you can. we can.

Karakan

Annual Report

2025 - 2026

Helping you to build resilience and live life better, together.

Acknowledgement of Country

Karakan acknowledges the Yugambeh, Yuggera, Jagera, Turrbal and Ugarapul peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Logan, the Northern Gold Coast, Brisbane and Ipswich where we live and work.
We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who continue to contribute to the life, cultures, and stewardship of this region, and we honour their enduring connection to Country, community, and culture. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and that this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

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Who We Are

For more than 50 years, Karakan has been committed to supporting people living with mental health needs and psychosocial disabilities to lead fulfilling lives within their communities. Our work is grounded in the belief that every person has unique strengths and the capacity to thrive when provided with the right support. Guided by our principle, ***"YOU CAN. WE CAN."***, we continue to foster connection, belonging, and opportunities for people to achieve their own recovery goals.

The 2025–2026 financial year marks the commencement of our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, setting a clear direction for the years ahead. While our purpose remains unchanged, the plan reflects our ambition to strengthen our organisation, expand our impact, and ensure we continue responding to the changing needs of our community. Through continued investment in our people, systems, partnerships, and service quality, this year we continued to build on the strong foundations that will enable us to deliver high-quality, responsive services and create lasting outcomes for the people we support.

Recovery is a deeply personal journey, and we remain committed to delivering person-centred, recovery-oriented services that recognise lived experience, promote choice and self-determination, and support people to build the lives they want. We continue to embrace strengths-based practice across every aspect of our organisation, empowering individuals while fostering a culture of respect, collaboration, and continuous learning.

Looking ahead, we will continue to work alongside our communities to identify emerging needs, develop innovative and evidence-informed responses, and advocate for greater inclusion and equity. Together with our staff, participants, partners, and stakeholders, we remain dedicated to challenging stigma, reducing social isolation, and creating opportunities for everyone to live life better, together.

Live life better, together.

Recognition of lived experience

We acknowledge people with lived and living experience of mental health needs, trauma, adversity, systematic barriers and personal recovery, and their support networks. We recognise the strength and courage it takes to navigate systems, find meaning and foster resilience. We acknowledge the diverse experiences of people of all generations and cultures, each with the right to feel safe, secure, seen and supported. We stand together in our commitment to creating a future where every person feels valued, respected and treated as an equal.

We each share a responsibility to uphold this commitment.

Vision

An Australia where people with mental health needs are included and valued.

Mission

Helping people with mental health needs to build resilience and live life better, together.

Our values

Resilience

We focus on values and strength and strive to build a life of meaning and purpose.

Connection

We value authentic interactions, meaningful conversations, and the power of collaboration.

Inclusion

We seek to build an open, safe, and respectful environment and value diverse perspectives.

Our guiding principles

- We ensure our services are inclusive and accessible to all individuals
- We uphold, protect, and safeguard human rights
- We listen to the honest and real voice of our people and action change
- We are committed to achieving outcomes and impact guided by positive measurable actions
- We drive social innovation and challenge the norm
- We promote and support a culture of learning and development
- We are committed to continuous quality improvement
- We value lived experience and choices of people with mental health needs and psychosocial disabilities
- We aim to provide coordinated support across our services in a safe and effective manner
- We focus on recovery-oriented practices responsive to individual needs

Chair & CEO's Message

As we reflect on the 2025–2026 financial year, we do so with a deep sense of gratitude, pride and optimism. It has been a dynamic, challenging and rewarding year for Karakan. Together, we have strengthened our foundations, expanded our impact, and continued to evolve to meet the changing needs of our community, ensuring more people experiencing mental health needs can access the right recovery-oriented supports when they need them most.

Our mantra, ***YOU CAN. WE CAN.***, has continued to guide how we lead, partner and work alongside others to bridge system gaps and create opportunities for recovery, connection and hope.

This year has been one of thoughtful growth. We strengthened our organisational capacity and capability through the introduction of key leadership roles, including the Capability and Enablement Manager, People and Culture Business Partner, and Programs and Services Manager, ensuring we remain responsive, sustainable and focused on delivering high-quality services.

The continued growth of YouthKan reinforced the importance of accessible, youth-centred mental health and wellbeing supports in a residential setting. Integrating Occupational Therapy into our service model has enhanced assessment, wellbeing planning and therapeutic support for each young person, while building the capability of our Youth Wellbeing workforce to provide more holistic and person-centred care.

Participants in our EverGrow® program continued to achieve meaningful recovery and housing outcomes, supported by enhancements to the service and Lyston House acreage environment that strengthened therapeutic foundations and client experience. Our valued partnership with Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service has remained central to the success of this integrated rehabilitation service and the outcomes it continues to deliver.

Strengthening how we understand and measure impact has also been a priority. Through enhanced outcomes measurement and evaluation activities across EverGrow®, YouthKan and the Multicultural Youth and Families program, we are gaining deeper insight into client experiences and the impact our services are having. These learnings are and will continue to inform service improvement, evidence-based practice and future advocacy.

Holly Blattman - Chair

Cameron Thayer - CEO

Another highlight was the launch of the Wayfinders short film series, co-designed with a Youth Advisory Group. This important resource amplifies the voices and experiences of young people from multicultural communities while fostering understanding, connection and belonging.

In response to the need for community-based mental health services in the Ipswich region, we expanded our NDIS Supported Independent Living (SIL) services. We also proudly achieved National Standards for Mental Health Services accreditation, reinforcing our commitment to quality, accountability and continuous improvement.

Our commitment to advocacy has remained strong. Through Mental Illness Fellowship Australia and Queensland Alliance for Mental Health, we continued to champion greater investment in community mental health services. A particular highlight was addressing the Parliamentary Friends of Mental Health at Australian Parliament House, sharing client impact data and advocating for upstream investment in community mental health as a preventative and complementary pathway alongside tertiary care.

We also took important steps in strengthening lived experience leadership, establishing Karakan's Peer Workforce Framework and welcoming our first Lived Experience Board Director and Peer Recovery Worker. These milestones lay the foundation for a strong and sustainable peer workforce that will continue to shape the future of our organisation.

Another significant milestone was commencing the development of Karakan's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. We recognise that reconciliation is a continuous journey of listening, learning and building respectful relationships with First Nations peoples, and we are committed to walking that path with humility, curiosity and genuine partnership.

Karakan closed the year with a strong financial outcome, reflecting disciplined stewardship and providing a sustainable foundation for future growth. This positions us to continue investing in our people, services and innovation, ensuring we remain responsive to the needs of the communities we serve.

While we are proud of what has been achieved, these outcomes and developments are held by many people. They reflect the dedication of our workforce, the trust of the people who choose our services, the collaboration of our valued community partners, and the leadership of our Board.

We extend our sincere thanks to our Board of Directors for their vision, governance and unwavering commitment to Karakan's purpose. We warmly welcome Tony Stevenson and Michelle Wain onto the Board, and we look forward to the year ahead under the guidance of Tracey De Angelis as interim Board Chair.

As Chair and CEO, we want to acknowledge that this will be our last joint annual report, and to deeply and warmly thank all those who are part of the Karakan community for the support, guidance, and inspiration you have given us during our years of leadership. We step down knowing that Karakan is in the safest and best of hands.

To our leadership team and every member of the Karakan workforce, thank you. Your compassion, expertise and commitment continue to create opportunities for recovery, hope and belonging for people, families and communities every day. It is your dedication that brings our purpose to life.

As we look ahead, we do so with an invigorated sense of vision, purpose and ambition. The need for accessible, recovery-oriented mental health supports has never been greater, and neither has our determination to respond. Together, we will continue to strengthen our organisational foundations, foster our culture and connections, and challenge the status quo to create more opportunities for people to live hopeful, connected and meaningful lives.

You Can.
We Can.

