

Annual Report

2025-26




Northcott
Let's see what you can do



Acknowledgement of Lived Experience

Northcott acknowledges the lived experiences of people with disability, their families and carers. We recognise the barriers many children and adults with disability face and the important role that people with lived experience play in shaping services, systems and communities that are more inclusive, fair and accessible. We are committed to listening, learning and working in partnership with people with disability and their support networks to achieve better life outcomes and build a more inclusive society where everyone can thrive.

Contents

About Northcott	05
Message from our Chair and CEO	06
Our Strategic Direction	08
Our community in FY2026	09
Our services	10
Do More	13
Be More	27
Reach More	41
Early Childhood Services	46
Financial summary	52
Our Members	53
Acknowledgements	54

Acknowledgement of Country

Northcott acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands upon which we work. We pay our respects to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and extend that respect to other First Nations people. We also pay tribute to their ongoing connection to land, water and community.

In everything that we do we strive to enable First Nations peoples to discover, unlock and unleash their potential. We recognise the challenges faced by those with disability and are committed to supporting First Nations people to overcome these, so they remain connected to their communities and broader society. We aim to achieve this goal through working in partnership with First Nations communities in a respectful, committed and professional manner.





About Northcott

Founded in 1929 by the Rotary Club of Sydney, Northcott began by supporting children affected by polio and other diseases. Today, the organisation is a leading disability and family services provider supporting children, young people, families, adults and communities in New South Wales (NSW), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Queensland (QLD).

We provide services and support across all life stages. As a NDIS Partner in the Community in 5 regions of NSW, our Early Childhood Service delivers support to families with children aged 0-9 years with developmental delay and/or disability and their communities.

From our offices, centres and in the community, we provide core services for children and adults including Therapy, Life Skills, Work & Study, Recreation, Respite, Social Outings, Behaviour Support and Sexuality and Relationship Education.

Northcott is also a leader in housing and supported living options for people with disability.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to build an inclusive society where people can live the life they choose. We do this by supporting children, young people, families, adults and communities.

Our vision

Our vision is to be an inclusive organisation, growing support and connection where everyone thrives.

Our values

Northcott is a values-driven organisation.

We are:

- **INNOVATIVE** - because we develop new ideas and solutions with creativity in anticipation of changing needs.
- **RESPECTFUL** - because we believe that everyone's voice is unique and that they have the right to be heard.
- **BRAVE** - because we have the courage to stand up for people with all abilities even in the face of adversity.



From the Chair and CEO

For nearly 100 years, Northcott has evolved in response to the changing needs of children, their families, adults and communities. Faced with new challenges and opportunities, FY2026 required us to adapt once again.

Operating within sectors experiencing significant reform, we continued to strengthen Northcott through systems, strategies and initiatives designed to progress our Strategic Plan, improve service delivery and make an even greater impact on the people and communities we support.

Across Northcott, customers continued to build skills and confidence, strengthen friendships, pursue their goals and increase their independence. Guided by our Strategic Plan and priority areas of Do More, Be More and Reach More, we created more opportunities for people to connect, contribute and participate as active and valued members of their communities. These outcomes reflect our vision to be an inclusive organisation, growing support and connection where everyone thrives.



Kirsten Armstrong



Liz Forsyth

Northcott made considerable financial progress this year, with our deficit reducing to less than half of last year's result and our operations returning to a positive cash position. This turnaround reflects the deliberate steps we have taken to consolidate operations, restructure where necessary and lift efficiency across the organisation. The challenge of a NDIS pricing model that falls short in covering the real cost of delivering quality services remains. We will continue to advocate for a fairer and more viable funding system for participants and providers, while maintaining a strong focus on returning Northcott to a balanced financial position.

To position Northcott for long-term success, a major focus has been to grow the way we support children, young people and families — services that have been part of Northcott since 1929. This year, we built on that legacy in a more deliberate and targeted way, focusing on expanding opportunities in areas where Northcott has deep expertise, such as early childhood support and family services. This involved drawing on the reputation and skills of our NDIS Early Childhood team, which once again delivered strong outcomes for thousands of children and families across New South Wales.

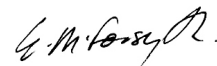
Northcott was also actively involved in discussions, consultations and reform initiatives that will shape the future of supports for people with disability, children and families. Through our advocacy, government submissions and participation in sector initiatives, we worked to ensure voices and experiences of people with disability and families remain central to policy and service design. We are particularly proud of Northcott's involvement in the Supported Independent Living and Therapy pilots under the National Disability Insurance Agency's Quality Supports Program. Through this work, Northcott is sharing evidence about the real costs and outcomes of delivering high-quality supports to help inform future service models.

During the year, we launched our third Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, setting out how Northcott will continue to strengthen relationships with First Nations staff, children, families, communities and organisations. This new plan focuses on embedding reconciliation initiatives across the organisation and creating stronger pathways to safe, culturally-informed support for First Nations children, families and communities. In the past year, we demonstrated this commitment through strong representation at First Nations events, increased collaboration with trusted organisations and deeper engagement with First Nations communities across New South Wales and Queensland.

Finally, we extend our sincere thanks to the Northcott Board, staff, partners and supporters. Every day, our community demonstrates extraordinary commitment to supporting customers and creating a more inclusive society. Their expertise, compassion, innovation and dedication are making a meaningful difference in the lives of the people and families we support.



