

Changing Lives

This is Us!
How a Bedford song became
an international sensation



Bedford



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Front Cover

**Footage from Bedford's
'This is Me' video**

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Maggie's welcome

**Hello everyone,
how nice it is
to welcome the
warmer weather
and you to
Bedford's Spring
2020 edition of
Changing Lives.**

It has now been over six months since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. We know that the crisis is not yet behind us and we're continuing to remain vigilant around the government's recommendations and keeping everyone at Bedford safe. It is great to see that our Clients who had been self-isolating felt confident and supported and are mostly all back at work or enjoying our Day Options and Community Access and Lifestyle programs – which are up and running again with an even broader range of services to our Clients.

In fact, we are busy building the Bedford of the Future. While we are well known for our commercial business and providing traditional employment, we are changing. It's still early days but we are working on creating a more personalised mix of programs for our each of our Clients to help them achieve their life goals.

People have the right to choose not only supported employment, but also open employment, self-employment like a start-up business, and options to operate or work for smaller-scale social enterprises in their areas of interest and skill.

Other goals may include the arts, sport or hobbies, supported independent living or a training course. Speaking of the arts, our first exhibition of our 2020 South Australia Living Artist (SALA) event last month, where Bedford artists sold their own pieces of art, is evidence of what we can do to offer our Clients alternate options to greater economic independence. You can read all about our fantastic Bedford artists and our 2020 SALA event in this edition.



“

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”

- Maggie

The changes to the funding of employment supports (the 'New Employment Model'), introduced by the NDIS on 1 July, presents an exciting opportunity and more choices for our Clients. We are very pleased to have been awarded a Department of Social Services Grant to specifically focus on transitioning our Clients to this New Employment Model.

You can read more about the New Employment Model on Page 6.

Also in this edition, you'll read some terrific stories about what's happening across our regional sites, great messages from our Clients and other news and updates.

Stay safe and well everyone and thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "maggie".

Maggie Dowling
Chief Executive

A New Employment Model for our sector



On 1 July 2020, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) introduced a New Employment Model and changes to the funding of workplace supports.

On 1 July 2020, the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) introduced a New Employment Model and changes to the funding of workplace supports.

It will provide important opportunities for Bedford's supported employees and clients to achieve their current and future goals and in future it will offer the possibility for one-on-one mentoring, social programs, training and skills development in new areas, or possibly a move into open employment or a start-up business.

Bedford has already starting contacting and communicating with our 1180 supported employees about the changes. We're also conducting two workplace surveys to help maximise each participant's NDIS Plan by asking questions like 'how many hours would you like to work?', 'what would you like to learn or do?' and 'how can we assist you to get there?'

Clients with existing workplace supports or new clients who may wish to transition to our employment offerings will be asked to make the change by January 2022.

Watch this space for more information our contact our friendly Bedford team on nemhelp@bedfordgroup.com.au



“I’ve been with Bedford for 28 years and I love it.”

– David

David Barnes

“I’ve been with Bedford for 28 years and I love it. I manage my own NDIS plan and always keeping an eye out for new opportunities to increase my workplace and lifestyle support.

“The Federal Government wants to increase the number of people with disability in the workforce to 30 percent. I think it’s doable, as long as they’re aware of how volatile the employment market is and how supported employment options like Bedford are really important for people like me. I’ve tried open employment and I prefer this environment with my friends and access to supervisors. That to me is so important to have someone to talk to about any issues I might have or to change my hours. I also like the idea of more one-on-one supports under this new model and learning new skills too.

“I now take cooking classes and play lawn bowls. It gets you out there and engage with other people. Taking on a new class or activity group doesn’t have to be daunting, you could bring in your support worker to begin and when you feel comfortable, they step back.

“I think technology will play a part in the future – especially with driverless cars. Now I can’t drive vehicles because of my eyes, so to even have a car that drives for me will allow me to get around on my own. That would make a huge difference. I’d enjoy that.”

Sweet treats at Torrensville



Our Torrensville clients may have missed out on packing Showbags this year due to COVID-19, but there's plenty of sweet offerings on the production line.

We have recently partnered with two local customers, Great Southern Chocolates and Edible Blooms.



Helen Baldwin started Great Southern Chocolates a little over ten years ago when she began dipping slices of dehydrated orange into sweet, molten chocolate for family and friends' parties.

These days, the company has more than 14 chocolate-coated products – including snakes, pretzels, and honeycomb and nut clusters, and demand is growing in order to supply supermarkets and stores as far away as northern Queensland.