Our Impact

A Snapshot Of Our Year

147,293 Total service hours | **245** Total staff | **4** Services | **14** Locations

Total number of clients

110 NDIS

21 EverGrow®

15 YouthKan

Breakdown of locations

5 NDIS SIL houses

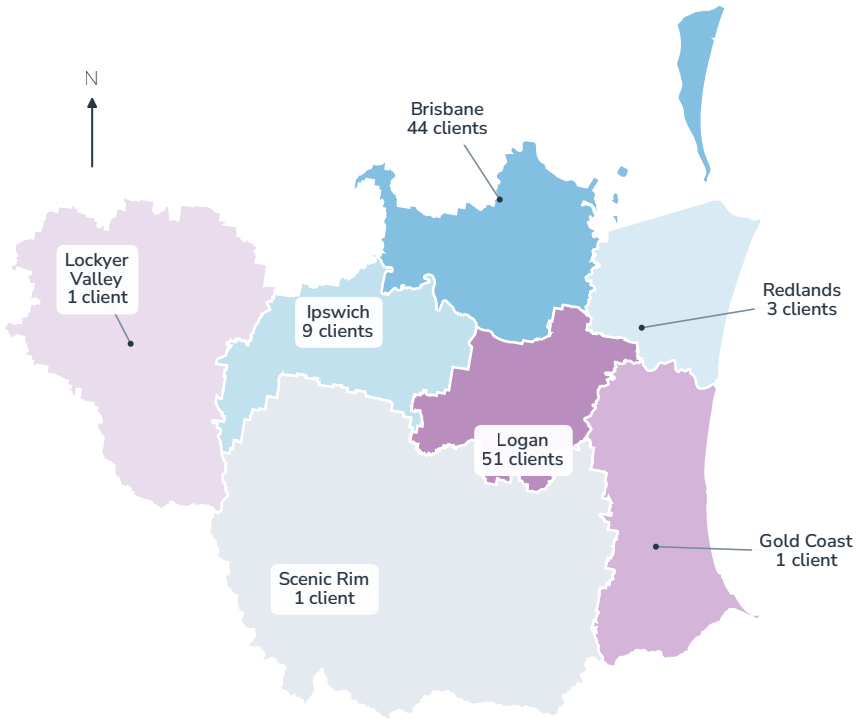
3 EverGrow® houses

6 YouthKan houses

Service hours by service

NDIS services	87,658
YouthKan	43,132
EverGrow®	10,397
Multicultural Youth and Families Navigator Service	6,106

NDIS Geographical Footprint



	CLIENTS	SHARE
Brisbane	44	40.00%
Gold Coast	1	0.91%
Ipswich	9	8.18%
Lockyer Valley	1	0.91%
Logan	51	46.36%
Redlands	3	2.73%
Scenic Rim	1	0.91%
Total	110	100%

In our 2025 Annual Client Survey, we asked clients about the impact of Karakan's services and supports in different areas of their lives.

65%
of people improved their mental health and wellbeing

58%
of people improved their overall health

63%
of people improved their sense of resilience

70%
of people improved their relationships and social connections

75%
of people improved their quality of life

69%
of people felt more hopeful and optimistic about their future

The experience of Karakan's services:

8.4/10
Overall satisfaction

97%
Supports meet my needs
agree or strongly agree

87%
Supports help me work towards my goals
agree or strongly agree

90%
Supports are culturally respectful
agree or strongly agree

89%
Supports are flexible
agree or strongly agree

92%
Staff value what I have to say
agree or strongly agree

90%
I feel safe to raise concerns with staff
agree or strongly agree

40
Net Promoter Score®

What's changed?

"Making friends and meeting other clients."

"Having somewhere safe to live."

"Greater access to community activities that suit my interests. Developed more self-worth, feeling valued and appreciated for who I am."

"Mixing with other clients and support workers has brought me out of my shell and has provided mental stimulation."

Strategic Plan

Our 2025-2028 Strategic Plan is rooted in our commitment to quality, person-centred, recovery-oriented services that elevate lived experience, strengthening Karakan's foundations while expanding our impact across communities. The 2025–2026 financial year marked the first year of the Strategic Plan and has been a period of significant activity and progress. We commenced several new initiatives and projects that will support Karakan's continued growth and development. As we move into the 2026–2027 financial year, our focus will shift towards completing, embedding and building on the work commenced in the first year of the Strategic Plan, ensuring these initiatives become firmly integrated into the way we deliver services and support our people and communities.

People & Culture

Objective: We have positive impact in peoples' lives by providing innovative, high quality and person-centred mental health supports and services.

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Status update
Enhance the knowledge and skills of our people and cultivate a learning culture to support delivery of evidence-informed, recovery-oriented services.	Ongoing	On track
Advance reconciliation through the **development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan**	2025–2027	On track
Develop and implement an organisational lived experience strategy and peer support framework to support staff wellbeing and value diversity of our people.	2025–2027	On track
Develop and implement people and culture strategy and framework to support Karakan workforce culture and development and ensure the safety and wellbeing of our people	2025–2028	On track

Impact & Reach

Objective: We have positive impact in peoples' lives by providing innovative, high quality and person-centred mental health supports and services

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Status update
Evidence-based recovery-oriented practice framework embedded across all services	Ongoing	On track
Develop strategic shared-value partnerships to strengthen continuity of support, service capacity, growth and impact	Ongoing	On track
Leverage and scale existing service models and infrastructure, including psychosocial housing, to grow and evolve services and optimise reach and impact in the community	Ongoing	On track
Service co-design with clients and stakeholders to support person-centred service experience and outcomes	2025–2026	Delayed
Outcomes and impact framework designed and implemented to drive and measure service quality, client experience and outcomes	2025–2027	On track
Increase recovery-oriented services tailored to young people with mental health needs	2025–2028	On track
Enhance services **targeted at Pasifika and Māori population**	2025–2028	On track

Leadership & Advocacy

Objective: We are a strong and effective sector representative that raises the profile and voice of people with mental health needs.

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Status update
Targeted community advocacy to support mental health and housing in Logan and other regions that we support	Ongoing	On track
Optimise opportunities for lived experience to inform advocacy and influence in support of community mental health needs	Ongoing	On track
Raise awareness and challenge stigma and discrimination and its impacts on people with mental health needs	Ongoing	On track

Performance & Sustainability

Objective: We strengthen operational capacity to support quality and optimise growth of key services to increase community reach and sustainability.

Key deliverable	Timeframe	Status update
Maintain financial stability through diversified funding streams	Ongoing	On track
Develop and implement IT Strategic Plan that drives fit for purpose technology investment and adoption, and ensures cyber safeguards are adaptive to emerging risks and threats.	2025–2027	Delayed
Enhance business improvement program to drive quality and efficiency of service, business processes and client experience	2025–2027	On track
Enhance compliance, safeguarding and accreditation processes and outcomes	2025–2028	On track
Focus on sustainable organic growth through expanding current service models	2025–2028	On track
Develop business intelligence capability to guide and inform business leadership, quality and accountability to drive continuous improvement	2026–2028	On track

What We Do

NDIS

A major highlight of the 2025–2026 financial year has been our expansion into Ipswich, with Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Community Access Supports (CAS) now being delivered to clients in the area. As part of this expansion, we welcomed a significant number of clients previously supported by Arafmi, working in partnership with them to ensure continuity of care while broadening Karakan's reach and strengthening our presence within the Ipswich community.

What our NDIS clients told us

We asked our NDIS clients about the most significant changes they have experienced since participating in our services. Here's what they had to say:

Greater confidence and self-worth

Feeling better about themselves, developing self-worth and becoming more confident in social situations.

Greater independence

Being able to do more things independently and having the confidence to get out and about on their own.

Increased participation in activities

Having greater access to community activities that match their interests, including walking, swimming, shopping and leisure activities.

Improved health and wellbeing

Feeling safer, less stressed and better supported to manage their health and wellbeing.

Stronger community connection

Getting out of the house, meeting new people, making friends and connecting with other clients and support workers.

Reliable and caring support

Having consistent, understanding and supportive workers who provide practical and emotional support when it's needed.

Reduced anxiety and stress

Having support to attend medical appointments, manage everyday tasks and stay connected with family, helping to reduce anxiety and stress.

Greater stability and independence at home

Receiving support with cooking, cleaning, shopping and maintaining their homes, while being able to live more independently.

> **"My team facilitator is fantastic as she always promptly gets my needs met and communicates with me."**
> – NDIS Client

> **"The staff are very understanding when I try to explain everything I am going through."**
> – NDIS Client

> **"Karakan is making a positive impact on people's lives."**
> – NDIS Client

We asked NDIS clients about the impact of Karakan's services and supports in different areas of their lives.

59% of people improved their mental health and wellbeing

55% of people improved their overall health

61% of people improved their sense of resilience

70% of people improved their relationships and social connections

73% of people improved their quality of life

65% of people felt more hopeful and optimistic about their future

We asked NDIS clients what has been the most significant change for them since participating in Karakan's services.

"Making friends and meeting other clients."

"Better outlook on life."

"Developed more self-worth, feeling valued and appreciated for who I am."

"Socialising and getting out in the community."

YouthKan

The YouthKan Integrated Therapeutic Wellbeing Residential Service is a trauma-informed, strengths-based program designed for young people aged 10–17 who are experiencing placement instability or high-risk care situations. The model integrates an Occupational Therapist who works alongside young people, team leaders, staff and their support networks to build capacity, strengthen resilience, and improve wellbeing and long-term outcomes.

YouthKan Redefined: Our Model of Care

In December 2025, Karakan identified a gap in how vulnerable young people in out-of-home care were being supported and set out to redefine what residential care could look like. YouthKan is the result – a therapeutic stepped care model built around safety, connection, and genuine progress. The service supports young people who are in crisis, at high risk of placement breakdown, or are being discharged from hospital with complex mental health needs.

Rather than a single intervention, YouthKan is a holistic wraparound model – safety, relationships, and skill-building working together to help young people stabilise, build capacity and move toward a sustainable future. Our approach rests on a simple belief: when young people feel safe, connected, and heard, healing becomes possible.

