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# CEO's REPORT



2019 was a turbulent year for Fibro & Us (Now called Invisible Illnesses Inc). We had some great ups, some of which were:

- Moving into our own offices
- Joining some amazing networking groups and connecting with some very supportive people
- A donation of 8 computers from the Department of Finance. These were well and truly needed as the ones we had were starting to crash

- We became a Centrelink registered organisation, which means those that must do volunteer hours to receive Newstart can do their hours with us.
- I attended several different workshops through the year. Some of those were around governance and management. These were helpful and made me aware of what policies we needed to implement.
- We became affiliated with 360 Health and Headspace

But on the flip side we had some major downs.

- The flu went through the committee with a few of us being laid out for a while. I personally ended up very ill with Influenza A. We had several of our volunteers resign during this period. With me out of action for a little over a month, my Events Manager, Deb Brzich, stepped up to run the group, fairly much on her own. With me being so ill, it caught us on the hop. We learnt we needed to have a strategy in place in case this happened again.
- We were reported to the Department of Commerce and the ACNC for alleged allegations that we had breached our Constitution as we had not produced our membership file to a member when requested and that we had repeatedly changed our financial year. We were able to prove that these allegations were false and had come from a disgruntled terminated committee member. To safeguard ourselves from this being able to happen in the future, we introduced a number of new policies.
- Two of our major events were cancelled, which in turn put some financial strain on us.

Thankfully, the beginning of 2020 has been very positive.

- We entered a competition to have our new website built and we're one of the lucky 7 to be chosen. I spent a day with a team of web developers to discuss what I wanted the website to look like. So far, I'm wrapped with the work put in by this team and can't wait for it to go live in the next few weeks
- At the end of last year, we were approached by Baldivis Events, to run Bingo alongside them, as the need was there for more sessions. We have applied for our permits and will hopefully, be up and running in late March or April.

- We have had 3 sponsors come on board: Oska Wellness, That's Delish and Viva Photography Rockingham.
- Grant Fisher from Focal Point has continued supporting us with business coaching. The support we have received from Grant has been invaluable and certainly kept us on track through the turbulent months.

## EVENT MANAGERS REPORT



### **Coffee and chats**

We were still holding our Coffee and Chats but found people were not showing up or coming very late which made the host sit and wait for some time. We had a number of volunteer hosts who would stay for a couple of events and then not show for any more or contact us to let me know when their coffee and chat was on. So sadly, at the time we decided to cancel them all together.

This year we decided not to have coffee and chats but opting to do coffee and crafts and roaming lunches as many people asked for lunches. Once a month, we choose a different location to hold a lunch. We have also decided to change the coffee and chats to coffee and craft days, which now will be held in our training room.

### **Workshops**

Unfortunately, with our workshops not many got to happen as there were too many people trying to hold different types of workshops which became difficult trying to find dates and times to suit.

Next term we will be holding an Adult 101 classes and in the process of organising some other classes.

### **Quiz Nights**

The first one was to be held in July but unfortunately we had a lot of sick staff and had there was no one available to help but after putting the call out in the group I managed to have enough people to be able to hold the event, but unfortunately a storm swept through and the power went out, so we were advised that we had to leave. We attempted to try a second time, but the timing was wrong as it was the end of school holidays. We decided that we would give Quiz Nights a miss for the time being and look at other events

### **Bingo**

We have decided to organise bingo this year and are in progress of getting the licence and all permits we need we have met a lady that knows her bingo very well and will be helping us.

## **Annual Ball**

Due to unforeseen circumstances the ball had to be cancelled.

On September 19th, 2020 we will be holding our Never Hide Your Wings Gala & Recognition Night. The venue is Tompkins on the Swan in Melville. Our menu has been organised; on arrival canapés then we sit for a main meal and then a dessert will also be offered and this year drinks such as Beer, Wine and soft drink is included. We will be offering our layby system again for those who would like to come but can't afford the full amount at once.

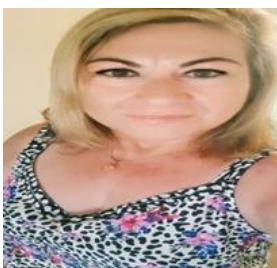
## **Markets, Fairs And shows**

Throughout the year we have attended about 20 or more shows or markets. Michelle and I did our usual trip to Katanning, which once again was another successful show. We did a lot of local fairs such as Port Kennedy Twilight Markets, Secret Harbour and Baldivis just to name a few.