“We could have sent the packaging work interstate or overseas, but Bedford's price was so competitive, and it just seemed like a good fit and the right thing to do,” Helen said.



Police packs

Torrensville also recently joined the fight against the spread of COVID-19 by making SA Health community protection masks for people entering South Australia.

In July, Bedford hosted the Honourable Steven Marshall, Premier, and the Minister for Health and Wellbeing, Stephen Wade, to announce the partnership.

Team members Paul Locke and Ameer Datson welcomed the new line of work and the skills and precision required to produce more than 100,000 packs in our HACCP-approved clean room.

“I hear there are plenty of deaths because of the virus and it feels like it’s really important to be doing this,” Paul said.

“I love working at Bedford and I’m enjoying learning new skills. I love meeting other people and working together. We all look out for one another,” Ameer added.

The packs will be distributed by police and army officers while on border patrols and at Adelaide Airport.

Success at our first SALA exhibition

Last year we asked our kind donors and supporters to help us raise \$70,000 to turn a disused gym into a dedicated Art Space at Bedford Panorama.

By the end of the campaign, we didn't just hit the \$70,000 target; we actually raised over \$100,000! Your generous support meant we could pay for additional resources, daily classes and clients could produce, exhibit and sell our works at events like the South Australian Living Artists (SALA) Festival.

Rachael Griffiths, Community Access and Lifestyle General Manager, says the Art Space has given clients the opportunity to explore their creativity and express themselves. For our non-verbal clients some of the pieces they produced were

an incredible insight into their world and a unique means of communication.

"We have clients who can come to this space, grab a canvas and paints, and put something together which is a reflection of their emotions or feelings or hopes and dreams," Rachael Griffiths said.

"We also wanted to ensure that art wasn't just a 'thing to do', but an opportunity for clients to make a business out of it, and empower them to sell their own pieces and make some money outside of the traditional employment opportunities," Rachael said.





On August 28 at Ten22 Boutique, Edwardstown, Bedford launched the careers of 40 talented artists with disability at our inaugural SALA exhibition in front of donors, families and dignitaries.

The exhibition's title was Isolation Appreciation, as the pieces were all created solo, or in groups, with the assistance of our Support Workers during the COVID crisis, and while some clients were self-isolating.

The physical exhibition was carefully staged with social distancing in mind, and featured performing artists such as the Phoenix Allstars cheerleaders, a karaoke cover band session and the Panorama Day Options crew.

“It’s exciting for me to be able to bring people through the area, show them all the amazing pieces of artwork our clients are producing. It’s provided our clients the chance to show off their own individual, or group, pieces, and feel empowered and take great pride in the work they’ve done. It’s pretty amazing.”

Head to Bedford’s Youtube channel to see a wrap of the SALA exhibition!



The Art Space gives our clients the opportunity to explore their creativity and express themselves.

Stories from our Regions



South East

When our Mt Gambier mill isn't producing furniture for Bunnings, kindling for OTR stores, or duck nests, our timber offcuts are now being sent to South Australian law enforcers to keep warm while on border patrol.

Bedford recently teamed up with the local Lions Club to send five tonnes worth of timber pieces to SAPOL officers and Army Reservists while on duty in the South East.

Mt Gambier site manager, Graham Harris explains.

“Our dedicated officers are putting in long days and nights in often chilly weather, so we were only too happy to help keep them warm and keep their spirits up,” he said.

Meanwhile in Millicent, the laundry team is buzzing with excitement after receiving their new \$70,000 commercial ironer. It's a critical piece of equipment for our site which caters to domestic and commercial clients throughout the South East.

The team, and in fact all our regional sites, will also be receiving new computers thanks to the generosity of donors from our recent Tax Appeal Fundraiser.



Mid North and Yorke Peninsula

Our Port Pirie and Kadina teams have been hard at work with gardening and grounds maintenance, car cleaning, packaging and manufacturing solutions, to name just a few services.

At our Wallaroo and Port Pirie Day Options centres, Bedford clients are also learning new skills and working on exciting projects.

Natasha MacDonald joined the Pirie team eight years ago and says it changed her life.

“I love my job and have made lots of friends too. When I’m not working, I get one-on-one support to learn how to cook and do shopping and I’m even learning the road rules at the moment on my trike. It’s so much fun,” she said.

“

I get one-on-one support to learn how to cook and do shopping and I’m even learning the road rules at the moment on my trike. It’s so much fun!