This year, YouthKan supported 15 young people across our residential program.

Our Approach

YouthKan is guided by seven principles:

- Collaborative care
- Healing and recovery
- A strengths-based approach
- Relationships and connection
- Participation and voice
- Cultural safety
- Empowerment and hope

In practice, this means prioritising safety and predictability, building genuine relationships, and celebrating what young people do well – not just managing risk.

A Three-Stage Journey

Young people move through YouthKan at a pace shaped by their own readiness:

01

STEP In

Crisis stabilisation

Immediate safety, trust-building, and structured routine.

02

STEP Down

Skill strengthening

Life skills, re-engagement with education, and growing independence.

03

STEP Forward

Placement sustainability

A supported transition to long-term, stable care.

Since introducing the stepped care model, the average length of stay for the STEP In stage has been 3 months. During this stage, we have seen 30% of young people re-engaging with education or training.

Wraparound Support

YouthKan integrates nine connected supports – assessment and planning, clinical and non-clinical mental health support, physical health, behavioural support, education, life skills, community integration, and cultural connection and identity. None of these operates in isolation: a shared meal can build a life skill and a relationship at once; a community outing can build belonging and identity together. This integration reflects our conviction that recovery happens through everyday life.

Looking Ahead

As YouthKan moves through its first full year of redefinition, our focus is on embedding the model with our first cohort of young people, strengthening partnerships across clinical, education, and cultural support networks, and growing a trauma-informed workforce equipped to deliver this model of care. We will continue refining the model in practice, building the evidence base that will guide its growth, and working to extend this approach to more young people who need a pathway from crisis to stability.

Growth in YouthKan

In April 2024, YouthKan began with two houses – a small but determined start to reimagining residential care for vulnerable young people. In the time since, that footprint has grown significantly: by June 2025, YouthKan was operating across six houses, extending our reach to more young people in crisis or at risk of placement breakdown.
This growth reflects more than an increase in beds. Each new house has meant building trauma-informed teams, strengthening partnerships with clinical, education, and cultural support networks, and embedding the stepped care model consistently across every home. It has meant learning from all the young people we care for and refining what genuine wraparound care looks like in practice.

As we look ahead, we see this growth as the beginning rather than the destination. There remains significant unmet need across the region for young people who require a different kind of residential care – one built on safety, relationships, and hope. We are excited by the opportunities ahead to extend the YouthKan model further, supporting more young people, in more communities, on their pathway from crisis to stability.

Embedding Occupational Therapy into YouthKan

Since October 2025, YouthKan has embedded a dedicated Occupational Therapist (OT) directly into the program as the Youth Wellbeing Lead. This has been a significant step in how we deliver integrated, clinical-grade support to young people in our care.

The reasoning was grounded in what trauma-informed practice teaches us: for many young people arriving at YouthKan, trauma isn't only emotional – it shapes sensory regulation, daily functioning, and the ability to engage with routine, school, or community life. Historically, addressing

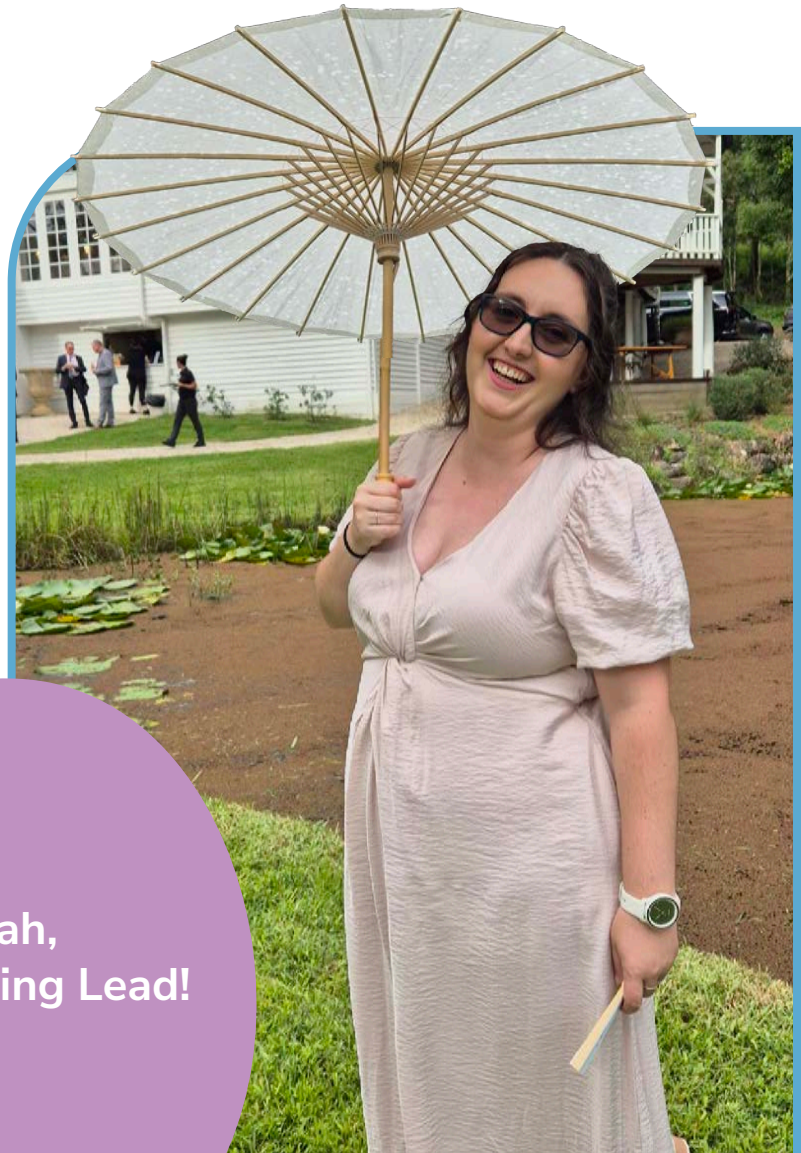
these needs has meant an external referral and a waitlist, creating a gap between when a need is identified and when support arrives. Embedding an OT closes that gap, allowing functional and sensory needs to be assessed and responded to as part of everyday practice from day one.

Practically, the OT works alongside frontline staff to assess sensory processing and functional capacity, build individualised strategies for emotional and sensory regulation, and support life skills, such as hygiene, routine, and independence. A key part of the role is translation: turning clinical insight into simple, consistent strategies that residential staff can apply in real time, so a young person experiences the same calm, co-regulated approach whether they're with a clinician or a Youth Wellbeing Worker at 7am. This also strengthens the feedback loop between clinical and non-clinical care. Staff already observe changes and contribute to individualised Wellbeing Plans as part of the model. Embedding an OT means those observations are met with faster clinical input, and clinical strategies can be tested and adjusted in real, everyday moments rather than in isolated sessions.

The benefits ripple across the whole model: earlier identification of need, more consistent regulation strategies in the home, a stronger bridge between clinical and everyday care, and a smoother, better-supported pathway through each stage of YouthKan. It reflects our broader commitment to treating the whole young person, not just the crisis.

How We Measure Impact

YouthKan tracks progress against eight outcomes within the Practice Framework: Emotional and Psychological Wellbeing, Secure and Healthy Relationships, Cultural Connection and Identity Development, Independence and Life Skills, Safety and Stability, Positive Behavioural and Social Outcomes, Continuous Growth and Self-Efficacy, and Community and Social Connectedness, spanning trauma recovery through to the skills and connections that support recovery. Each young person is rated against every outcome monthly on a scale of 1–5, giving a longitudinal picture of progress that informs both individual care planning and program-level reporting, and shows where YouthKan's trauma-informed, relationship-based model is having the greatest impact.



Meet Hannah, our Youth Wellbeing Lead!

Impact on YouthKan

The most positive results from a year of outcome tracking across YouthKan's Integrated Therapeutic Wellbeing Residential Service.

01

9 in 10

YOUNG PEOPLE IMPROVED

92% of young people showed measurable improvement in their outcomes over the year — evidence the model is working for the vast majority of those in our care.

02

+29% AVERAGE SCORE LIFT

Average outcome score rose 29%, climbing from 2.43 to 3.13 out of 5 across all eight wellbeing domains.

03

+50% SELF-EFFICACY SCORES SOARED

Continuous Growth & Self-Efficacy scores jumped 50% as young people built confidence, set goals, and stepped into leadership.

04

83% FELT MORE CONNECTED

83% improved in Community & Social Connectedness, reflecting deeper participation in cultural events, mentorship, and belonging.

05

+61% SAFETY SCORES SURGED

Safety and Stability scores climbed 61% as young peoplere ported feeling significantly safer and more settledby year's end.

06

75% BEHAVIOUR & SOCIAL GAINS

75% improved in Positive Behavioural & Social Outcomes — scores up 31% — as young people built self-awareness, teamwork, and conflict-management skills.

