



# CEREBRAL PALSY SUPPORT NETWORK

strength through connection



ANNUAL REPORT | 2015



# CEREBRAL PALSY SUPPORT NETWORK

strength through connection

Cerebral Palsy Innovative Choices is a registered Victorian Government Department of Human Services (DHS) and National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) disability service provider.



*There are currently  
17 million people in the world  
who have cerebral palsy.*

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*Cerebral palsy refers to permanent injury of the developing brain, which affects muscle control.*



## ABOUT CPSN

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The Cerebral Palsy Support Network (CPSN) is a not-for-profit organisation providing information and support services to people living with cerebral palsy and their families. The organisation has the dual focus of empowering individuals to lead more independent lives as well as providing support in various ways to their families.

The CPSN is based in Melbourne and is the only disability support not-for-profit organisation in Victoria that focuses solely on supporting people with cerebral palsy through a range of programs and services.

CPSN recognises that each person is unique and as such, the needs of all members are assessed and addressed individually. As part of the ongoing objective to promote acceptance and equality for people with cerebral palsy, CPSN continually strives to change attitudes towards CP through awareness campaigns within the general community.



*Cerebral palsy is the most common childhood physical disability, affecting 1 in every 500 children worldwide.*

*We help to empower people with cerebral palsy to make their own choices and live the life they want.*

## WHAT WE DO

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At the Cerebral Palsy Support Network, we don't just provide essential support services.

We help to empower people with cerebral palsy to make their own choices and live the life they want.

Our ongoing objective is to promote acceptance and equality for all people living with cerebral palsy, leading to enriched lives for all. The Cerebral Palsy Support Network is continually striving to change attitudes towards cerebral palsy through awareness campaigns within the wider community.



## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

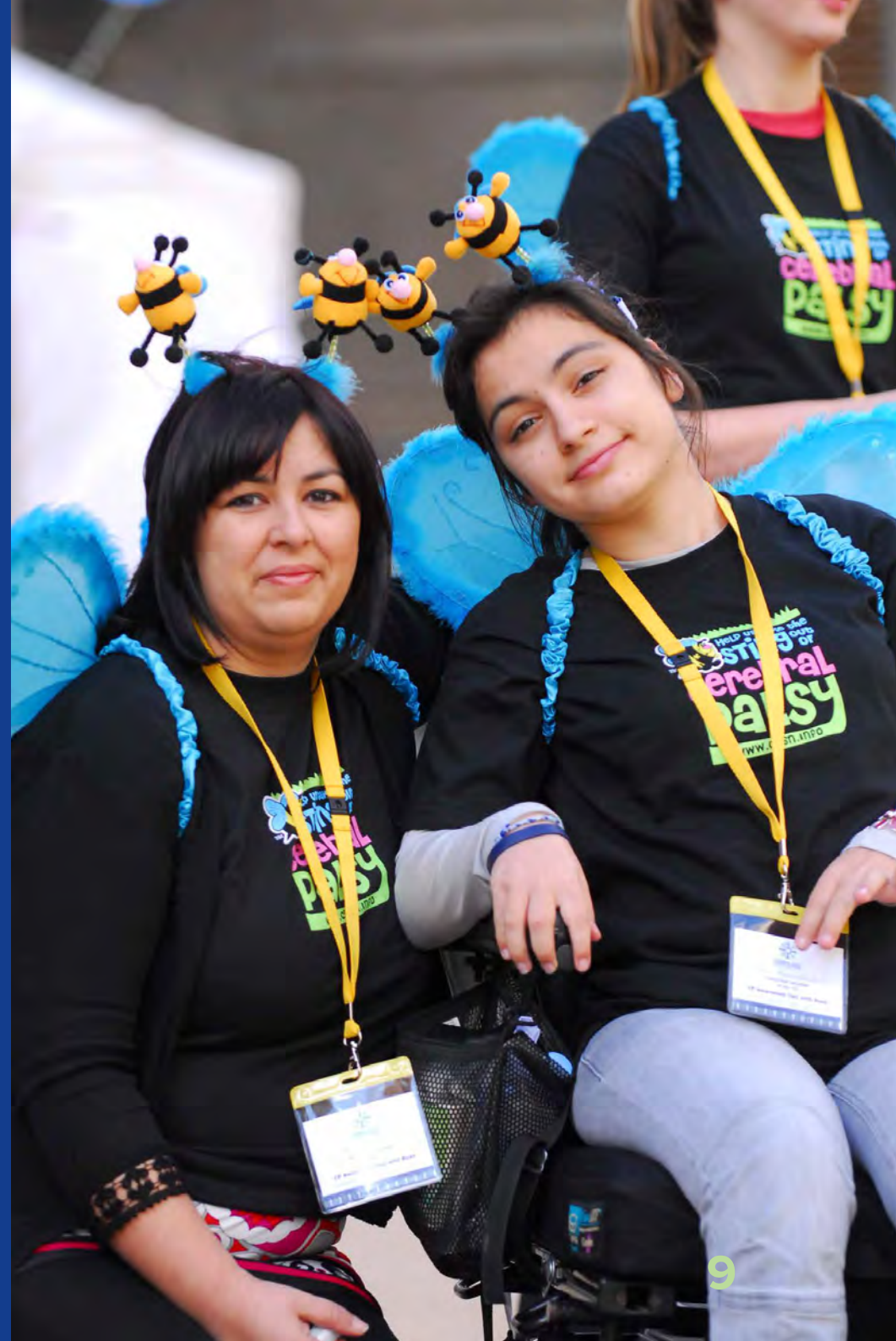
**President:** Lydia Bergantino  
**Treasurer:** Ron Harrison  
**Secretary:** Mary Cucuzza-Finn  
**General Member:** Sacha Petersen  
**General Member:** Yola Armstrong  
**General Member:** Melissa Rosenthal  
**General Member:** Cadeyrn Gaskin