This year we will be holding our own inaugural fair on March 21<sup>st</sup>. It will be held at The Village Green Oval in Rockingham. We have at this point; 14 General stalls, 10 Food trucks, 2 Entertainers, 7 Community Groups and one company bringing 5 rides. We have not received all payments for stalls yet, but they are slowly paying in.

We have been invited to attend the Duck Race in Mandurah which we will be attending. We are looking at the Pumpkin Festival on Easter weekend. As usual we will be attending the local ones. We have decided that this year we won't travel as often but Katanning & Albany or on the list to attend.

# **SECRETARY'S REPORT**



## **Brief History**

Michelle Greenwood started Fibro & Us in 2016, she managed to build this non - profit organisation on her own through Facebook by advertising in different groups that she was looking for others who had Fibromyalgia. Within a short period of time there were 50 that had replied. Michelle started with hosting a coffee morning in Port

Kennedy, where the majority of those 50 people attended. Michelle was approached by Rockingham City Councillor Matt Whitfield to see if there was a need for a support group. From that conversation the support group was formed. In September 2016 Fibro & Us - Fibromyalgia Support Group Inc was officially formed.

By 2017 her online members reached 900, now in 2020 we have an estimated 1727 WA wide as online members and growing at a rate of 1 - 2 people a day.

In mid-2019 it was decided to change the name of the group to Invisible Illnesses. It was put to vote for the name change which was accepted unanimously. January 2020 saw the

name change from Fibro & Us to Invisible Illnesses INC, to make the group more inclusive and to have more reach with funding.

The first few years volunteers and committee members were hard to find. With perseverance the committee grew. We now have 15 Committee members but still have positions that need filling

### **Events**

Sausage sizzles proved to be profitable but lacked volunteers, so the committee decided that only 2 events to be done per year.

Our first Quiz Night, in 2017 was a huge success with the event being fully booked and people still wanting to pay at the door. In 2018 due to committee members being sick and travelling no Quiz Nights were arranged. In 2019 a Quiz Night was organised but unfortunately on the night a storm swept through and the venue lost power, resulting us being asked to leave for safety reasons.

2020 will be a busy year with new things being planned. We will have Bingo once a month, a Community fair in March, Bus tours starting in March to name a few. We will be bringing back our roaming lunches and coffee & craft mornings.

### **Helping Hands**

Helping Hands committee are finding it difficult to get volunteers for gardening and cleaning, for our members. We have just done a big recruitment push and things are looking more positive. We still need several volunteers to cover the north and west side.

### **Sponsorship**

This position is still to be filled, in the meantime Michelle Greenwood is covering the sponsorship seat. She has managed to bring on board Oska Wellness for sponsoring \$1000 per year, Lisa from That's Delish who will be supplying cakes for all our events free of charge and we thank them for their support. Michelle attends many different networking events to help attract more sponsors and to raise the awareness.

### **Meet & Greet**

Unfortunately our Meet & Greet were not widely attended, causing our volunteers to sit around waiting for people to show up. It was decided that we would cancel the meet and greet and try roaming lunches. We have now held 2 roaming lunches with a few people attending. We hope this will continue to grow during 2020.

### **Membership**

We currently have 48 paid members and 47 nonpaid member, we estimate that by the end of 2020 Invisible Illnesses will have more paid members as we would have more to offer to them.

We streamlined our membership fees and now have either Financial or Non-Financial. Our membership fee is \$20 per year which entitles them to: discount to our events, our eNewsletter, Facebook & Website, Loyalty Program & Birthday Club, access to Helping

Hands, rights to vote at the AGM and access to our wellbeing services.

### **Grants**

Thanks to Cliff we have managed to be successful in a few grants with the money awarded going into marketing and the purchase of new office equipment.

This year we have Garry Eves working on multiple grants.

### **Treasurer**

The treasurer's role was empty for several months, leaving our accounts in a bit of a mess. Michelle endeavoured to find someone who was able to fill this position for a few months. Our accountant took over the bookkeeping until such a time the position was filled. During that period our accounts were moved from spreadsheets over to Xero. He entered all the data from the last 3 years, giving us a more accurate accounting.

We now have Ruchi Sharma filling the position which means we are now able to keep our accounts up to date.

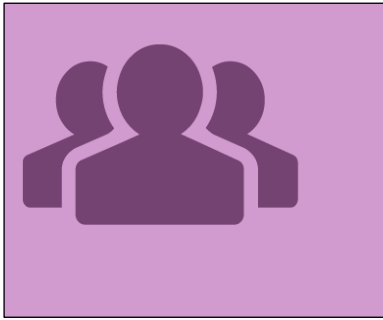
### **2020**

The beginning of the year has been positive, with most of the Committee positions being filled, the return of Serafina as Secretary and more volunteers to cover our Helping Hands. Our members, can now hopefully see the benefit of being a financial member and it will encourage more people to pay their membership.