07

75% STRONGER SENSE OF IDENTITY

75% improved in Cultural Connection & Identity Development — scores up 31% — supporting stronger, more secure identity formation.

08

31% A FULL YEAR OF CARE

4 of our 13 young people were supported with a full 12 months of continuous engagement, giving the program its clearest picture yet of long-term impact.

09

+49% MOMENTUM BUILT ALL YEAR

Outcome scores climbed 49% from September's low to June's year-high, rising in 9 of the final 10months tracked — representing sustained, compounding progress rather than a one-off gain.

EverGrow®

EverGrow®, Karakan's Transitional Living and Support Service, is a service operating in partnership with Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service that aims to work with and empower people to improve their mental health and wellbeing, quality of life, and long-term housing stability.

EverGrow® provides two support pathways:

- Support & Sustain (community-based case management support in people's own homes)
- Transitional Living Pathway, which supports clients through STEP In, STEP Down and STEP Forward (residential support)

EverGrow® supported a total of 21 residents during the 2025-2026 financial year.

Program Phase	Number of Residents
Support & Sustain	3
STEP In	3
STEP Down	3
STEP Forward	3
Transitioned out of the service	9
Total number of clients supported since July 2025	**21**

Throughout the 2025–2026 financial year, EverGrow® has continued to grow in ways that extend beyond the formal support program. Residents, staff and our partners have been working together to create an environment where people can connect, learn new skills, contribute to their community and take pride in the spaces they share.

One of the highlights has been the continued development of the EverGrow® vegetable garden at Lyston House. What began as an idea for creating a more purposeful outdoor space has developed into something residents can actively contribute to and enjoy. Residents have been involved in planting, caring for and harvesting produce, with vegetables and herbs being incorporated into our regular weekly cook-ups.

This has created a wonderful connection between growing, cooking and sharing food, while providing opportunities to develop practical skills, build confidence and experience the satisfaction of seeing something grow from the garden to the table.

The therapeutic garden continues to evolve, with residents and team members contributing ideas and helping shape how the outdoor spaces can be used. Looking ahead, we are exploring further nature-based spaces, including a First Nations sensory space and a Zen garden, creating additional opportunities for quiet reflection, sensory regulation, connection with nature and Country, and purposeful outdoor activity.

Physical activity and recreation have become an increasingly important part of the weekly program. Boxing and other physical exercises, along with group sports and recreation, provide residents with opportunities to build routine, social connection, confidence and healthy ways of managing stress whilst supporting mental wellbeing.

Our focus on health and wellbeing has also expanded through collaboration with Queensland Health. Residents have participated in the Healthy Me Program, alongside receiving support from a dietitian and physiotherapist. These opportunities complement the educational, physical and recreational activities and supports residents receive to develop healthier routines and greater confidence in managing their health and wellbeing.

Based on resident feedback, the program commenced hosting a monthly barbecue and open day where people who are interested in the program can come along to experience what it's all about. Former residents who have successfully transitioned to living independently in the community also connect back in and regularly attend these monthly barbecues as valued members of the EverGrow® community.

Throughout the year, the team has been supported to strengthen their knowledge and skills. Five staff members completed Queensland Health sensory approaches training, supporting the team to better understand sensory needs and incorporate practical regulation strategies into everyday support. This learning has contributed to the development of a dedicated sensory resource box, giving residents access to a range of practical tools and activities that can support regulation, comfort and wellbeing.

Together, these developments reflect the continued evolution of EverGrow®, a program where residents are not simply supported to participate, but are encouraged to contribute, create, learn and shape the environment around them. From growing vegetables and cooking together, to developing outdoor spaces, learning new skills, participating in healthy activities and coming together as a community, EverGrow® continues to grow alongside the people who call it home.

As we reflect on the first year of the program, we are proud of what has been achieved. We are grateful to our workforce, to Metro South Health as our service partner, and clients who have shaped the model. We look forward to working alongside clients, staff, our partners and funders to build on this strong foundation and expand impact into the future.

EverGrow® One Year Program Evaluation Highlights

As part of our commitment to quality and impact measurement, we undertook a 12-month program evaluation in early 2026. This outcomes-focussed evaluation revealed that when people have stable housing and an integrated, recovery-focused support team around them, meaningful change is possible.

The evaluation found that, for people who completed all three stepped stages of the program:

100% were living independently in the community

100% successfully exited tertiary mental health care

66% were employed

2 people commenced further studies

2 people started volunteering in the community

These outcomes are all positive indicators of stability, community participation and social connection. Overall, the evaluation revealed that all five program outcomes are being achieved. People in the program experienced:

- Reduced hospitalisations and exit from tertiary mental health care
- Improved mental health and physical health
- Stabilised housing and tenancy
- Sustained engagement with critical support networks
- Sustained community participation

Recovery Star Data reveals improvements across all outcome areas for residents.

What is the Recovery Star?

The Recovery Star is a validated, person-centred outcome measurement tool widely used in mental health and community services. It supports individuals to reflect on their own wellbeing and progress across key areas of life, placing the person at the centre of their own recovery journey. The Recovery Star captures what matters most to people – from managing mental health and finding meaningful activity, to building relationships and feeling safe at home.

A key strength of the Recovery Star is its ability to track distance travelled. This is the change in a person's self-rated score over time across each outcome domain. A positive distance travelled across different areas indicates that people are feeling more confident, more connected, and more in control of their lives and wellbeing.

We are proud to share that in the 12-month program evaluation, residents showed positive improvements across all life domains measured by the Recovery Star. This is a powerful reflection of the growth, resilience and change experienced by people as they journey through the program and a testament to the dedication of our team and the courage of every person who chose to invest in their own journey of change.

Life Domain	Average Improvement in Distance Travelled
Managing Mental Health	+1.6
Physical Health	+3.33
Home	+2.5
Living Skills	+2.43
Relationships	+2.25

Life Domain	Average Improvement in Distance Travelled
Friends & Community	+3.8
Use of Time	+3.8
Addictive Behaviour	+2.2
Identity and Self Esteem	+2.8
Trust and Hope	+3.67

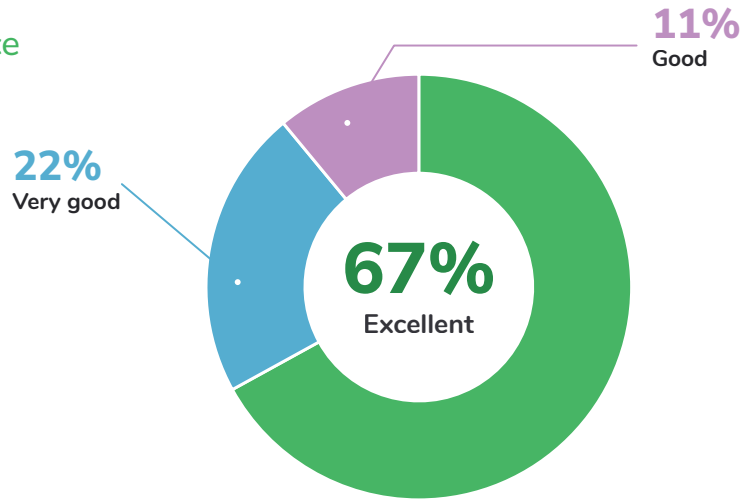
"Everything has changed – my lifestyle and my future outlook. Remarkable support from the team." - Anonymous client

"The support was natural, safe and secure. Staff weren't robots – they were people who really understood and cared. That made all the difference." - PK (client)

As part of the program evaluation, we also asked people about the most significant change they have experienced after being part of the EverGrow® program. Here's what they shared:

Area of most significant change	% of people who selected this area of change
Exercise and healthy lifestyle	18%
Independent living	18%
Hope for the future	18%
Self-harm and suicide	18%
Mental health and wellbeing	18%
Participating in community life	9%

Overall client experience



What's driving success?

The program evaluation revealed several drivers of success that consistently underpin positive outcomes in the EverGrow® program. These include:

- A values-aligned community-clinical partnership with Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service, with shared care and strong clinical governance
- Integrated community-clinical practice, where psychosocial and clinical supports work as one recovery-focused team
- A recovery-oriented environment, including stabilising and therapeutic benefits of the rural/acreage setting, routine, and meaningful activity
- Stable housing as the platform for recovery and transition readiness
- A skilled workforce and lived-experience-informed practice that strengthens trust, engagement and follow-through
- Cross-system collaboration to reduce barriers and support transitions as people step through the stages of the program and then exit the program into independent living in the community.

Workforce Highlight

This year marked a significant milestone in the evolution of the EverGrow® program with the introduction of our first Peer Recovery Worker role in April 2026. This addition to the EverGrow® multidisciplinary team — which includes Recovery Workers, Case Managers, an Occupational Therapist, Community Link Workers and a Service Coordinator — represents a meaningful step forward in how we think about and deliver holistic, person-centred support.