**Kirsten
Armstrong**
Chair



**Liz
Forsyth**
CEO

Our Strategic Direction



VISION

Our vision: To be an inclusive organisation, growing support and connection where everyone thrives.



Do More, Be More, Reach More

Northcott's strategic direction and vision explain how we want Northcott to develop in the future. Our plans have been developed in consultation with customers, families and staff.

DO MORE



- * **Active Support with all customers that improves engagement and outcomes.**
We want you to be able to participate in meaningful activities and social relationships of your own choosing.
- * **Business and service models that promote integration.**
We want our services to be more connected to the community.
- * **Active and purposeful presence in community.**
We want to help you fully take part in your communities.

BE MORE



- * **Actions that deliver an inclusive and diverse organisation.**
Northcott team members are supported to bring their best selves to work.
- * **Inclusive governance and customer voice.**
You help us make decisions.
- * **Advocacy at all levels.**
Northcott promotes the inclusion of people with disability in our community and beyond.

REACH MORE



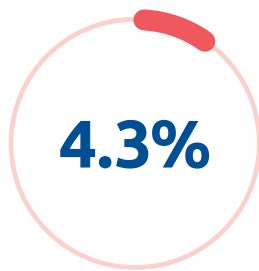
- * **Growth plans to move into new areas and sectors.**
We want to innovatively support existing and new customers, including expanding NDIS services and developing more non-NDIS services.
- * **Alliances and partnerships that help us achieve our scale and impact.**
We want to work with others to achieve more and have a greater impact.
- * **Technology that delivers innovation in services and support.**
We will keep improving our systems and technology to better support you.

Our community in FY2026

Our customers

4,227 people with disability* provided with support and services by Northcott.

*excluding children supported by Northcott's Early Childhood Services as a NDIS Partner in the Community. See page 46 for more on this.



told us they are
Aboriginal or Torres
Strait Islander



used Northcott
for the first time



Our workplace profile



2,272
staff members



41%
part-time



31%
casual



70%
female



62%
are in metro
areas



52%
born overseas



19%
are carers



96%
work in Support
and Therapy roles

Our services

Support for every stage, from the earliest years to later life, and everything in between.

Allied Health and Clinical Services

Our fully accredited speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers and dietitians support positive physical and mental health across all life stages. Our Allied Health team works with children, young people, adults and those over 65 years.



Early Childhood Services

Tailored support meeting the needs of children aged 0-9 with developmental delay or disability, delivered through our role as a NDIS Early Childhood Partner in the Community.



Child, Youth and Family Support

Northcott provides a range of services and supports, such as playgroups and parenting groups, to support children, young people and families to achieve positive outcomes.



Group Services

These are services where customers with similar goals and interests come together in a group setting at a Northcott Centre or in the community. Our offerings include Life Skills, Recreation, Work & Study, Short Stays and more.



Home and Living

We offer Housing and Supported Independent Living services that support people with disability to find a home and access the support they need.



Individual Services

To increase customers' independence, we work one-on-one to assist them to take part in their community or be as independent as possible in their home.



Positive Behavioural Support

Our experienced practitioners support the management of behaviours of concern and create positive behavioural outcomes.

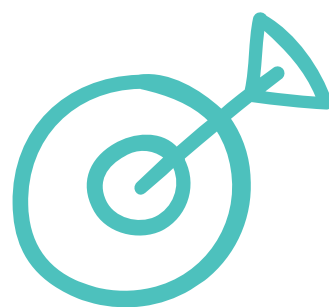


Sexuality and Relationship Education

This is a human-rights based clinical service, offering therapeutic support, assessment, training and education, to holistically achieve sexuality goals and needs.







Do More



Our services give customers choices so they can participate in activities and build relationships that are important to them.



Services are delivered in inclusive and accessible settings that meet customers' wants and needs.



Through effective and meaningful partnerships, customers choose how they participate and are included in their communities.

Support through all life stages

Luke and Edith

Child and Family Support

Luke and his daughter Edith love attending Northcott's weekly supported playgroup, facilitated by an experienced Northcott professional. Luke has connected with other parents and Edith has developed vital social skills and friendships, improving her confidence as she prepares for school. "There's lots going on. It's good to see Edith bouncing between all the different set-ups and really enjoying herself," says Luke. "It's also giving dads like me a different perspective on our child's development and needs."



Ella

Clinical Services

Seven-year-old Ella has myotonic dystrophy, a condition that affects her muscles. She was just 8 months old when she started physiotherapy with Northcott (then known as Montrose Therapy). The personalised, play-based physiotherapy she accesses is supporting her to build strength, balance, coordination and mobility — essential skills for growing independence and enabling her to participate more fully in her community.



Cooking with purpose

Community-based Group Services

Each week, Northcott Campbelltown Work & Study customers help prepare meals that go directly to individuals and families at risk of homelessness. This volunteering opportunity is teaching customers how to cook, while they give back to the local community.

“This has been important for our customers. They are using their skills to provide good for others, and they feel proud of that,” explains Northcott Support Worker Isabella.

“Customers are gaining practical cooking skills, but also learning teamwork, organisational skills and time management. It’s really preparing them for the workforce.”

Customers have told us the experience has been transformative. Many have expressed how rewarding it is to make a difference to others less fortunate in the community.