## STAFF

**Chief Executive Officer:** Vicki Cavalieros  
**Member Services Manager:** Shannon Cheal  
**Marketing & Communications Manager:** Mira Smoljko  
**Finance Manager:** Phil Tsamados  
**Programs Coordinator:** Sarah Burns  
**Programs Administrator:** Melissa Flentjar  
**Administrative Officer:** Judy Steedman



*No two people with cerebral palsy are the same, and symptoms range from very mild to profound.*



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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Once again it has been an extremely busy year for the Cerebral Palsy Support Network and one that has seen many changes.

I would like to extend a big thank you and utmost appreciation to the entire board, including outgoing members, who have contributed and worked so hard to build a stronger foundation for the organisation. I feel enormously grateful and privileged to have met and worked alongside everyone. You have continually demonstrated your commitment to serving the direct needs of the CP community.

This year, the CEO and I had the pleasure of going to Sydney to meet the team at Tress Cox and to thank them for the ongoing support they have shown the CPSN. In addition to valuing this relationship immensely, it continues to be a genuine pleasure to work with their legal team.

This year the board spent many long volunteer hours putting together a new strategic plan, which continues to forge the direction of the organisation. Instrumental to the successful development and

implementation of the plan are the amazing team of employees at the Cerebral Palsy Support Network. The planning focus for the organisation has now moved towards developing a marketing strategy which will align with the strategic plan and provide a delivery mechanism for achieving our organisational goals.

A highlight of the year was the successful submission of an entry into the National Disability Awards. As finalist in the category of improving Personal and Community Support, the CPSN was invited to the final awards ceremony held at Parliament House in Canberra, along with the leaders of both major political parties. Being recognised as an important player in the disability sector was a strategic success and showed the CPSN had moved far beyond its origins of suburban parent support group. This could not have been achieved without the tireless dedication of our employees. On behalf of the board, I thank you all. We are so proud of all of your achievements this year.

***Lydia Bergantino***

*Cerebral palsy is usually diagnosed in the first 12 to 18 months.*



# CEO'S REPORT

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Our team at CPSN continues to grow with the addition of two new staff. Firstly, we welcome Judy Steedman as our Administrator. Not only is Judy often the first point of contact that members have with the CPSN, she also provides a variety of administrative support to all team members. Our second new addition is Phillip Tsamados as Finance Manager, whose primary role is to ensure that CPSN finances are managed accurately and with transparency.