We have several events planned for the year from Doggy Wash Days, our Community Family Fun Day to our Never Hide Your Wings Gala & Recognition Night. Deb has been hard at work making sure everything is in place to ensure our events are successful.

There is positive energy in the office, with a friendly and relaxed atmosphere, which will certainly help keep Invisible Illnesses Inc on task.

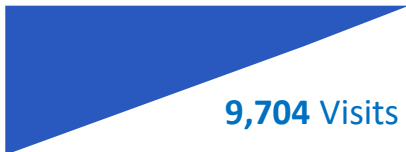
# THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



**1732**  
Members  
across WA



**48** Financial Members  
**47** Overdue Members  
**1638** Non-Financial Members  
Membership fee increased to \$20 per annum



**9,704** Visits

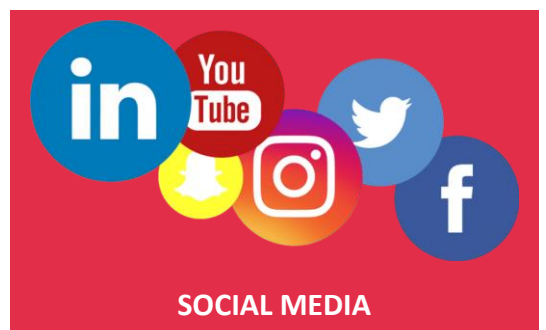
New website will be live March 2020



**12** Editions  
**34** Shoutouts  
**984** subscribers



**880** FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS  
**40** INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS  
**1,546** LINKEDIN CONNECTIONS



# HELPING HANDS REPORT



All Helping hands Volunteers have been emailed.

All Volunteer Files have been updated

Transition to paper into digital

Volunteer's we have so far:

1) Alina Lee – Warnbro – General Household Cleaning

2) Caitlin Marrison – Stirling – Driver/Shopping Companion/Cleaning

3) Ron Hayden – Baldivis – Gardening

4) Malcom Herman – Bicton – Driver/Shopping Companion

5) Paul Marchant – Gardening/Handyman

6) Vanessa Warren – Driver/Shopping Companion

Issue's need action immediately:

We need to have more Volunteers in all Perth areas especially in General Cleaning and Gardeners.

At the moment I can't accommodate our members because we are lacking Helping Hands Volunteers.

Need to have more Helping Hands Coordinator's as I'm not working every day. It would be more beneficial for daily emails and communications between our members and volunteers.

Keeping up to date is very important.

Communication between all Members of committee and volunteers is very important.

## **Closing:**

I'm very optimistic about the positive outcome for Helping Hands.

We have started to do a recruitment push for volunteers and are receiving a few applications.



# BUSINESS COACH'S REPORT

Working alongside Michelle, Deb and the Team at Invisible Illnesses over the last 4 months has been an inspiration and blessing. Michelle and Deb have gone even more above and beyond than they always do and have made some significant progress and changes within the organisation both strategically and operationally. The standout accomplishments include:

## Marketing

- Redefining and expanding the market the organisation will serve to cover all the 'invisible illnesses' that can be associated with fibromyalgia.
- The successful rebranding to Invisible Illnesses.
- Even greater visibility and planning around fundraising, events and partnerships.
- Greater exposure and connection with business owners through a variety of networking events.

## People & Operations

- The review and restructure of the organisational chart, with roles refined, defined and performance expectations set.
- New board members and support team members enrolled.
- New volunteer partnerships established.
- IT and office systems refined and consolidated.

## Finance

- Review, rationalising and trimming of operational expenses.
- Increased activity around Grant applications and support.
- New support from businesses offering and providing services.

These are just the top-level achievements. Beneath the surface, Michelle and Deb and done so, so much more and as we have all witnessed, they do so with a smile, lots of laughs and lots of passion.

Michelle and Deb have taken a word that many would use 'IMPOSSIBLE' and turned it into I'M POSSIBLE. It is for this reason I am confident that Invisible Illnesses is destined to make an even more significant difference in people's lives across Australia in the future.

Sincerely

Grant Fisher

Global Multi Award Winning Business Coach & Professional Trainer

# SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Invisible Illnesses Inc has consistently strengthened its presence across several medial platforms including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Our presence on social media has contributed to increased sector development interest and attendance, increase in memberships and to the sector's ability to stay informed on topics that have an impact on service delivery. Invisible Illnesses Inc social media strategy has supported the organisation to engage with a wide audience of both current and potential members seeking both information and a pathway to our services.