“It feels great to give back to the community. I’ve learned some new dicing techniques, and it’s given me a bit more confidence with talking. I’ve even noticed that I’ve been able to cook more at home,” says Dylan.



Find out more about Northcott’s Dignity Dishes team by watching our video!



Romana

Home and Living

When Romana’s stepfather was looking for a safe and suitable place for Romana to move to when his own health declined, Northcott Tamworth was there every step of the way. After settling Romana into her new home, our staff have continued to support her to build her independence and get out more in the local community. See page 38 for Romana’s story.

Enhancing services and supports

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

Our third Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (September 2025–August 2028) was launched in September 2025. It builds on more than a decade of formal reconciliation work with high-impact, measurable actions across the organisation.

Developed through consultation, the Stretch RAP reflects the perspectives of the First Nations staff, partners and communities we work alongside. It reinforces our commitment to respectful relationships, genuine partnership, cultural safety and culturally responsive practice across Northcott.

In FY2026 Northcott progressed in several key RAP areas, including tailoring Early Childhood pathways and strengthening engagement with First Nations communities and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs). Northcott now has close to 20 active partnerships with ACCOs across New South Wales and Queensland. These are helping us to improve our locally informed and culturally responsive service delivery, particularly when delivering outreach and community-based programs.

By working alongside ACCOs and local communities, Northcott aims to reduce barriers to access, strengthen community connections and improve pathways to culturally-safe and appropriate support for First Nations children and families.

Actions in our Stretch RAP touch all parts of the organisation, from guiding community partnerships and informing Northcott policies and service delivery to improving our recruitment practices to grow and better support our First Nations workforce.



Delivering inclusive dental care

Our Healthcare and Clinical Governance team won a 2026 HESTA Award in the Disability Services – Team Excellence category for their work delivering a free dental clinic for people with disability. Northcott has partnered with the University of Sydney School of Dentistry since August 2024 to deliver the service. Demand grew this year with 105 customers accessing the clinic, which is staffed by trainee dentists. Most patients received preventative care, with only two requiring hospital referrals. The early intervention care delivered through the clinic is helping to reduce avoidable escalation of oral health issues.

89
in-person
consults

16
telehealth
consults



New disability housing

In June 2026, construction began on Northcott's new disability housing for the people of Glenroy, in the Murrumbidgee region. This will provide six bedrooms across two purpose-built homes. Designed in collaboration with people with disability, the homes are close to community amenities, green spaces and support services. This will support future residents to have more opportunities to participate in their community and build connections. Northcott is proud to partner with Inclusive Housing Australia as the Supported Independent Living service provider for this new development.

We know that many people with disability are still unable to access housing that meets their needs, preferences and support requirements. Northcott continues to explore partnerships to expand disability housing options across New South Wales and Queensland.



More supported playgroups

To reach families who may not have NDIS funding or access to traditional one-on-one therapy for their child, we expanded our early intervention supported playgroups into more regions across New South Wales and Queensland. Our Clinical Services team now offers structured Allied Health Facilitated Playgroups which combine developmental, play-based activities with parent coaching and are led by a Northcott clinician.

In addition, our long-running supported playgroups, funded through the NSW Department of Communities & Justice and various philanthropic partners, were introduced in more locations. Northcott's NDIS Early Childhood Service also expanded its playgroup program, offering group-based early childhood supports in all of the regions where the service operates.

Allied Health for over 65s

Following a successful Gold Coast pilot, we expanded our aged care allied health service to older people in Parramatta and Ipswich, Logan and the Sunshine Coast. New contracts through the Community Home Support Program, Support at Home and Department of Veterans Affairs funding streams have enabled Northcott clinicians to support more older Australians without NDIS funding.

We also introduced monthly outreach clinics in Hervey Bay and Maryborough in Queensland, where older people are waiting more than six months for therapy services. In line with emerging aged care reforms, relevant processes were updated and staff completed training to ensure our service delivery remains compliant, high quality and consistent.

Earlier, preventative intervention for families

A group of Northcott therapists completed Primary Care Triple P and ENVISAGE training, enhancing their ability to provide early, evidence-based support for children and families. We also formed partnerships with kindergartens and early learning centres for other early intervention opportunities and began delivering therapy outreach services to children and families in Nowra on the NSW South Coast.

Community partnerships

Partnerships with local organisations expanded opportunities for customers, extending our impact beyond services alone. These relationships helped to create stronger local connections and more inclusive communities where customers can participate, belong and thrive. A few highlights are below.

Northcott Hornsby and North Parramatta partnered with Ku-ring-gai Community College to provide accredited and non-accredited training to support customers to build practical skills and explore employment pathways.

The Australian Navy partnered with Northcott Parramatta to offer Work & Study customers an experiential learning opportunity alongside Navy cadets. As part of the Young Endeavour Program, our customers toured a Navy vessel and learned practical sailing skills, promoting teamwork, communication, confidence building and problem solving.

Guided by our Stretch RAP, we strengthened First Nations access to support through culturally-responsive outreach and community-based approaches, developed through stronger engagement with First Nations communities and organisations. In Grafton, we worked alongside Gurehlgam Corporation to support a First Nations Early Supports playgroup. Delivering support within a trusted community setting, such as this playgroup, helps families access culturally safe services while strengthening relationships between Northcott, local First Nations organisations and community. This work reflects Northcott's commitment to strengthening respectful and reciprocal relationships with First Nations people and organisations. It shows how we are moving beyond engagement alone towards genuine partnership, shared learning and locally informed approaches that strengthen culturally safe pathways for First Nations children and families.