The Peer Recovery Worker brings lived experience expertise of mental health recovery to the team. This firsthand understanding enables a distinctive and deeply human connection with the people we support, walking alongside residents as they work towards their own recovery goals in a way that complements the clinical and non-clinical supports already available within the team.

The introduction of this role reflects Karakan's commitment to embedding lived experience at the heart of our services. Peer support is increasingly recognised as a critical component of effective psychosocial support models, and we are proud to be growing this capability within the EverGrow® program.

As we continue to refine and develop the program, the lived experience voice and insight that this role contributes will play an important role in shaping how we support clients and drive continuous improvement across the program.

Carl's Journey

Carl entered EverGrow® seeking stability after experiencing housing instability and ongoing mental health challenges. With support from the program, he built routine, increased his independence, and grew in confidence by stepping outside his comfort zone.

During his journey, Carl achieved significant personal milestones, including securing stable housing and purchasing a vehicle. Today, he is living independently, looking forward to the future, and remains connected to the EverGrow® community.

"Before I came to EverGrow®, I felt stuck and unsure about my future. The support, encouragement, and sense of community helped me build stability and confidence in myself. I'm very grateful for the role EverGrow® has played in my journey. Now I feel more in control of my life, proud of how far I've come, and motivated about what's ahead." - Carl

Multicultural Youth & Families Navigator Service

Our Multicultural Youth & Families Navigator Service (MYFNS) exists to work with community to enhance accessibility, inclusion, and participation of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and First Nations (FN) young people, their families and carers.

We work with young people, their families, carers, and community members to:

- Facilitate engagement with local community organisations
- Connect and work with young people, their families and carers to support mental health and wellbeing
- Facilitate groups and activities to understand the key issues, barriers and service gaps people are experiencing in their community
- Develop resources to support social and community participation for young people, their families and carers.

During the 2025-2026 financial year, MYFNS strengthened Karakan's connection with multicultural young people, families and communities across Logan, Ipswich, Brisbane, and the Northern Gold Coast.

The program is grounded in relationships, cultural connection, and community voice. Through events, workshops, consultations, surveys, referrals, school engagement, stakeholder partnerships and community conversations, MYFNS creates spaces where young people and families are seen, heard and connected to relevant supports.

Across the year, MYFNS delivered and progressed:

- Wayfinders short film series
- Wayfinders Premiere event
- Pacific Islander and Māori Engagement Framework
- Youth Advisory Group activities
- Youth surveys and consultation tools
- Youth-led digital and storytelling activities
- Youth and family workshops
- Cultural engagement activities
- Cultural workshops and resources
- Stakeholder consultations and interagency presentations
- Community event stalls and promotional resources
- Partnership development across Logan and Brisbane

Community Impact

2,379
Young people engaged

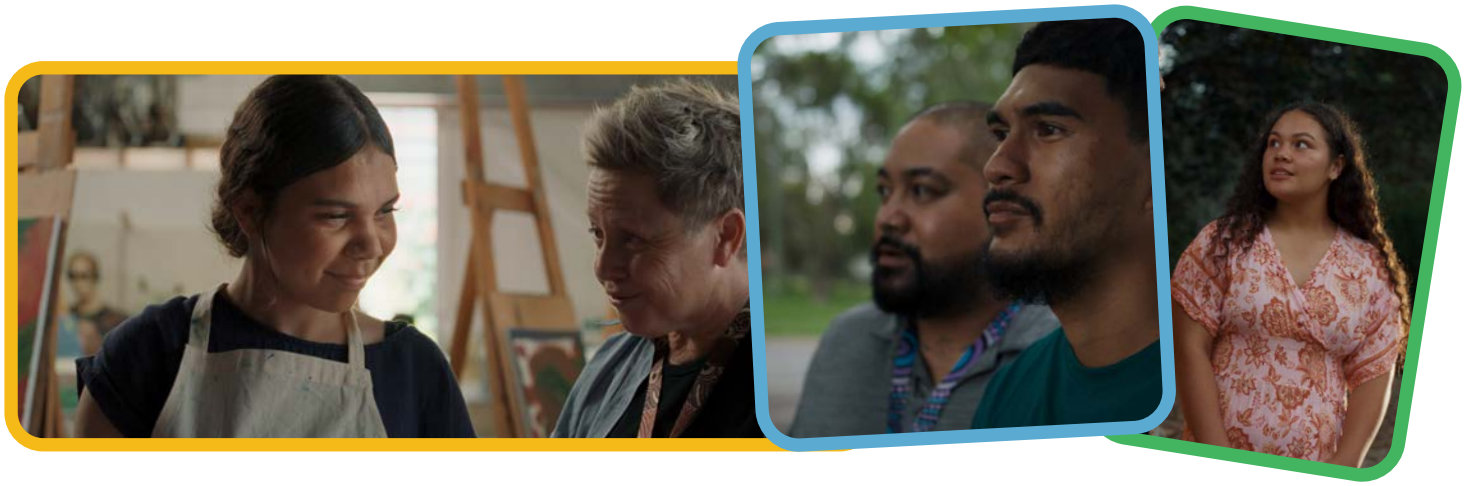
974
Family members engaged

189
In-service meetings that have been delivered to community stakeholders

458
Information sessions, workshops and events that have been delivered

One of the biggest achievements for the MYFNS program was the launch of the Wayfinders short film series, a youth-informed storytelling resource celebrating identity, culture, belonging and help-seeking. Wayfinders brought together young people, families, community, cultural leaders and stakeholders to celebrate identity, belonging, culture and help-seeking through storytelling.

While the three Wayfinders short films reflect First Nations, Māori and Pacific Islander young people, the broader themes of identity, belonging and connection resonated across communities. The project reinforced that creating safe spaces for young people starts with listening, building trust and recognising the cultural and personal experiences they carry.



Wayfinders now provides Karakan, partner organisations and community with a practical tool to support conversations with young people, families, schools and services. It helps open discussions around wellbeing, help seeking, service navigation, and the importance of young people feeling seen, heard and connected.

During the year, the MYFNS team also proudly supported the development of eight other youth-led and youth-informed resources, creating opportunities for young people to shape resources, share their stories, and lead conversations important to their communities. This included youth surveys, the Youth Advisory Workshop Group, youth-led resource workshops, digital and storytelling activities, partner youth projects, Wayfinders co-design resources and Karakan's Pacific Islander and Māori Engagement Framework workshops.

Together, these initiatives celebrate youth voice, cultural leadership and community-led design.

Watch Wayfinders Now

MYFNS Independent Program Evaluation

This year, we also partnered with Enable Health Consulting to undertake an evaluation of the Multicultural Youth & Families Navigator Service. Through this work, we have been able to understand the impact the program is having with young people, their family members and carers, and with our valued community partners and stakeholders.

The evaluation found that over the last two years, the MYFNS team has engaged 2,954 young people, 1,225 families and 297 unique community service stakeholders. This engagement and community development work has enabled the team to build trusted, place-based relationships and co-design nine resources, including the Wayfinder short film series, grounded in what young people told us they needed.

2,954

Young people engaged via surveys, workshops and advisory groups

1,225

Families engaged via workshops and direct service navigation support

297

Unique community service stakeholders engaged across four regions

9

Collaboratively designed resources, including the Wayfinder short film series, podcast series, StreamLab program

The evaluation identified three key areas of impact:

- Empowerment of young people — 100% of the Youth Advisory Group felt empowered to share their stories and more confident to lead and use their voice
- More connected communities — stakeholders felt less siloed, more culturally capable and better equipped to support young people and families
- Organisational growth for Karakan — through this work we have deepened community trust, increased visibility and supported the development of a Pacific Islander and Māori Engagement Framework to guide our work going forward.

We are proud of what the MYFNS team has achieved. They have provided a culturally grounded model of community navigation that elevates youth voice, strengthens relationships and positions Karakan as a trusted partner in community-led wellbeing work.

"I loved knowing I have a voice." – Young Person

"Karakan have been a saving grace and the glue in the region." – Community Service Stakeholder

"It was good to be able to voice my opinions and to have them be considered as part of this thing that will go on to help other young people." – Youth Advisory Group member

"[The MYFNS team] continuously adjust to meet the needs and the gaps within the community based on what they are saying, not based on what government is saying." – Community Service Stakeholder

Meet Cheroche Uiese

Finding her place and her voice

Moving from New Zealand to Australia meant more than finding a new home for Cheroche Uiese. As a young Māori and Pasifika woman without her usual family support system around her, she had to navigate different cultural expectations, challenges finding employment and the uncertainty of building a life in a new community.

At times, the distance from family and familiar ways of life felt heavy. Cheroche leaned on her faith for strength while facing mental health challenges that many young people experience as they search for connection and belonging.

Joining Karakan's Youth Advisory Group became an important turning point. It offered a welcoming, family-oriented space where Cheroche's culture was valued, her experiences mattered and she could connect with young people finding their own way.