”

– Natasha

**We have
temporarily
moved**

Eyre Peninsula

Did you know that our Whyalla site has temporarily relocated a few blocks away while we conduct some much-needed renovations and repairs in the lead up to the opening of a new Day Options centre?

For the next two months we will be located at 64 Essington Lewis Avenue, but it’s business as usual for our team, who are getting very excited about the new look and expanded services at Shiell Street.



From Day Options to work options

Brittany Tink-Eaton has been attending our Day Options centre at Panorama for the past three years.

The 22-year-old has a big heart and enjoys art classes and making dog and cat toys for the RSPCA. She also has big aspirations and has been hard at work, gaining new skills that she hopes will help her achieve her goal of transitioning into the workforce.

Brittany would first like to try supported employment with her friends at Bedford and perhaps in the future she'd like to transition into open employment in an office or shop or even a cafe.

To help with this transition, our Day Options staff and a Flinders University student teacher have been helping Brittany by identifying her strengths – such as her fine motor skills and love of repetitive tasks.

“I built up my work skills with Lego and little match sticks, so that I can one day make sprinklers or pack screws and tool kits into boxes,” Brittany said.

Day Options supervisor Kiara Flynn says Brittany follows instructions very well, and has excelled at counting out and assembling kits such as antenna plugs which consists of 36 steps. Look out IKEA!

With these transferrable skills, the team is confident Brittany will be working in our Packaging department and fulfilling her life goals very soon.

Ticket to Ride

William Nimmo has wanted to get behind the wheel of a car for many years.

In fact, when he was a small child he wandered over to his neighbour's house, hopped in their car and happily beeped their horn and imagined he was cruising along the roads.

These days, the 22-year-old from Adelaide's north is an enthusiastic member of the Community Access team. He takes part in cooking classes, Social Saturdays and recently added studying for his L Plates to his list.

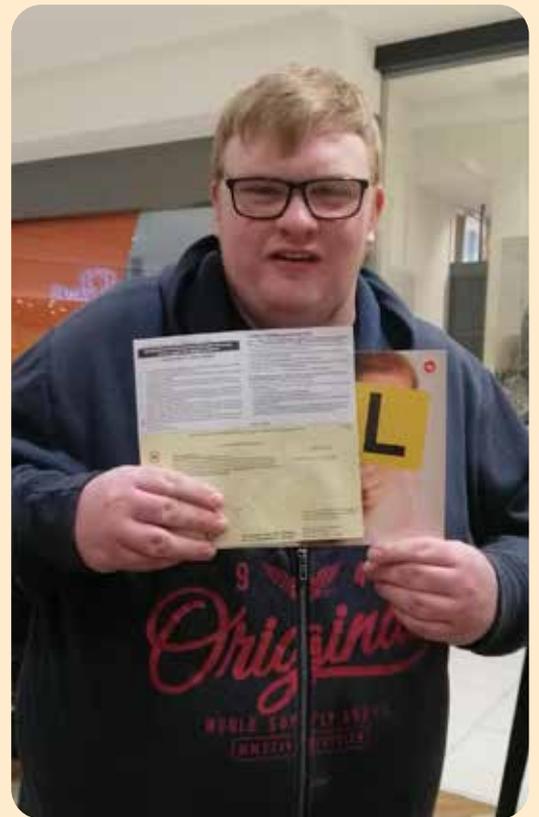
From the outset William showed a keen focus and willingness to learn. He studied the road rules, give way signs and general driving knowledge, improving and absorbing more and more each week.

Eventually, William decided he was ready to sit the test. While a little unsure of some of the give way rules, he was still keen to give it a go and if he didn't know an answer, he'd leave it out and perhaps ask a support person to explain it afterwards.

With the support of Mum and Dad, William put aside his nerves and filled in every answer.

After a short time, a Service SA official approached the family and said not only had he passed with a near perfect score, but he also correctly answered all the give way questions.

William was absolutely beside himself with pride and cites his supportive family and friends for believing that he is capable of achieving his goals and dreams.



Would you like to enrol in our CAL course to obtain your Learner's Permit? Contact us on (08) 8275 0211 for more information.



When I saw this video, I had tears rolling down my cheeks. It was so powerful and shows that resilience can be found in all of us and we see it every day at Bedford...I hope you find this recording as poignant and uplifting as I did.



- Faye Packham, Bedford Ambassador

This is Us!

Our song of resilience goes viral

When the COVID-19 crisis hit South Australia, many of our 1300 clients chose to self-isolate and we were reluctantly forced to suspend several services – including our arts program and choir.