Making art in Albury

Six of our Housing customers in Albury took part in an innovative, 6-week community-based art and culture program aimed at reducing social isolation, improving wellbeing and fostering community engagement. Delivered by Northcott in partnership with Gateway Health and Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Tracey Vaughan, customers participated in cultural experiences and workshops aimed at connecting them with Aboriginal culture and encouraging self-expression through art.

Activities included hearing from local Elders, learning traditional cooking techniques, visiting the Yindyamarra Sculpture Walk and participating in Aboriginal art workshops with Tracey. During the program, customers formed new friendships and grew in confidence.

Each participant created an individual artwork that was exhibited at a showcase for participants, families, support staff and community members. Made possible with funding from The Broinowski Foundation, Northcott is grateful to Gateway Health, Tracey Vaughan, local Elders, participants, families, staff, volunteers and supporters whose contributions helped to make this program a success.

A similar collaborative creative project is also running for Northcott customers across our Sydney locations, supported by a Commonwealth Bank Community Grant. From May to October 2026, customers will take part in music workshops, Indigenous artmaking, woodwork and resin workshops to build skills and explore their creative side.



Tertiary Scholarships

Northcott's subsidiary, The SpineCare Foundation provides financial assistance to help students with disability pursue their tertiary education goals. Offered through several longstanding Trusts and Foundations, these scholarships support recipients to overcome some of the financial burden of further education, such as the cost of computer equipment, internet access, transport, scribes and personal care.

At the end of 2025, after 10 years of impact, the Wendy Hall Scholarship concluded. Established in memory of a much-loved former Northcott employee, it supported six students to pursue education and career goals.



27
recipients



SpineCare
Foundation

Improving facilities and service delivery

New offices, relocations and renovations

In FY2026, we continued to open, relocate and upgrade sites to better support customers and strengthen service delivery. Projects included:

- Relocating our Campbelltown services to a more modern and accessible site close to parks, services and community organisations. Northcott has a long history in Campbelltown and surrounds with strong connections to the community. Our new site better equips us to strengthen these relationships for even better outcomes for customers.
- Re-inventing our Liverpool site to integrate a new day program, respite services previously offered in Cabramatta and therapy services from Casula.
- Relocating our Hillsdale services to an accessible site in Banksmeadow, that better suits the customer cohort requirements.
- Moving Seven Hills services to our Blacktown site to support the delivery of multiple services from the one location.
- Opening a new office in Maroochydore to support growth in Group Community Services
- Expanding the Ipswich site to provide dedicated space for Group Services and community participate.

ClubGRANTS funding also enhanced customer experiences. Our Penrith centre received support for a new garden area and outdoor furniture, creating an inviting space for socialising, relaxation, skill development and community connection.

Ipswich



Penrith



Campbelltown



Quality, Risk and Safeguarding

Safer services for customers

To support safer services and better outcomes for customers, we strengthened incident reporting, risk management, investigations and clinical governance. This improved compliance, timeliness and responses to emerging risks.

We also reviewed and improved more than 1,100 customer healthcare plans. This work strengthened customer healthcare plans, improved consistency across services and helped identify and address potential risks earlier.



More than
1,100
customer healthcare
plans reviewed
and improved

Strengthening workforce safeguards

We strengthened customer safety and compliance by improving how we monitor and manage mandatory staff credentials, including Working With Children Checks and NDIS Worker Screening clearances. Improved alerts and tracking has helped ensure credentials remain current, while updated risk assessment processes provide appropriate safeguards when checks are underway but not yet finalised.