"The project that was set up gave a sense of purpose," Cheroche said. *"It also made us feel included and that we were able to be a voice by sharing our ideas and experiences."*

As her confidence grew, Cheroche began using those experiences to speak alongside others. She contributed to community events and the Logan Youth Network, presented the group's work at Karakan's Annual General Meeting, and helped shape Wayfinders - a youth-led film series grounded in the real lives of young people. She was also invited to contribute her perspective through a West Moreton youth advisory initiative.

Cheroche is now making her mark in the place she calls home. Her journey shows how faith, cultural connection and being genuinely heard can help a young person recognise their strengths and use them to create hope for others who may be struggling to find their place.

Our People

Our Workforce Lived Experience and Diversity Snapshot

79%

of staff identified as having some form of lived experience of mental health needs (personal, family/carer, or both)

- **More than 15** cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Representation across six age cohorts
- Gender-diverse workforce, including non-binary staff
- LGBTQIA+ representation within the workforce
- High levels of multicultural, Māori, Pacific Islander and First Nations representation relative to many community-sector organisations

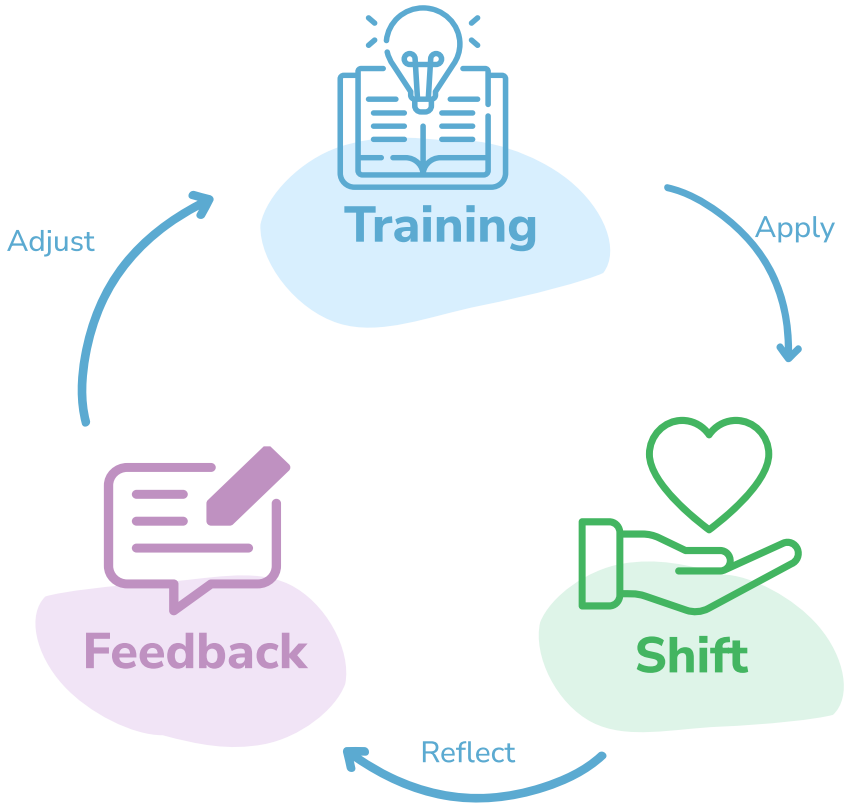
Investing in Our People: A Year of Growth at Karakan

A major focus for Karakan throughout the 2025–2026 financial year has been strengthening the skills, knowledge and capability of our people. Through a range of training, professional development and learning opportunities, we have continued to build a culture where staff are supported to grow, develop their skills and deliver high-quality support to the people we work with.

Karakan Academy

Our nine-module Karakan Academy provides staff with a comprehensive range of training, with weekly sessions designed around real-world scenarios and the needs of our workforce. During the year, 171 employees participated in Academy training, with some staff progressing through the full program.

We have also continued to expand the Academy, developing new modules focused on attachment and connection to community to further strengthen staff knowledge and capability.



YouthKan

As part of our commitment to building a skilled and confident YouthKan workforce that can provide support aligned with the YouthKan Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing Practice Framework, we refreshed and strengthened our capability framework that underpins this service. This has resulted in 12 staff completing our first Youth Mental Health First Aid course during the year. New Youth Wellbeing Workers also receive a comprehensive onboarding program to ensure they are well prepared to support young people. This includes two days of training, a buddy shift and four days of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) training.

To support ongoing capability and confidence building, all YouthKan staff are also invited to complete six-monthly TCI refresher training, ensuring their skills remain current and responsive to the needs of the young people we support.

Leadership Training

Strengthening leadership capability has also been a key focus throughout the year. We adapted the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health's e-learning leadership training into a tailored, face-to-face leadership development program for Karakan staff.

The program provides leaders with practical opportunities to build their skills, share experiences and apply their learning directly within the workplace, supporting stronger leadership across the organisation.

Learning Management System

Our Learning Management System (LMS) was launched in March 2026, providing staff with easy access to a broad range of industry-specific e-learning and training resources.

Engagement has continued to grow strongly, with more than 80% of staff engaging with the LMS within its first three months, increasing to 96.9% six months after launch. The LMS provides Karakan staff with flexible access to learning and development opportunities at their fingertips.

INSIGHTS

90.9%
Participation

96.9%
Engagement

93.6%
Progress

92.1%
Completion Rate

NDIS Workshops

As part of our commitment to delivering safe and high-quality supports, we continued to provide three NDIS workshops each year for every NDIS staff member.

The workshops focus on compliance, quality and safe practice, with staff wellbeing incorporated throughout. This ongoing training helps ensure our teams have the knowledge and confidence to provide consistent, high-quality support while maintaining strong standards of safety and compliance.

Professional Qualifications

We continued to support staff to pursue formal qualifications and further develop their professional skills. During the year, 13 staff graduated with a Certificate IV in Mental Health, with a further 12 staff commencing the qualification through our Registered Training Organisation partnership with DaV'ange Training.

We thank DaV'ange for their ongoing partnership and commitment to delivering quality training that supports the continued professional development of our staff.

Learning Loops

This year, we also introduced Learning Loops to provide a more responsive approach to staff development.

When a service identifies an emerging training need, Learning Loops enables us to quickly develop short, practical micro-learning that directly addresses the issue. This approach allows staff to apply new knowledge immediately within their working environment, supporting continuous learning and improvement across our services.

Peer workforce development

During the 2025-2026 financial year, Karakan reached a significant milestone in strengthening our commitment to recovery-oriented practice through the development of our Peer Workforce. Over the past year, we completed the first phase of our Peer Workforce Development Project, working alongside consultant Donna Didlick and our Peer Workforce Project Management Group to establish the foundations for embedding lived experience expertise across the organisation. This included the development and launch of our Peer Workforce Framework and Peer Workforce Policy, providing a clear vision and practical guidance for the safe, consistent and sustainable integration of peer worker roles.

The launch of the framework reflects our belief that lived experience is a valuable form of expertise that strengthens the quality of support we provide. Peer Workers use their own experiences of mental health, recovery and service use, together with specialised peer practice skills, to foster hope, connection and empowerment for the people we support.

This year also marked the introduction of Karakan's first designated Peer Worker roles within the EverGrow® program, representing an important step in embedding lived experience across our services. As we continue to build our Peer Workforce, we remain committed to expanding peer roles throughout the organisation and ensuring lived experience perspectives are central to the way we deliver recovery-focused, person-centred support.

The full Peer Workforce Framework can be viewed and downloaded using the QR code.

Find out more

Anonymous Staff Quotes

"I've really enjoyed working at Karakan, especially with the workers I've been on shift with. It's been easy getting through shifts because of their experience and support. I also enjoy being at Karakan because of the support we receive from our leaders and the office staff. They're professional and approachable, and overall it's been a really positive experience."

"I love working at Karakan because it's a supportive, values-driven environment where people genuinely care about each other and the community. The work feels meaningful, collaboration is encouraged, and I feel respected."

"It's rewarding to help others, especially those struggling with daily life. Working with a caring leadership team experienced in the field is both reassuring and encouraging. Seeing clients succeeding and coping better is inspiring and motivating despite the inevitable lows. I'm grateful for co-workers who are committed to these principles and are so respectful and aware of others needs and feelings."

Key findings from 2025 Annual Staff Survey

We know that meaningful progress starts with open and authentic feedback. Our 2025 Staff Engagement and Feedback Survey provided valuable perspectives on our strengths and highlighted opportunities for improvement. Here's how our workforce rated their experience, using a 5-point scale:

Workforce experience

How our workforce rated their experience on a 5-point scale

4.5 / 5
Feel aligned with our values of inclusion, connection & resilience

4.18 / 5
Are satisfied with their job

4.08 / 5
Feel their skills & experience are used in a meaningful way

4.04 / 5
Feel valued for the work they do

Our staff survey also highlighted several key strengths that continue to shape Karakan as a positive and purpose-driven workplace.

