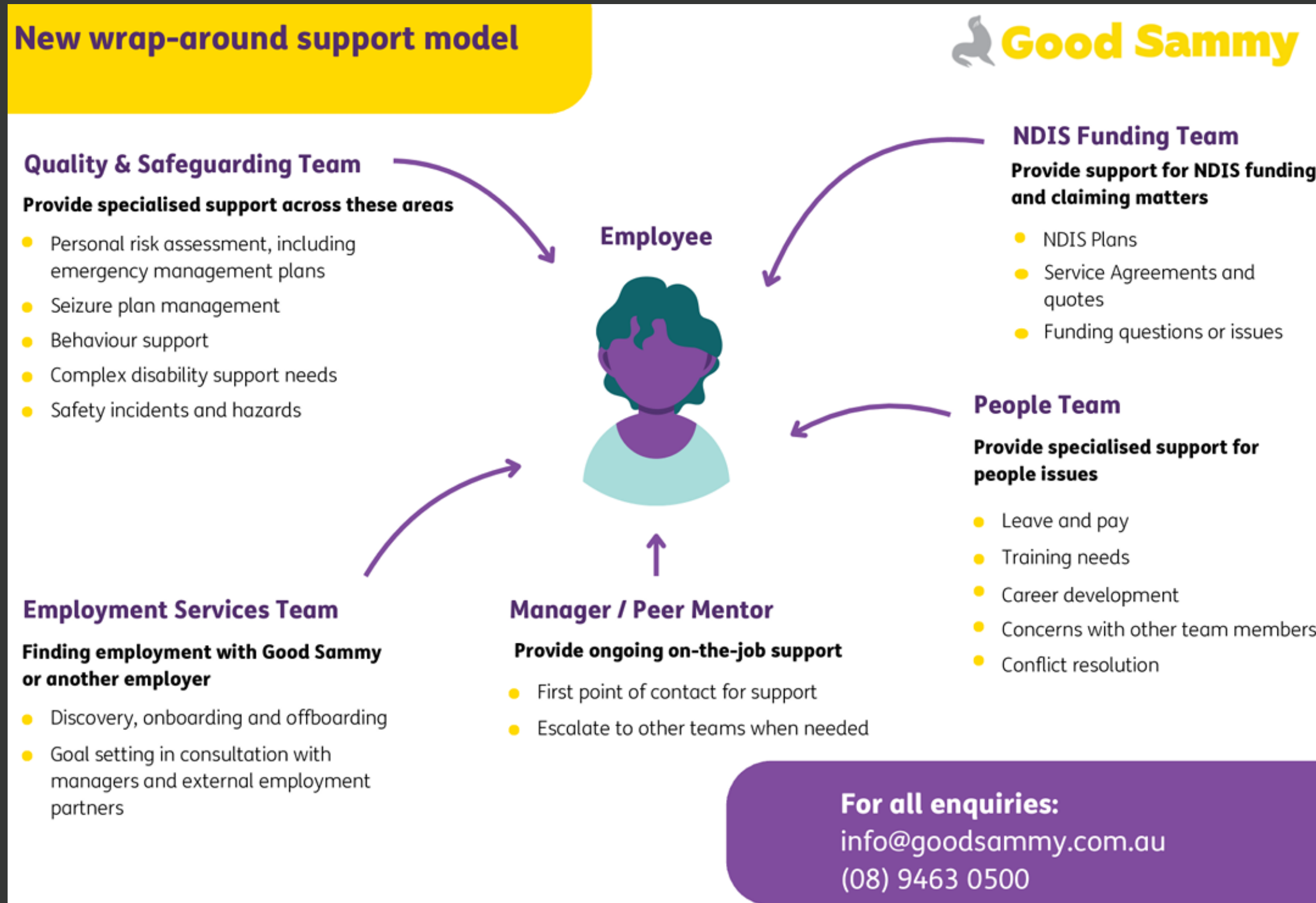
**This one conversation can enable better inclusion via:**

- **Access to training opportunities**
- **Assurance all know about training scholarships**
- **Conversations about aspirations outside of current role**
- **Opportunity for positive feedback about strengths but also early intervention on issues**
- **Confidence building through self-reflection**

# **Commitment to offering career development pathways for anyone who wants one and rethinking 'competency and progression'**