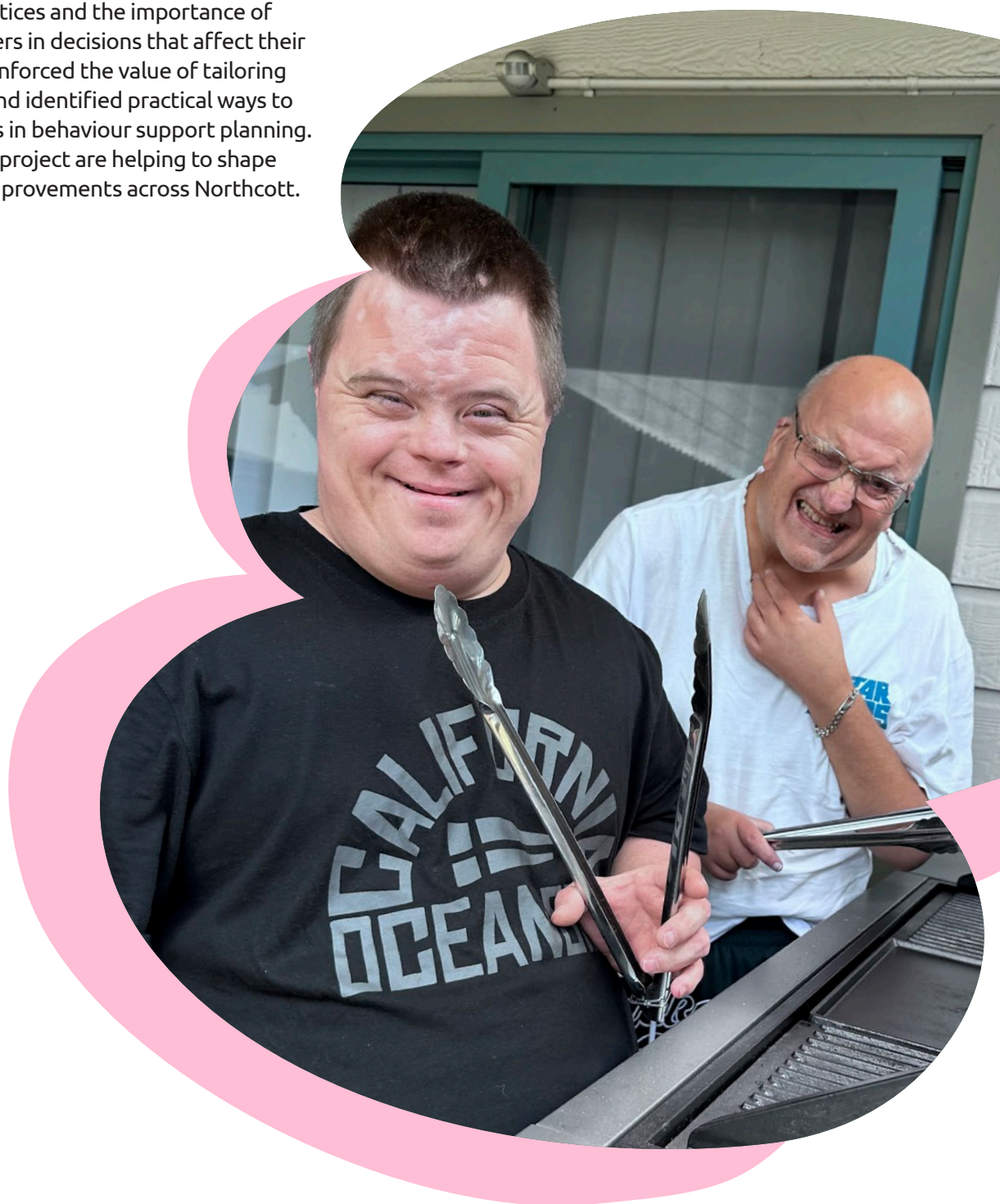
Reducing restrictive practice

We reduced the number of restrictive practices used to support customers through stronger behaviour support and clinical oversight of behaviour support plans, clearer thresholds for use and more targeted training for staff.

The Restrictive Practices team worked closely with Operations to deliver practice improvements and active support with customers. This included improving staff understanding of customer rights, particularly when managing safety and risks, as well supporting frontline workers to use strategies that reduce, and where possible, eliminate restrictive practices.

Through the Quality Supports Program under the National Disability Insurance Agency's Supported Independent Living (SIL) Pilot, we also strengthened customer voice in restrictive practice decision-making. As part of this work, Northcott trialled the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission's *Restrictive Practices and Me* resources with customers who have restrictive practices in place. Behaviour Support Practitioners explored how accessible, personalised information could help customers better understand the restrictive practices included in their plans and enable them to be more involved in discussions about their supports.

For the first time, two customers shared their experiences directly with a Restrictive Practices Panel, providing valuable insights into the impact of restrictive practices and the importance of involving customers in decisions that affect their lives. The pilot reinforced the value of tailoring communication and identified practical ways to involve customers in behaviour support planning. Insights from the project are helping to shape future practice improvements across Northcott.



Gordon's on the move



“

“The Move to Improve program has helped me feel better about myself and when I’m around others. It’s helped me be comfortable in myself, even on days without progress.”

Gordon, Move to Improve participant

Since joining Northcott’s Move to Improve group, Gordon has developed a new outlook on leading a healthier, happier life.

Gordon is part of a group of Campbelltown Life Skills customers committed to getting fit and adopting a healthier lifestyle – with support from Northcott.

Developed by a Northcott Support Worker and launched at the start of 2026, Move to Improve is a weekly program combining movement, wellbeing and connection. It supports young adults with disability to build healthy habits, while growing their confidence.

Each week customers take part in a physical activity, such as bushwalking, swimming, pickleball or boxing, followed by a hands-on learning session focused on nutrition and wellbeing. To stay motivated, customers reflect on the activities and their progress in a weekly journal. They are also encouraged to contribute ideas for the weekly activities and meals to learn to cook.



“Now I feel energised and more confident with myself.”

Gordon, Move to Improve participant

For Gordon, the program has already had a positive impact.

“At the beginning, I wasn’t very active. I was very lazy and didn’t know how to take care of myself. Now I feel energised and more confident with myself. I go out more and enjoy walking to places. I also enjoy other physical activities, like going to the gym,” he says.

“The program has also made me happier. I’m able to talk more with my friends and it’s made me come out of the shell I was trying to hide in before.”

While Gordon’s favourite activities have been going to the PCYC gym and bushwalking, he says the variety keeps him motivated.

“I like being able to try out new activities every week and connecting with the others. Being able to lose weight and feel healthier emotionally and physically is good,” he says.

For Support Worker Saji, who developed the program, seeing customers grow in confidence and take pride in their progress has been rewarding.

“I created the program after seeing how much customers benefitted when physical activity and wellbeing were combined, rather than treated separately. I’m delighted the response has been so positive. Watching the customers become more independent, feel stronger and connect with each other is wonderful.”