At the moment, Invisible Illnesses does not use Instagram to it's full potential, therefore not being very active with engagement. We aim to change this during 2020 and are currently looking into ways to make things easier and more consistent when posting information.

Even though we have a Twitter account, we do not use it. After attending several social media training events, we have discussed using it more often and using our hashtag #thinkoutsidethechair to increase the awareness.

## What is new?

As well as increasing our presence on Instagram and Twitter, we will be introducing podcasts. The strategy is to convey and validate the benefits of joining a Support Group and provide a learning and information tool for those newly diagnosed. The Podcast Series will promote different invisible illnesses but will also communicate the reasoning behind joining a support group, concentration on the health and mental health benefits of joining a support group and the value of community connection to help stop the social isolation.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

This year saw us bring our financial year in line with the ATO financial year. We didn't have a treasurer for most of the year so Michelle arranged to have an accountant do our books until such a time we could fill the treasurer's position.

Harsha Kandemulla from HK Dillan came on board as our accountant. Harsha moved our accounting from spreadsheets over to Xero. He reconciled all accounting since Fibro & Us started.

Ruchi Sharma was taken on as our Treasurer. Ruchi has just finished her Accounting Degree. We are still learning our way around Xero but hopefully given time we will be able to use it to its full potential.

We will be looking at changing accountants this year as we would prefer to use someone local.

# Balance Sheet

Invisible Illnesses Inc  
As at 30 June 2019

30 JUN 2019

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## Assets

### Bank

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Westpac Community Solutions | 2,344.40        |
| <b>Total Bank</b>           | <b>2,344.40</b> |

### Fixed Assets

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| Computer Equipment                                  | 1,250.00   |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation on Computer Equipment | (1,250.00) |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation on Office Equipment   | (120.00)   |
| Less Accumulated Depreciation on Plant & Equipment  | (20.00)    |
| Office Equipment                                    | 120.00     |
| Plant & Equipment                                   | 20.00      |
| <b>Total Fixed Assets</b>                           | <b>-</b>   |

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|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Total Assets</b> | <b>2,344.40</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------|

## Liabilities

### Current Liabilities

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| Westpac Business One Flexi       | 82.77        |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b> | <b>82.77</b> |

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|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Liabilities</b> | <b>82.77</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------|

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|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Net Assets</b> | <b>2,261.63</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------|

## Equity

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Current Year Earnings | 330.13          |
| Owner Contributions   | 1,390.00        |
| Retained Earnings     | 541.50          |
| <b>Total Equity</b>   | <b>2,261.63</b> |

# THE TEAM BEHIND INVISIBLE ILLNESSES INC

**Chief Executive Officer**

Michelle Greenwood

**Treasurer**

Ruchi Sharma

**Helping Hands Coordinator**

Vacant

**Loyalty Program Coordinator**

Rebecca Garz

**Governance (Adhoc)**

Kellie Plenty

**Graphic Artist**

Sarah Silva

**Bus Driver/Events Crew**

Bernadette Riseborough

**Wheatbelt Leader**

Ann Clarke

**Admin Assistant**

Vacant

**Information Session Coordinator**

Vacant

**Secretary**

Serafina Erichsen

**Office/Events Manager**

Debbie Brzich

**Grant Writer**

Garry Eves

**DJ/Events Assistant**

Michael Beckers

**Database/Research Coordinator (Adhoc)**

Shelley Fitzgerald

**Bingo Caller/Events Crew**

Lorraine Edmonds

**Events Crew**

Erin Rotondella

**Fundraising Coordinator**

Vacant

**Public Relations Officer**

Vacant

*Invisible Illnesses Inc would like to thank all their dedicated volunteers for their invaluable contribution to the organisation and our members*