- **Staff are motivated by purpose** — making a difference in the lives of our clients continues to be the biggest reason people love working at Karakan
- **Our culture is a strength** — our workforce describes Karakan as supportive, inclusive and team-focused
- **Staff feel aligned to our values** — connection, inclusion and resilience continue to guide how we work
- **Flexibility and development matter** — work-life balance and opportunities to learn are highly valued
- **Our diversity and lived experience are strengths** — these are core to who we are and how we support our communities

Feedback from our staff survey has also helped identify priority areas for continued improvement.

Over the coming year, we will focus on strengthening leadership capability to ensure all teams receive consistent support, enhancing communication and follow-through so staff feel heard and well informed, and improving workforce planning and rostering to create a more positive day-to-day experience. We are also committed to building clear career pathways, including opportunities in leadership and lived experience roles, while continuing to foster an inclusive and connected organisational culture as Karakan grows. Recognising the importance of supporting our people, we will also enhance staff recognition initiatives and wellbeing supports across the organisation.

Our Community

R.I.S.E Walk

In September 2025, we proudly hosted the R.I.S.E. Walk, a community wellbeing event celebrating Resilience, Identity, Strength and Empowerment as part of Queensland Mental Health Week. Held at Springfield Lakes, the family-friendly event brought people of all ages together for a 2.7km community walk, followed by inclusive movement activities including Zumba, yoga, functional fitness and mindful breathing.

Participants also enjoyed the opportunity to connect with others in a welcoming and supportive environment. The event highlighted the importance of movement, connection and community in supporting mental wellbeing, and it was inspiring to see people coming together in a shared commitment to health and inclusion.

We thank everyone who participated and acknowledge our valued partners for helping make the event such a meaningful success.

Queensland Mental Health Week

As part of Queensland Mental Health Week, Karakan proudly hosted Home Is Where the Heart Is: Connect With Mental Health, a community event highlighting the important connection between mental health and housing. Bringing together community members, service providers, government representatives and people with lived experience, the event provided an opportunity to raise awareness, foster meaningful conversations, and strengthen the support networks that contribute to positive mental wellbeing.

We gratefully acknowledge the Queensland Mental Health Commission for their generous sponsorship and ongoing support. We also thank Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic for his inspiring address, along with guest speakers Michelle Debert and Summer Coco, who shared their personal insights and experiences of mental health and homelessness.

Schizophrenia Awareness Week

In May 2026, during Schizophrenia Awareness Week, Karakan hosted Belonging Begins With Us, a community event focused on raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting inclusion for people with lived and living experiences of schizophrenia and other mental health needs. The day brought together community members, sector partners and government representatives in a shared commitment to fostering understanding, connection and belonging.

We sincerely thank the Queensland Mental Health Commission for sponsoring the event and Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic for joining us and speaking on the day. We also acknowledge and thank Corrine McMillan MP and Kara Cook MP for their attendance and support, which helped make the event a meaningful celebration of community, advocacy and hope.

Queensland
Mental Health Commission

A valued sponsor of our Queensland Mental Health Week and Schizophrenia Awareness Week events

Karakan Community Events and BBQs

Throughout the year, Karakan hosted a range of community events and barbecues that brought together clients, families, staff and local organisations to celebrate, connect and strengthen relationships. These gatherings provided opportunities to showcase our services, recognise important community initiatives, and create welcoming spaces where people could share food, participate in activities, and enjoy time together. Whether through games, shared meals or moments of spontaneous fun, these events fostered meaningful connections, encouraged a sense of belonging, and reinforced the importance of community in supporting positive wellbeing and stronger outcomes for those we walk alongside.

Our Advocacy

During the 2025–2026 financial year, Karakan was proud to collaborate with a range of advocacy networks and organisations united by a shared commitment to amplifying the voices of people with lived and living experience of mental health needs and strengthening the case for community-led mental health services. Across these networks, we added our voice to important conversations spanning cultural mental health, housing and homelessness solutions, and mental health research, each representing a critical piece of the broader puzzle of mental health and wellbeing in our local communities.

It is a privilege to sit alongside others who share our passion for community-led approaches and to contribute to local advocacy efforts that place the needs, experiences and wisdom of our communities at the centre. We believe that the strongest solutions are those shaped by the people and communities they are designed to serve and our involvement in these networks reflects our ongoing commitment to being an active and engaged voice for the people and communities we support.

During the year, some of the local networks we contributed to included:

- Logan Homelessness & Housing Strategy Network
- Zero Hospital Discharges into Homelessness Network
- Logan Pasifika & Māori Interagency Network
- Brisbane South PHN Pasifika and Māori Health and Wellbeing Strategy Governance Group
- Logan Youth Network
- Co-design and Research Translation Alliance in Mental Health (CoRTA-MH)
- Queensland Lived Experience Workforce Network (QLEWN)
- Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS) Research and Evaluation Network.

Advocacy highlights

Queensland Alliance for Mental Health Board Appointment

During the 2025-2026 financial year, Karakan CEO Cameron Thayer was appointed to the Board of the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH), further strengthening Karakan's contribution to sector leadership and advocacy across Queensland.

This appointment provides an important opportunity to bring both professional expertise and lived experience to statewide discussions on mental health reform, supporting collaborative advocacy to improve mental health and wellbeing outcomes for Queensland communities. It also aligns with Karakan's commitment to influencing systemic change, challenging the status quo, and contributing to the development of responsive, community-led mental health services.

Through this role, Cameron will help guide the implementation of QAMH's strategic priorities while advocating for a stronger community mental health sector and service systems that better reflect the needs and aspirations of the people and communities they serve.

Brisbane South PHN Pasifika and Māori Health and Wellbeing Strategy Governance Group Appointment

In 2026, Ponga Pompey, Karakan's Multicultural Community Engagement Officer, was appointed as a member of the Brisbane South PHN Pasifika and Māori Health and Wellbeing Strategy Governance Group. Through this governance role, Ponga contributes community-informed perspectives to support the ongoing implementation and development of the PHN's Pasifika and Māori Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Drawing on his experience working alongside Māori, Pacific Islander and multicultural young people, families and communities, he contributes to strategic discussions on community engagement, prevention, workforce development, culturally responsive practice and health equity, helping ensure community voices are reflected in planning and initiatives that improve outcomes for Māori and Pacific Islander communities.

Karakan joins Co-design and Research Translation Alliance in Mental Health

This year, Karakan became a proud member of the Co-design and Research Translation Alliance in Mental Health (CoRTA-MH). This is a place-based consortium facilitated by Psychosis Australia that brings together service providers, Primary Health Networks, peak advocacy bodies, researchers and people with lived experience to drive the translation of research into policy and practice.

Central to CoRTA-MH is lived experience leadership, ensuring that research remains grounded in and responsive to the real needs of communities. Our involvement in this alliance reflects our commitment to strengthening the evidence base for person-led, recovery-oriented practice, helping to ensure that funded supports and services are informed by high-quality research on what leads to the best outcomes for people.

Through our membership, we look forward to contributing our perspective and strengths as a trusted community mental health service provider, and to playing an active role in driving evidence-informed innovation and meaningful reform across the mental health and wellbeing sector.

Mental Health Advocacy in Canberra

In March 2026, Karakan CEO Cameron Thayer and Innovation & Impact Manager Hayley Abell attended the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia's Parliamentary Friends of Mental Health event in Canberra, providing an opportunity to share Karakan's experience and advocate for the importance of lived experience-informed service design.

Cameron delivered a powerful address highlighting the transformative impact of developing services in partnership with people with lived experience to respond to identified gaps in the community. The event provided an important opportunity to engage directly with Parliamentarians and reinforce the role that lived experience can play in shaping more responsive services, stronger policy and better outcomes. By bringing community perspectives and real-world experience into these conversations, Karakan continues to advocate for a mental health system that is grounded in the needs and experiences of the people we support.

Our Partnerships

Building New Partnerships for Greater Community Impact

This year marked an exciting milestone in Karakan's growth as a community-led organisation, with the signing of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with two youth-focused organisations – REKON Youth Foundation and leVOYCE Youth Services. These partnerships reflect our deep commitment to working alongside established service providers who share our values and our belief in the power of community-led solutions. By joining forces with organisations that are already trusted and embedded within the communities they serve, we are able to enhance our reach and deepen our collective impact, ensuring that more young people can access the right support, at the right time, in ways that are meaningful and culturally responsive.

Our partnership with REKON Youth Foundation marks an exciting collaboration in Logan, built on a shared vision of creating meaningful opportunities and improving outcomes for young people. A key focus of the partnership is supporting the development of StreamLab, REKON's innovative initiative that empowers young people to share their stories through creative media, including video, film and podcasts. Together, we will also explore opportunities to strengthen support for Pacific Islander and Māori young people, fostering cultural identity, creative expression and positive pathways through community-led initiatives.