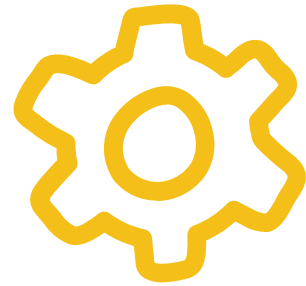
Saji was recognised as our Employee of the Month in February 2026, for the leadership and innovation shown in developing Move to Improve.



Watch this video to learn more about Move to Improve.







Be More



Our actions deliver an inclusive and diverse organisation supporting staff to thrive.



We involve and listen to customers, so they play a part in the decisions made in the organisation.



We advocate for the inclusion of people with disability and strive to influence change.

Our team



Canberra
Therapy team



Maroochydore
team

During FY2026, Northcott continued to navigate organisational change while remaining focused on attracting, developing and retaining skilled staff. This year, in line with our Stretch RAP, we increased our First Nations workforce representation from 64 to 67 identified staff. Northcott's First Nations workforce target is 5% by 2028, and we are currently at 3%.

Despite a highly competitive labour market, our retention results remained stronger than industry benchmarks. Permanent staff attrition fell from 21% to 19% and was 4.7% better than the industry benchmark. Permanent and casual frontline staff turnover also remained below industry averages, at 19% and 42% respectively.

We supported staff to build meaningful and rewarding careers through flexible work practices, staff benefits, professional development opportunities and the introduction of Northcott's comprehensive Performance Management Framework and process.



Ipswich
team



2,272
staff members in
NSW, ACT and QLD

Recruitment

We strengthened our recruitment by refreshing employment advertising to better reflect Northcott's commitment to inclusion, diversity and equity. This has helped attract high-quality candidates, improve hiring outcomes and support workforce retention. We also established a centralised Hiring Manager Resource Repository with enhanced recruitment tools and interview frameworks, and transitioned reference checking to our HR system to improve consistency, efficiency and the overall candidate experience.

For a more culturally informed recruitment process for First Nations candidates, senior representatives from Yarrabee, our First Nations staff network, joined interview panels when applicants identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Workplace Gender Equity

Our Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reporting showed Northcott's average gender pay gap remained below the sector benchmark (by 0.5%), with strong female representation across all job categories. Manager-level pay equity remains an area for improvement and monitoring. We continued to support families by providing 14 weeks of paid parental leave, compared with the sector average of 9 weeks.



Building staff capability

This year, online Lead & Learn sessions were introduced on topics including *How to get your team humming*, *AI and Change Mindset*. The Learning & Development team also produced new e-learning modules and improved induction training to increase staff engagement.

Targeted training to strengthen staff capability in children, youth and family services was provided to prepare for future service delivery. We also maintained a strong focus on cultural capability and awareness, aligned with actions outlined in our Stretch RAP. This is contributing to a more inclusive and culturally safe workplace for our First Nations staff and customers. New disability confidence and inclusion resources helped to grow staff awareness and improve accessibility across the workforce.

Online staff forums provided updates from across the business and opportunities to celebrate wins together. Improved organisation-wide communication is contributing to a more cohesive and supportive workplace.

Work commenced on a new People Leader Essentials online course to build the capability of new and emerging managers through practical tools and information on Northcott's leadership expectations.

From a technology perspective, we continued to build organisational capability through investment in cyber security, data governance and responsible technology use. We enhanced cyber security controls, progressed the Essential Eight uplift program, improved data governance practices and developed new policies for Artificial Intelligence (AI), privacy and information security. Stronger frameworks for ethical AI use were also introduced helping balance innovation with customer safety, privacy and trust.



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During FY2026, we achieved a 40% reduction in hours lost due to workplace injuries.

Wellbeing and safety

The health, safety and wellbeing of our people continued to be a priority. During FY2026, we achieved a 40% reduction in hours lost due to workplace injuries. Injury prevention, early intervention and tailored recovery support helped employees recover safely and remain connected to the workplace after incidents.

We also invested in staff wellbeing through our Employee Assistance Program, Wellbeing Champions network and resources available through Perkbox. Together, these initiatives provide practical support to help staff prioritise their physical and mental wellbeing.

Our staff networks, VIVID, Pride, Yarrabee and Cultural Connect, helped to connect different cohorts of staff and their allies. Members provided input on organisation-wide initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion. As an example, this year Yarrabee members reviewed Northcott’s policies through a First Nations lens.

Our staff networks



Advocacy for people with disability

Influencing policy and reform

During the year, Northcott continued to contribute to policy and reforms impacting people with disability, children, youth and families. The organisation is an active participant in key peak bodies and sector organisations including Queensland Kids Partnership, Fams, the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies and Families Australia. Northcott CEO Liz Forsyth represented Northcott through sector networks and leadership groups, such as Ability First Australia.

Northcott also made formal submissions to government consultations and inquiries into NDIS reform and other future early years and family programs. Through this work, we advocated for better outcomes for children, young people, families and people with disability and sought to ensure the voices of those with lived experience are reflected in policies and systems.

We also contributed our experiences as a provider to ensure government and decision-makers could better understand the workforce, funding and service costs associated with delivering high-quality supports within a sustainable operating environment.