We extend another big welcome to the members who have already transitioned to the NDIS in the Barwon trial site. These members have selected to continue using our services through the scheme and are reaping the benefits of both CPSN services and the NDIS.

The NDIS roll-out continues and careful consideration has been given to how it will impact CPSN and the disability community. We have taken the time to assess and plan service offerings to our members through the development of a new strategic plan that aligns with the NDIS. This is a significant step on an unknown and yet exciting journey.

It is inevitable that such a dramatic change will include some obstacles. The planning that is underway aims to anticipate as many potential issues as possible. We are confident in the organisation's ability to

satisfactorily deal with future challenges as we head towards an empowered community that will give people with disability access to necessary and timely supports and services.

I am very excited to lead the CPSN into this new environment and believe that we will continue to consolidate our reputation for empowering members to live more fulfilled and independent lives. Our expanding programs and services illustrate the various ways in which this is achieved every week.

We look forward to working in a new world where the focus of supporting people shifts from crisis management to empowerment and equality.

**Vicki Cavalieros**

*“Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” Ralph Waldo Emerson*





# PROGRAMS

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The programs area has seen a whirlwind of activity in 2015 with the expansion of existing initiatives and the introduction of new ones.

## SHARP

The Social, Health and Recreational Program - better known as SHARP - continues to provide opportunities for young people with cerebral palsy to socialise and develop friendships in a relaxed and supported environment. SHARP continues to make great strides amongst youth with CP with the expansion into the southern region. This now brings the total number of monthly SHARP groups to four, covering Melbourne, Northern & Eastern and Southern areas.

Each group is driven by the participants and supported according to their interests, goals and requirements, with a maximum of six attendees. The Melbourne group focuses on adults (18+) who do not require high level care, whilst the other groups are designed for teenagers and young adults requiring various levels of care. Activities are appropriately selected for each group and have included visits to the Comics' Lounge, Werribee Open Range Zoo, Collingwood Children's Farm, Royal Melbourne Show and Queen Victoria Market.

There were a total of 26 program sessions held during the year with a total of 80 participants. Further growth of these groups is anticipated in the coming year.

"My daughter has thoroughly enjoyed the activities she has been able to attend and often talks about them". **Heather (parent)**

"It was good to be back at SHARP program today. Thank you for taking me to the Werribee zoo. I really liked going on the bus for the safari adventure. I especially enjoyed seeing the giraffes. There was a platypus, rhinos, zebras & gorillas at the zoo too. It was fun talking to Abby in the

taxi. It was fun spending time with my friends Troy, Jake, Nicki & Demi. It is hard to wait until next time. Hope to see you next month for more fun.”

**Nicholas (Participant)**

### Camp SHARP

Camp SHARP is into its second successful year after a fantastic launch in April 2014. The first camp was held in Maldon, Victoria with 24 participants, volunteers and support workers spending two nights away in camp facilities. The weekend was carefully planned and arranged with a series of fun activities which kept the participants busy. The weekend was also beneficial for parents and families as it provided some temporary respite. Plans are underway to increase the frequency of the camps to more than once a year.

“This is the best disability camp I’ve been to. I’m surrounded by wheelchairs but I’ve never felt less disabled.” **Jack**

### M-POWER

The new M-Power Health and Fitness program was launched in March and has already proved to be immensely popular. The program is uniquely structured to promote optimal health and development amongst participants. It encourages a positive relationship with peoples’ physical health and development and works towards creating a stronger and more confident self. Participants also receive access to webinars that focus on the importance of maintaining optimal health, both physically as well as nutritionally. The strength, balance and core based M-Power classes ensure that people can experience a variety of exercises including boxing, tai chi, yoga, circuit, hydrotherapy and dance. There are currently two M-Power programs, Eastern and Northern. Weekly attendance has been solid with an average of six to eight participants per group.