- **Long tenure in the role doesn't imply a lack of desire for something new**
- **Setting up a safe environment to step out and try something new**
  - **First fire warden**
  - **Forklift training, WorkSkills/WorkReady, Drive, Traineeships**
  - **Open employment trials**
- **Measuring success by contribution and growth, not just independence**

# Moving away from one specialised support team to a wrap-around support model



# The importance of co-design

**The Lived Experience and Happiness Advisory Committee (LEHAC) is Good Sammy's dedicated consumer reference group. It plays a vital role in offering genuine insights and advice on matters related to disability and creating a happy, inclusive workplace**



# Lived Experience of Disability Statement

***For true inclusion in a supported employment setting, disability must be at the front of everyone's minds all the time***

A graphic with a yellow vertical bar on the left containing the Good Sammy logo (a stylized figure) and the text "Good Sammy". To the right, a white box contains the text of the statement.

**Statement of Lived Experience of Disability**

At Good Sammy, we acknowledge people with disability and respect their experiences.

We believe everyone is equal.

We are thankful for the people at Good Sammy, and for those who love and care for people with disability.

Everyone's disability is different. Sometimes it can be seen, and sometimes it can't.

We see the whole person — not just the disability.

We know people with disability work hard: to reach goals, to face unfair treatment, and to stay strong every day — even when others don't understand.

We celebrate inclusion, independence, and joy.

We support people to grow at their own pace and to feel they truly belong — at work, in the community, and in life.

Together, we can live, learn, and achieve great things.

# How external funding for open employment trials and transition of our ADE model has helped us understand more about inclusion



Open Employment Hybrid Project (2023 – 2026) Supported by the Paul Ramsay Foundation designed to transition young people with intellectual disabilities from supported employment to open employment

Open Employment Pathway Pilot Project (2023 – 2025) - Supported by a generous anonymous funder – aimed to transition people with intellectual disabilities into employment by supporting them to complete relevant licences or traineeships

ADE transformation (2024 – 2026)- Transformation of the ADE model to provide supported employees with evidence-based services, community-facing and contemporary roles, and diverse career development pathways

# How external funding for open employment trials and transition of our ADE model has helped us understand more about inclusion

## Open Employment trials interim report findings (Sep 23 - Dec 24)

- 60% of participants reported increased self-confidence and independence, with many highlighting social inclusion as a key benefit
- External employment partners involved in the trial reported higher workplace satisfaction and team cohesion when employing individuals with disability, challenging common misconceptions
- Digital capability training saw a 70% success rate in enhancing employability, with many moving into admin, retail, and logistics roles.



Scan to  
download  
Interim Report

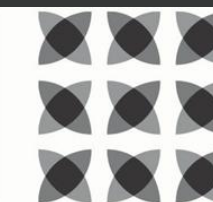
## Centre for Social Impact (Swinburne University)

Training and implementation of the WISE-Ability Model at Good Sammy and a Gap Analysis

*"Good Sammy's significant progress in aligning its operations with inclusive employment principles, particularly through the provision of flexible roles, diverse work opportunities, and efforts to support open employment transitions. Good Sammy's future strategy reflects a deliberate, multifaceted approach to inclusive employment growth that is entirely consistent with the WISE-Ability model." Dr Jenny Crosbie, CSI Swinburne*

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SWINBURNE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY



**CENTRE**  
for **SOCIAL**  
**IMPACT**

# The importance of leadership

*Setting the tone through practice as inclusion is most strongly shaped by front line leaders*

- **Significant investment in leaders across all levels of the organisation**
- **Focus on Disability and NDIS Awareness capability uplift**
- **Proactively addressed bullying and other disrespectful behaviours including from supported employees - this often has a very significant positive impact on inclusion**



**Leaders Lab**

Good Sammy Leadership Series



# More than an op shop... Our breadth of social enterprise services



**Op shops**  
30+ across WA



**Containers for Change**  
7 depots + 1000 collection  
points across WA



**Academy Programs  
and Certified Traineeships**



**Logistics &  
Warehousing**



**Gardening &  
Property Care**



**Catering**



**Employment  
Services**



**Ecommerce**

**Join us in our bold vision  
to transform workplaces  
and society through  
disability employment**



[goodsammy.com.au](https://goodsammy.com.au)

# QUESTIONS?

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