Northcott contributed submissions to:

- the *Thriving Kids Initiative* Inquiry
- the Department of Social Services consultation on a new national program for children and families
- a Request for Information and market insights on Foundational Supports
- the consultation on the NDIS Amendment Bill 2026, through a joint submission with the Australian Child and Family Supports Alliance (ACaFSA).



Amplifying the voices of people with disability

Research: Preventing Everyday Harm

Since 2022, Northcott has been proud to be involved in the collaborative disability research project, *Preventing Everyday Harm*, which ended this financial year. Led by Flinders University and involving UNSW and other disability sector partners, the project explored ways to improve understanding of the small, everyday experiences that shape safety, dignity and wellbeing for people with disability.

Our Community Researchers Hannah Zsigoski and Tyra Buteux, who are also long-term Northcott customers, contributed lived experience insights, helping to shape research questions, review findings, develop accessible resources and share the outcomes.

Northcott is now exploring how to embed the findings into training and team discussions. Our goal is to ensure the principles of choice, respect, inclusion and meaningful participation, which help to reduce everyday harm, continue to shape the way Northcott staff provide support to customers.

In April 2026, Hannah and Tyra hosted a closing event at Northcott Parramatta to share the research findings with customers, families, staff and community partners. Customers from our Campbelltown and Parramatta Work & Study services worked at the event, greeting visitors, making refreshments and assisting where needed.



The findings, accessible tools and resources for people with disability, families, support workers and service providers can be found at everydayharm.org.au.



The Preventing Everyday Harm research project was funded by an Australian Research Council grant.

Research outcomes



Training videos



Personal stories



Policy guides for providers



The Everyday Harm board game



Easy Read resources

Customer Survey

Northcott's annual customer survey is an important way we hear from the people we support, their families and carers. The feedback we receive helps inform service improvements, shape new services and guide our priorities for the year ahead. This year's results showed that customers continue to feel positive about the quality of support they receive from Northcott and empowered to make choices about their lives.

Improving the experience for customers and supporting as many people as possible to complete the survey was a focus this year. A working group was formed to review the survey's accessibility, wording and relevance, as well as achievable timelines and targets.

Multiple formats and language versions, including Hindi and Vietnamese versions, were also made available.

Following a recommendation from Northcott's Supported Living Lab Committee, we trialled a peer mentoring program, with trained customers supporting residents in Northcott homes to complete the survey. This resulted in a 45% increase in completed surveys from Home and Living customers compared with the previous year. It also created meaningful opportunities for the customer peer mentors, who reported feeling valued by the experience and were keen to be mentors again in the future.

Of the customers, family members and carers who responded:



84%

feel satisfied with service quality



80%

said Northcott respects diversity in gender, sex and sexuality



86%

feel Northcott understands them and their needs



75%

feel Northcott listens to feedback to improve services



82%

feel supported to achieve their goals



75%

feel empowered to live the life they choose



Contributing to quality supports in housing

During the year Northcott participated in the National Disability Insurance Agency Quality Supports Program – Supported Independent Living (SIL) Pilot. This brings together 44 providers to help define what high-quality SIL supports look like in practice. Northcott has provided examples of good practice, contributed financial and operational data and shared customer case studies to help the sector build a stronger understanding of the supports required for people with complex needs. We also joined Community of Practice workshops and shared our insights on the workforce needs, systems and true service costs.

This involvement has strengthened quality initiatives within Northcott, delivering positive outcomes for both customers and staff. Key initiatives included:

- the peer mentoring program for our customer survey (see page 34)
- trialling the *Restrictive Practices and Me* tool (see page 22)
- expanding Northcott Innovation's A Good Life initiative
- improving our quality management system.

Delivering an inclusive and diverse organisation

Embedding our DEI Strategy

In September 2025, Northcott launched its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy 2025–2028. Building on Northcott's previous Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, the new strategy presents a broader approach to creating a workplace where everyone feels included, respected and supported. It recognises the many aspects of diversity, including disability, culture, gender, sexuality, age, caring responsibilities and family structures.

To support all employees to access and engage with the strategy, it is available in accessible formats, including Plain English and Easy Read versions. Throughout the year, the DEI Steering Committee monitored the organisation's progress and provided strategic oversight.

Additionally, working groups focused on priority areas including ICT, Facilities and Learning & Development, helped to drive actions forward. A strong focus on improving diversity data and drawing on the lived experience of employees informed decision-making and shape future actions.

Our first organisation-wide DEI Employee Survey, conducted in June 2026, provided valuable insights into workforce diversity, inclusion, belonging and the experiences of staff. The findings will inform future priorities and action planning under the DEI Strategy.



Celebrating diversity and belonging

Once again, our DEI team hosted Inclusion Fest. This year's program focused on inclusion, belonging and awareness across culture, sexuality, First Nations inclusion and neurodiversity. The week's 5 events were a mixture of online and in-person events hosted at different Northcott sites. Highlights included the Inclusion Super Star Awards and the launch of Our Diverse Stories, a short film sharing personal stories from Northcott staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Inclusion Advocate of the Year Award went to Necia Allen, Sales Development Manager, in recognition of her "genuine commitment to inclusion and the way she brings inclusion to life across her teams and the organisation". Our Northern NSW Early Childhood Team received the Allyship in Action Award for their "outstanding work building partnerships and strengthening inclusion across the region, particularly with First Nations and CALD families".