The development of each of the participants regardless of ability has been exceptional and outstanding to watch. The program encourages and supports individuals holistically and is aimed at ages 15 years and above and of all abilities. We are confident in expecting big things from M-Power and its participants over the next year.

“I was hesitant to attend the program as I didn’t think I would have the ability to participate as I have complex disability. I want you to know that I have thoroughly enjoyed the programs and I love coming. I can’t believe how accommodating everyone has been to support me and my participation. I don’t get that usually.” **Jenna (Participant)**

“I just wanted to say what a great program this is, Rachel can be hesitant and the fact that she keeps wanting to come back is fantastic. It’s also a great chance for us parents to have our little catch ups. Thank you.” **Angela (Parent)**



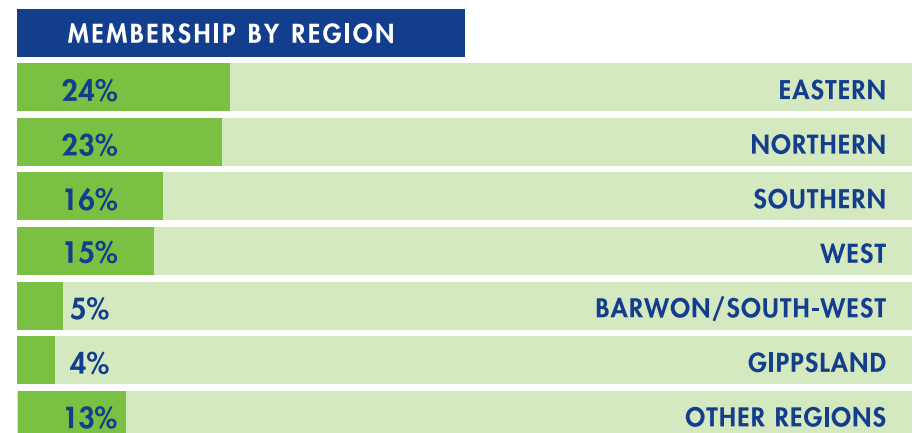
*Premature babies are at higher risk of cerebral palsy.*

## MEMBER SERVICES

CPSN members form the foundation of the organisation. The 2014-15 year has seen the Member Services area continue to resource and empower members with information, support and referral through the Care Centre, parent support groups and the online information library.

CPSN welcomed 103 new members this year and supported over 200 people through the Care Centre, by phone, email and in person. The Care Centre is receiving an increasing number of calls from people who have found CPSN through internet searches, including parents of children recently diagnosed with cerebral palsy, adult individuals with cerebral palsy and also their families and support networks. It is extremely encouraging and gratifying for people to find the organisation through online searches and subsequently reaching out to connect and seek support.

This year CPSN has focused on building a culture of welcoming feedback and complaints from members as a way of improving services and programs, an essential component of any continuous improvement cycle. The team have participated in training from the Office of the Disability Services Commissioner and reviewed the process for receiving and responding to complaints. Members are always encouraged to share examples of positive interactions with the CPSN, and also provide feedback on potential areas for improvement.





# AWARENESS & EDUCATION

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A combination of online and traditional undertakings have formed the basis of CPSN marketing activities for the year. Brand awareness is still a key area of focus for the organisation, within both the CP and general communities.

This year the digital marketing strategy has focused primarily on email marketing, social media and SEO activities. The combination of various media has meant that diverse information to a number of different demographics has been able to be delivered in an engaging and timely manner.

Online communications channels to members and the CP community have been streamlined but have also grown. The monthly newsletter 'What's the Buzz' is still going strong with membership at almost 2,000 subscribers.

A new weekly email newsletter has been created in response to the increasing number of external organisations requesting dissemination of pertinent information to members. The 'CPSN Weekly News' was created to address this need and keep people informed of more immediate happenings.

Social media updates with current and topical posts continue to be used successfully to engage with the CP community on a more immediate level.

The increased activity online combined with search engine optimisation activities have resulted in significant strides being made with website traffic. There has been a marked increase in visitors to the CPSN website over the past year. When compared between 2014 and 2015, the period April to June has seen a 70% increase in traffic. Approximately three-quarters of visitors are unique which means that an increasing number of new visitors are still finding the site.