## PRIORITIES

## AREA OF FOCUS

## MAIN ACTION

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Sustainable Organisation - Embedding sustainability by:</b></p>             | <p>Developing and practicing operational excellence</p> <p>Diversifying funding sources while maintaining current source</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a culture of operational excellence</li> <li>2. Become the support group of choice</li> <li>1. Maintain current funding sources</li> <li>2. Increase and develop funding opportunities</li> <li>3. Manage funds responsibly</li> <li>4. Increase sponsorships</li> </ol>                 |
| <p><b>Connecting People - Connecting people and organisations by</b></p>          | <p>Matching needs of members with volunteers</p> <p>Raising public awareness and breaking down the stigma.</p> <p>Creating a database of "friendly" doctors</p>     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Overcome barriers with volunteers</li> <li>2. Increase connection opportunities across the medical sector</li> <li>1. Building Invisible Illnesses Incs profile in the medical sector</li> <li>2. Promote the benefits and contributions of a support group to sufferers and doctors</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>Valued Partnerships - Developing valued partnerships by:</b></p>            | <p>Nurturing existing relationships and developing new collaborative partnerships</p> <p>Being the recommended support group by doctors &amp; specialists in WA</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use influencers and key stakeholders to develop new relationships</li> <li>2. Maintain and grow existing relationships</li> <li>1. Be recognised as the support group doctors and specialists recommend in WA</li> </ol>  |
| <p><b>Strengthening Sector - Championing to build sector capabilities by:</b></p> | <p>Anticipating, addressing and adapting to our members changing needs</p> <p>Strengthening the support groups capabilities and capacities</p>                      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use research to respond to changing needs of our members</li> <li>2. Be the change leaders through research and innovation</li> <li>1. Promote collaboration and networking</li> <li>2. Develop and influence policies</li> <li>3. Strengthen support/ expertise</li> </ol>                     |

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Invisible Illnesses Inc team would like to thank and acknowledge those who have supported us throughout the last 12 months. Without the support we receive we would not be able to do what we do.

Invisible Illnesses Inc extends its thanks and gratitude to all of the organisations whose support has been key to its growth and development.

A special mention to:

## **Our Sponsors**

Grant Fisher from Focal Point  
Darren Wedge from Oska Wellness  
Lisa Gliddon from That's Delish  
Viva Photography Rockingham  
Jo Minney from Digital House

## **Our Partners/Affiliate's**

ConnectGroups  
WACOSS (Western Australia Communities & Social Services)  
Act Belong Commit  
CurtinFM  
District 32  
VolunteeringWA  
Rotary Rockingham  
360 Health  
Headspace  
Rockingham City Council  
City of Kwinana Council  
Rockingham Volunteer Resource Centre  
Peel Volunteer Resource Centre

## **Friends of Invisible Illnesses Inc**

Melissa Dumitru – Pulmonary Hypertension Network Australia  
Kerry Hort Rowe – Brain Thinking  
Amanda Brown – Employsure  
Andrea Clarke – City of Rockingham  
Matt Whitfield – City of Rockingham  
Dean Keating – District 32  
David Young – Fluidline Designs  
Harsha Kandemulla – Hk Dilian Accounting  
Madeline King MP

# MORPHING INTO A NEW NAME

## ***From Fibro & Us - Fibromyalgia Support Group Inc to Invisible Illnesses Inc***

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who was playing outdoors and found a caterpillar.

The little girl got a jar and put in some plants to eat and a stick to climb on. Every day she watched the caterpillar.

One day the caterpillar climbed up the stick and started acting strangely. The little girl was worried, so she called her mum. Her mum explained that within the chrysalis the caterpillar was undergoing a remarkable transformation, to become a beautiful butterfly

The girl was thrilled to hear about the changes the caterpillar would go through. She watched every day, waiting for the butterfly to emerge. One day it happened, a small hole appeared in the cocoon and the butterfly started to struggle to come out.

The butterfly was struggling so hard to get out! It looked like it couldn't break free! It looked desperate! It looked like it was making no progress!

The girl was concerned and decided to help. She went and got some scissors and cut the cocoon to make the hole bigger and the butterfly quickly emerged!

As the butterfly came out the girl was surprised. It didn't look like the beautiful butterfly she was expecting. She continued to watch the butterfly hoping that, at any moment, that it would change. She knew that in time the body would shrink and the butterfly's wings would expand.

But it didn't happen!

As the girl tried to figure out what had gone wrong her mum took her to talk to a scientist. She learned that the butterfly was SUPPOSED to struggle. In fact, the butterfly's struggle to push its way through the tiny opening of the cocoon was part of the metamorphosis. Without the struggle, the butterfly would never, ever fly.

Just like the butterfly, we have been through our struggles. We have had the rapid growth and are at a point where we need to expand our wings and really fly.

We have started to go through the metamorphosis so we can grow and become more inclusive. To do this we are changing the structure of our committee, rebranding as well as a new name. We have had a mind change to take us more into the corporate world to help make funding and finding sponsors easier.

We hope that those of you who have been on the journey with us since the beginning will continue the journey as we spread our wings and we welcome new partners along the way.