"By working together, Karakan and REKON are helping young people feel supported, valued and hopeful about their future."
- Rolando Pisia - Rekon Youth Foundation Director - Logan Wilbur Street Youth Centre Manager

Karakan also formalised a partnership with leVOYCE Youth Service, reflecting our shared commitment to supporting young people and families through culturally grounded, strengths-based approaches. The partnership was established following opportunities to connect and learn from leVOYCE's work, highlighting the importance of leadership, mentorship, cultural responsiveness and community connection. Through this MOU, Karakan and leVOYCE are committed to creating safe, inclusive environments where young people feel seen, heard and connected to the supports they need to thrive.

"LE VOYCE and Karakan – connecting culture, creating opportunity, and building stronger communities together."
- Papali'itele La'a Uitime - Director leVOYCE Multicultural Communities

Strengthening our partnership with Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service

We are proud to recognise and celebrate our partnership with Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service (MSAMHS) in the delivery of the EverGrow® program. Over the past financial year, we have made significant strides in deepening our collaboration, embedding a truly integrated way of working that supports a holistic service response in the community. The program continues to be expertly stewarded by the EverGrow® Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from both Karakan and MSAMHS, ensuring we uphold strong governance, drive service innovation, and draw on the complementary strengths that each organisation brings from within the non-clinical and clinical mental health service ecosystem.

We extend our sincere gratitude to MSAMHS for their unwavering support and commitment to this partnership. Together, we are proud to deliver a service that is community-led and clinically supported. We look forward to continuing to grow this partnership and the positive impact it has on the people we serve.

Continuing to Amplify Our Voice Through Key Sector Partnerships

Alongside our new partnerships, Karakan continued to work closely with several key sector partners throughout the year, including:

- Mental Illness Fellowship Australia (MIFA)
- Queensland Alliance for Mental Health (QAMH)
- Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS).

These peak body relationships keep us connected to the critical mental health reform conversations happening both locally and nationally. They also provide important platforms through which we can contribute our voice as a trusted community mental health service provider to support ongoing reforms.

During the year, these partnerships enabled us to actively engage in conversations and advocacy efforts around changes to the NDIS and what these mean for the people we support, mental health system reforms and the need for community-led approaches, the importance of outcomes and impact measurement, and the value of community mental health services in supporting the wellbeing of people in our local communities.

We are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with these organisations and to contribute meaningfully to the conversations and decisions that shape the mental health landscape for the communities we serve.

Our Governance

The 2025–2026 financial year was a period of change for the Karakan Board, with several movements strengthening the organisation's leadership and governance.

We extend our sincere thanks to Holly Blattman as she concludes her tenure as Chair of the Karakan Board after more than 10 years of dedicated service. Holly joined the Karakan Board as a Director in July 2014 before being appointed Board Chair in October 2015. During her time in leadership, she has played a pivotal role in shaping the organisation's strategic direction, governance, and long-term sustainability. Holly's passion, integrity, and unwavering commitment have left a lasting legacy. On behalf of the Board, staff, and the people we support, we thank Holly for her outstanding contribution and wish her every success in the future.

Following Holly's departure, Tracey De Angelis, who has served as a Director on the Karakan Board since 2020, was appointed Interim Chair.

"It has been an incredible honour to be a member of, and to Chair, the Karakan Board. This is an organisation that truly lives its values, at every point from Board level to service delivery. Whilst Karakan has evolved considerably in my time, both in size and range of services, that much has never changed. Family and career obligations have caused me to step down, but I do so with heart and mind full of gratitude and optimism for Karakan's future, and in the knowledge that I leave a Board and management team which is collegiate, skilled, and passionate about Karakan's mission." - Holly

"Throughout 14 years of service, Holly has led with the same compassion, integrity and commitment to community that sits at the heart of Karakan. Holly's belief in Karakan's purpose, support of our people, and dedication to those we serve has left an enduring mark on the organisation. It is a privilege to step into the role of Interim Chair with such a strong foundation and a clear example of the values that matter most. As Karakan enters its next chapter, we are strengthened by Holly's legacy of compassion, community and service, and shared commitment to continuing the work that changes lives every day." - Tracey

The Board also welcomed two new Directors, Tony Stevenson and Michelle Wain, bringing new perspectives, experience and expertise to Karakan's governance and leadership. Tony and Michelle bring a wealth of wisdom and sector knowledge to the Board. Tony also brings his expertise as a mental health carer and Michelle will contribute her lived experience expertise as a Lived Experience Board Director.

As Karakan continues to evolve, we remain committed to strong, values-led governance and to ensuring our Board is well positioned to guide the organisation into its next chapter.

Meet our Current Board:

Tracey Deangelis – Interim Chair

Rex Manderson – Secretary

Leanne Peries – Treasurer

Cathy Hill – Director

Aaron Farrell – Director

Tony Stevenson – Director

Michelle Wain – Lived Experience Director

2025 Queensland Mental Health Week Sponsors and Donors

Karakan would like to sincerely acknowledge and thank the organisations who generously supported our 2025 Queensland Mental Health Week Community Celebration through sponsorships and donations.

We are incredibly grateful for the support in helping us create a welcoming and inclusive event that brings our community together to promote connection, wellbeing and mental health.

- Australian Training Academy
- CheckUP Australia
- Civiforce Traffic Management Pty Ltd
- Traffex Australia Pty Ltd
- Trafquip Pty Ltd

We extend our thanks for helping us make this event possible.

Financial Summary

Revenue

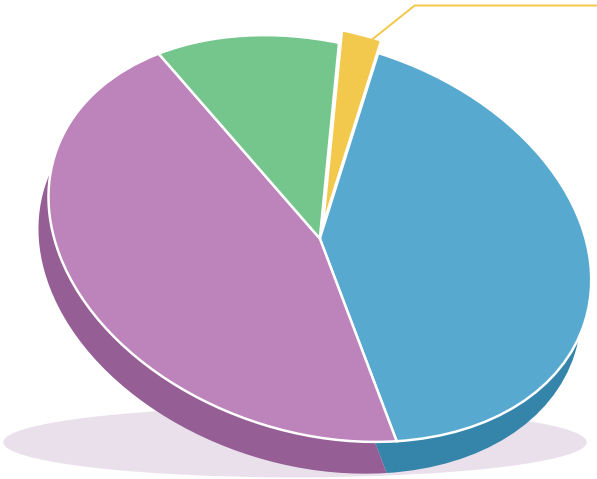
2020–2021	2021–2022	2022–2023	2023–2024	2024–2025	2025–2026
$5,547,188	$5,082,280	$6,360,885	$7,212,777	$11,684,976	$16,405,444

Total income

$16,405,444

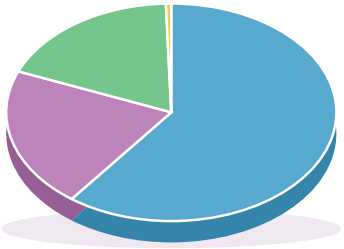
INCOME SOURCES

- **NDIS Services** $6,886,791 · 42.0%
- **YouthKan Services** $7,291,818 · 44.45%
- **Other Grants** $1,845,353 · 11.25%
- **Other income** $381,482 · 2.3%



Other income

$381,482 · 2.3% of total income

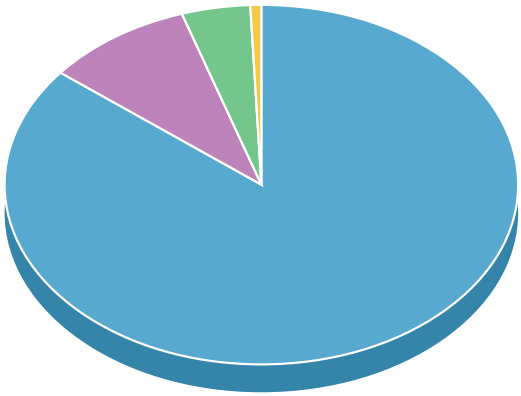


BREAKDOWN OF OTHER INCOME

- **Lease (Rental) income** $230,084
- **Other Income** $69,951
- **Interest** $79,447
- **Wage Subsidy** $2,000

Financial Position	2025–2026
ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$3,464,097
Receivables	$1,094,315
Other Assets	$236,240
Property, Plant and Equipment	$2,641,381
Right to Use Assets	$259,945
Total Assets	**$7,695,978**
LIABILITIES	
Contract Liabilities and Income in Advance	$59,134
Trade and Other Payables	$504,624
Employee Leave Provisions	$748,517
Lease Liabilities	$259,945
Total Liabilities	**$1,572,220**

Expenses distribution



EXPENSE CATEGORIES

- **Employee benefits** $13,016,751 · 85.7%
- **Occupancy costs** $656,048 · 4.3%
- **Other expenses** $1,410,858 · 9.3%
- **Depreciation Expenses** $104,792 · 0.7%

To access our full financial report, please visit our website.

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