Traditional marketing initiatives have also contributed to increased CPSN brand awareness. A suite of marketing brochures have been developed featuring strong and consistent branding across all programs and services including SHARP, M-Power, CPIC and the Care Centre.

The focus on branding has carried through to external presentations. This has been particularly necessary due to the increased number of speaker requests from various organisations. These relationships are essential in promoting the work done by CPSN as well as developing potential partnerships and associations. A prime example of a strategic relationship is with the Centre of Research Excellence (Cerebral Palsy). The close working relationship between the two organisations has resulted in a joint initiative, CP FACTS, a one day expo aimed at parents of children with CP. Planning is underway for the day to be held later in the year.

Notable donations for the year were received from various sources, including the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) who hosted a fundraising lunch featuring Warwick Capper. An example of an individual initiative was the 'Surrey to Murray' bike ride, which was organised by a father of a child with CP. A significant portion of proceeds from his bike ride from Portland to Mildura were donated to the CPSN. On a more sombre note, Mrs Neilma Gantner, a long-time supporter and annual donor through her foundation, passed away in June 2015.



# TREASURER'S REPORT

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After my first year as treasurer, I am pleased to report that the Cerebral Palsy Support Network has put in a solid performance for the year.

It is important to note that the organisation's surplus was lower as a percentage of revenue than last year. This can be attributed to the delivery of a greater number of services to our members. In addition, this is the first time that we have established a provision for doubtful debts in the accounts.

The CPSN maintains its strong financial position which will provide an excellent foundation for increased services and staff numbers in the coming financial year.

I would like to thank the staff for their contribution to this result, especially Vicki (CEO) and Phil (Finance Manager) who have made the job as treasurer such an enjoyable task. I look forward to even better results over the next twelve months as the CPSN goes from strength to strength.

**Ron Harrison**



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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## ***Independent audit report to the members of Cerebral Palsy Support Network***

### **Report on the financial report**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of The Cerebral Palsy Support Network, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015, the profit and loss statement for the period then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

### **Committees' Responsibility for the Financial Report**

The committee of Cerebral Palsy Support Network are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committees' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### **Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about

the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Cerebral Palsy Support Network as at 30 June 2015, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the period then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic).

### **Emphasis of Matter**

Without qualification to the opinion expressed above, attention is drawn to the following matters:

1. Our audit opinion does not include any reference to the results and state of affairs as at 30 June 2014 as we did not attend to that audit.

### **Basis of Accounting**

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Cerebral Palsy Support Network to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

***John Petridis Director***

***Kidmans Partners Audit Pty Ltd ABN 46 143 986 841***



## FINANCIAL REPORT

| INCOME                           | 2015               | 2014               |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| CP Innovative Choices            | 2,630,631          | 1,735,041          |
| Donations                        | 12,004             | 9,895              |
| Interest Received                | 8,407              | 17,104             |
| Grants - Dept. of Human Services | 63,009             | 59,246             |
| Grants - Other                   | 1,048              | 81,250             |
| Memberships                      | 676                | 920                |
| Other Income                     | -                  | 99                 |
| Rebates & refunds                | -                  | -                  |
| <b>Total Income</b>              | <b>\$2,715,775</b> | <b>\$1,903,555</b> |