However, we wanted to help our clients pursue their love of the arts and continue to have their voices heard and, over a two-month period, put together music clips of our clients that evolved into the musical work of art This is Me.

This is Me has now reached an audience of more than one hundred thousand people from around the world and featured on Seven News, ABC Radio and national morning TV program, Sunrise.

Bedford's Chief Executive Maggie Dowling says the project shows just what's possible when imagination, passion and belief, and of course great talent, are brought together.

"This is a wonderful song about acceptance – not just of people living with disability but of everyone and how intolerance has no place in our society."

"When I saw this video, I had tears rolling down my cheeks. It was so powerful and shows that resilience can be found in all of us and we see it every day at Bedford. Sometimes we as a society need a gentle reminder to accept people for who and what they are. I hope you find this recording as poignant and uplifting as I did," Faye Packham, Bedford's Ambassador said.

"The song made me smile with pride (and get a little emotional!) It's so good to see some of my Bedford favourites engaging in something like this whilst inspiring all who view it," Adelaide Football Club's Tom Doedee added.

With the gradual easing of restrictions in South Australia we have now reinstated many of our social activities, and our own choir the Bedford Beats is in full swing and working on their latest music project, a version of Michael Jackson's 'Heal the World'.



Positivity in the Face of Adversity

During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in SA, our three Bedford Cafes at Panorama, Elizabeth and Torrensville were forced to shut down. A daunting and unnerving time for many, but our Hospitality team embraced the change with positivity and transitioned into other work areas.

Operations Manager of Hospitality Soren Gemo says it gave the team a chance to develop a variety of new skills, and the extra hands helped Bedford complete our biggest packaging contract yet with Smith's Chips.

"The majority of our team moved into Packaging and helped with everything from Smith's Chips to sanitisers. They did an amazing job and learnt new skills like using a pallet jack," he said.

Flashforward to spring and the Bedford Cafes are back up and running (with all government restrictions in place, of course) and morale is high!

"I was so happy to come back to the cafe. Normally I make biscuits, but after COVID hit I've been doing the cash tills, specials and morning tea and lunch service," team member Alexander said.

"It was so good to come back and see my friends again," team member Angie added.



Soren and the team also took the opportunity to re-assess the cafe's current meal options and introduce some healthy options and take-home packs.

"Our focus on re-opening was to ensure we could increase the number of nutritional meals on site. We trialled out some new products and techniques to promote healthy eating and moderation."



If you or someone you know is interested in joining the Hospitality team please call us on 8275 0211 or email onboarding@bedfordgroup.com.au



Meet Dumpling Queen, Kirra-Lea

With the Hospitality team continuing to flourish, Bedford Panorama welcomed a smiley new member recently, dumpling extraordinaire Kirra-Lea Wall.

Growing up with a love of cooking, the 18-year-old has become well-known for her amazing pork and shallot dumplings – an exciting new menu addition at Panorama.

For Kirra-Lea, joining the Hospitality team was a perfect fit.

“I’ve had a lot of cooking experience. I was part of a school cafe team where I would make coffees, and I did work experience and prepared meals at One Little Sister in Normanville,” she said.

“I chose to work in hospitality because I prefer being hands-on and crafting new meals. I also have tiny hands which helps me have a good technique for making dumplings without any difficulties.”

In the future, Kirra-Lea aims to start a TAFE cooking course, along with some other short courses.

“I’d love to get some new qualifications under my belt next year.”

And Bedford is proud to support her on this journey to reach her career goals! Here’s her recipe for you to enjoy.

Pork and Shallot Dumplings



INGREDIENTS

- o 2 tps vegetable oil
- o 2 tps finely grated fresh ginger
- o 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- o 55g (3/4 cup) coarsely chopped green cabbage
- o 2 tbs water
- o 250g pork mince
- o 2 shallots, trimmed, thinly sliced
- o 1 tbs soy sauce
- o 2 tps caster sugar
- o 1 tps sesame oil

METHOD

1. Heat vegetable oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook ginger and garlic, stirring, for 1 minute or until aromatic. Add cabbage and water. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes or until the cabbage wilts. Transfer to a bowl. Set aside to cool. Stir in pork, shallot, soy sauce, sugar and sesame oil. Season with salt.
2. *Buy wonton wrappers or make your own using the Dumpling dough recipe below.*
Place 1 wrapper on a clean work surface. Place 2 tps of pork mixture in the centre of the wrapper. Brush edges with water. Fold over to enclose filling. Pinch edges together. Place on a tray lined with non-stick baking paper. Repeat with remaining wrappers and pork mixture.
4. Heat half the rest of the vegetable oil in a non-stick frying pan over high heat. Cook half the dumplings for 2 minutes or until bases are golden. Add half the extra water. Cook, covered, for 5 minutes or until cooked and liquid has evaporated. Transfer to a serving platter. Cover to keep warm. Repeat with remaining oil, dumplings and water.

Serve with chilli sauce or soy sauce.



DUMPLING DOUGH INGREDIENTS

- o 600g Plain Flour
- o 1 tsp Salt
- o 350 ml boiling water

DUMPLING DOUGH METHOD

1. Mix all ingredients with a mixer on medium speed for 3 – 5 minutes.
2. Wrap the dough in plastic and leave for 30 minutes.
3. Flour a bench and roll dough into 2mm thickness. Use a pasta machine if you have one. Cut dough into 10cm circles (wonton wrappers).

Lightsview, Camera, ACTION!

Whether we're operating excavators, installing irrigation systems or building entire water retention basins, it's no wonder our Bedford APG team is one of the largest and most trusted landscaping and garden maintenance companies in South Australia.

Our amazing wetlands and work at Lightsview will soon feature in a Channel Nine lifestyle program called Outdoors Indoors.

Celebrity gardener and presenter Kim Syrus and the film crew spent a day in Adelaide's north-east recently to capture some of our 160 supported employees in action, and preview our latest large-scale contract, a \$1.5M park and playground off East Parkway.

Stay tuned for the full feature story, aired on Sunday afternoons at 4:30pm or visit [outdoorsindoors.tv](https://www.outdoorsindoors.tv).





Bedford's soccer league gets more legs

More players, more teams, more excitement. The second season of our sponsored Community Soccer League got off to a flying start recently.

The COVID-19 crisis delayed the official launch of the 2020 season, but Football South Australia says that may have served to generate even more buzz across our sector.

"It's really exciting considering it has only been one year since our two organisations joined forces to create South Australia's first soccer league for people with disability and we've already doubled our participation rates," FSA's Michael Carter said.

This year eight teams signed up to the League and have been enjoying a healthy competition and camaraderie at the parks in Adelaide's North-East.

One of those teams is an all-Bedford affair linked to the Sturt Lions Football Club, according to Executive Manager Client Services, Sam Hellams.

"For the first time, our Community Access Lifestyle clients joined forces with a respected, mainstream club.

Furthermore, their costs are subsidised by Bedford, Sturt Lions, and provisions in their NDIS plans."

Sturt Lions has also kindly volunteered its time and resources. Club President John Vander Veecken explains.

"We believe inclusive team sports are so important and we are in it for the long haul at Sturt. We are already looking at incorporating more training sessions, setting up junior squads and even looking to other codes with a long and strong history in inclusive sport like the Goody Saints Football Club for their guidance moving forward." John said.

While play is still underway, there have already been a number of stand-out performances and players are also eagerly looking forward the Community League Grand Final which will be played as a curtain-raiser to the FSA's own Grand Final.

"We hope this league continues to grow and bring people together," Sam Hellams said.



On the road with DJ

Bedford Truck Driver, Panorama and Woodville

“

My name is David John Parker or ‘DJ’ as most people call me. I’ve been in supported employment at Bedford for over 16 years.

I started out at APG on the ride-on mowers at Linear Park, which was very joyful and relaxing and these days I drive the new Bedford truck.

My day usually starts at 7:30 and usually the truck is loaded for me for my deliveries. I could be off to Woodville to drop off our flat-pack furniture, or I could be off to a transport company or another contractor. My day is unpredictable, and I like it that way. I’m on my own, on the road and it keeps me out of trouble!

This new fit-for-purpose truck has been a long time coming and it’s good to be behind the wheel of it – even if it is an automatic.

I was actually born in Woomera and moved down to Adelaide when I was five. I won’t say how old I am, but that was 57 years ago, so you can do that maths.

I tried all sort of things in my working life and in open employment, but well here I am. There are some really good people here, like Chook my supervisor, and I’m happy to stay here until I can’t work anymore.



Bedford Spring Lottery



\$10
per ticket

More than just
a lottery ticket.

The quickest way to purchase
your tickets is to jump online
and visit bedfordlottery.com.au
or call us on **1300 981 519**

1ST PRIZE

\$50,000
CASH!

2ND PRIZE

\$20,000
CASH!

3RD PRIZE

\$10,000
CASH!



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