| ASSETS                           |                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS                   | 2015             | 2014             |
| Cash Assets                      | 773,878          | 691,311          |
| Receivables                      | 158,948          | 129,710          |
| Other                            | 2,292            | 2,292            |
| <b>Total Current Assets</b>      | <b>\$935,118</b> | <b>\$823,313</b> |
| NON CURRENT ASSETS               | 2015             | 2014             |
| Property, Plant & Equipment      | 13,108           | 9,066            |
| Intangible Assets - Website      | 14,294           | 33,313           |
| Total Non Current Assets         | 27,402           | 42,379           |
| <b>Total Assets</b>              | <b>\$962,520</b> | <b>\$865,692</b> |
| LIABILITIES                      |                  |                  |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES              | 2015             | 2014             |
| Payables                         | 21,544           | 44,631           |
| Current Tax Liabilities          | 50,479           | 26,345           |
| Provisions                       | 60,623           | 12,844           |
| Amounts Received in Advance      | 50,510           | 38,135           |
| <b>Total Current Liabilities</b> | <b>\$183,156</b> | <b>\$121,955</b> |
| <b>Net Assets</b>                | <b>\$779,364</b> | <b>\$743,737</b> |
| MEMBER'S FUNDS                   | 2015             | 2014             |
| Retained Surplus                 | 779,364          | 743,737          |
| <b>Total Member's Funds</b>      | <b>\$779,364</b> | <b>\$743,737</b> |

| EXPENSES                | 2015   | 2014   |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|
| Accounting & Audit Fees | 4,055  | 2,750  |
| Advertising & Promotion | -      | 7,491  |
| Bank Fees & Charges     | 1,823  | 235    |
| Committee Expenses      | 6,461  | 6,106  |
| Depreciation Plant      | 3,940  | 16,109 |
| Depreciation Website    | 29,532 | -      |
| Fundraising Expenses    | 7,422  | 48,540 |
| Insurance               | 417    | 374    |
| IT & Telecommunications | 12,149 | 22,905 |
| Newsletter Expenses     | -      | 3,915  |
| Office Supplies         | 6,469  | 6,270  |
| Postage & Delivery      | 6,938  | 3,079  |
| Printing                | 4,898  | 4,400  |
| Occupancy Costs         | 38,466 | 35,705 |
| Replacment Tools        | 177    | 752    |
| Seminars & Workshops    | 1,614  | 4,554  |
| Staff Amenities         | 1,899  | 1,840  |
| Staff Training          | 9,973  | 5,013  |

| EXPENSES (Cont.)                           | 2015               | 2014               |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Subscriptions                              | 77                 | 170                |
| Sundry Expenses                            | 15,927             | 3,719              |
| Superannuation                             | 181,909            | 113,854            |
| Wages & Salaries                           | 2,234,775          | 1,515,399          |
| Workcover                                  | 56,306             | 22,089             |
| Infrastructure                             | 2,047              | -                  |
| Legal                                      | 933                | -                  |
| Recruitment                                | 1,983              | -                  |
| Volunteer Expenses                         | 970                | -                  |
| Programs                                   | 9,987              | -                  |
| Provision Doubtful Debts                   | 39,000             | -                  |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                      | <b>\$2,680,148</b> | <b>\$1,825,269</b> |
| Profit from ordinary activities            | \$35,627           | \$78,286           |
| Net profit attributable to the association | 35,627             | 78,286             |
| Total changes in equity of the association | -                  | -                  |
| Opening retained profits                   | 743,737            | 665,451            |
| Net profit attributable to the association | 35,627             | 78,286             |
| <b>Closing Retained Profits</b>            | <b>\$779,364</b>   | <b>\$743,737</b>   |

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

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The ongoing support of individuals and businesses is critical to the existence of the Cerebral Palsy Support Network. You can show your support for our work in any number of ways including any of the following.

## *Donate*

Donations are the most direct method of supporting our works and help us to extend and introduce much-needed services to as many people living with cerebral palsy as possible. There are a number of ways that you can donate including our website or by contacting our office directly. As a registered charity, donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

## *Fundraise*

There are so many creative ways in which people and businesses have raised funds for the CPSN, from organising a morning tea to the more energetic fun runs and charity bike rides. For ideas, please visit our website for more information on fundraising.

## *Become a member*

Membership is free for individuals with cerebral palsy and their immediate families. Otherwise there is a small annual fee that goes directly into our support services.



*The ongoing support of individuals and businesses is critical to the existence of the Cerebral Palsy Support Network.*



CEREBRAL PALSY  
SUPPORT NETWORK  
strength through connection



CEREBRAL PALSY  
INNOVATIVE  
CHOICES  
creating opportunities for the lifestyle you want

## CONTACT US


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