Necia Allen



*Amy Jenkins, Northern
NSW Early Childhood*

Pride in action

A group of 30 Northcott staff and customers were 'unstoppable' at the 2026 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. This year, we used the theme: "UNSTOPPABLE: The Rhythm of Us" to celebrate and raise awareness about people with disability who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community.



A safe and welcoming home for Romana

Since her mother died in 2016, Romana's stepfather, George, has devoted his life to caring for her. When his own health began impacting his ability to look after Romana safely at home, George turned to Northcott for support. We found a welcoming home for Romana at our Oxley Vale disability house in March 2026.

Romana has been a customer with Northcott since 2014, accessing services including Individual Services, Life Skills and Respite from the age of 21.

At the time George approached Northcott for support in finding a suitable home for Romana, our Tamworth team was transitioning its Respite accommodation into Supported Independent Living (SIL) to help meet the demand for local disability housing. Offering Romana a vacant bedroom made perfect sense. The house was familiar to her, close to George and home to people she already knew through Northcott's Life Skills service.





“

“We’ve seen so many positive changes in Romana since she moved into her Northcott home. It’s been particularly wonderful to see her and her stepfather George reconnect in a whole new way.”

Sharon Leonard
Service Manager from Northcott Tamworth

“Romana’s application for SIL funding was approved early in 2026, opening the door to her moving out of home,” explains Sharon Leonard, Service Manager from Northcott Tamworth.

Because the Northcott team already knew Romana and George well, they were able to begin her transition into the home soon after the funding was approved.

“To make the move as smooth as possible, staff organised afternoon teas and weekend visits to the house so Romana could spend time in the space, reconnect with staff and build confidence before moving in. We also invited George to visit, helping him feel familiar and comfortable with the house and staff who would be supporting Romana,” says Sharon.

Northcott’s Life Skills team also supported Romana to build stronger connections with her housemates during the day program, which they all attend.

With George’s blessing, Romana moved into her new home just three weeks after her transition began.

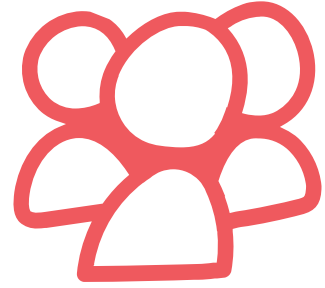
“She has settled beautifully into her new home and new way of life. She is engaging with her housemates, going out in the community and participating in activities such as barbeques, movies, bowling and live music at the local pubs,” explains Sharon.

“We love seeing Romana so comfortable and at ease in her new home.”

Sharon says seeing the positive impact for George has also been rewarding for the Northcott staff involved.

“Since stepping away from his daily caregiving duties – and trusting Northcott to provide the support and care Romana needs – George has been able to concentrate on his own health, enjoy quality time with Romana, and finally go on that long talked about fishing trip!”





Reach More



We adopt new and different services and systems to support current and future customers.



We collaborate with partners with experience and expertise to help us to achieve impact, inclusion, efficiency and growth.



We invest in technology and innovation to improve customer outcomes, operate more efficiently and help grow our services and impact.



Growing our impact for children, young people and families

Creating change

This financial year, we built on our long history of supporting children, young people and families by developing a Child, Youth and Families (CYF) Theory of Change and Outcomes Framework. Co-designed with Northcott leaders, frontline staff, members of our Yarrabee staff network and staff with lived experience of parenting and caring, together these documents describe how Northcott's services create change over time for children, young people, families, communities and the wider sector.

The Theory of Change and Outcomes Framework were rolled out to staff in early FY2027 to support a more unified way of working across services. The next phase will be to test, pilot and refine the approach as we learn more from our teams, customers and families.



Delivering more support

Northcott was selected as a service delivery partner for the national ENVISAGE Families program. This is an evidence-based, peer-support program that empowers parents and carers of children with developmental concerns or disability through connections, knowledge, resources, tools and support.

We are delivering ENVISAGE in Queensland and New South Wales, with Belongsides Families co-facilitating workshops in New South Wales. In the coming year, Northcott will be the first organisation to deliver the ENVISAGE First Peoples program in New South Wales. This will provide First Nations parents and communities with access to a culturally-informed and safe support program. Through our First Nations Program Advisor, Northcott will have ongoing involvement in this program's governance.

Northcott was also named as the first delivery partner for The Inklings Program in New South Wales and Queensland. Our clinicians will be trained to deliver this support program for parents of babies aged up to 18 months.

During the year, our family support partnership with the NSW Department of Communities & Justice was renewed for a further 5.5 years. For more than 20 years, Northcott has delivered early intervention and support services to children, young people and families in South West Sydney experiencing vulnerability. This includes supported playgroups, peer support and tailored programs that support families to build confidence, strengthen relationships and access support before challenges escalate.

envisage 

Building capability internally and across the sector

Partnerships and research

Northcott subsidiary, Northcott Innovation (NI) reconnected with University of Technology Sydney to explore future collaborations. NI also began working with Western Sydney University on a literature review exploring the role of robotics in Supported Independent Living (SIL). This work is contributing to sector-wide understanding of how emerging technologies may enhance future service delivery.



Strengthening community connections

During the year, Northcott strengthened its focus on community engagement and participation, with local teams building stronger connections to create more opportunities for customers. Resources, tools and guidance were developed to support teams to lead this work locally. In line with commitments under our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, Northcott deepened relationships with First Nations communities through participation in cultural events, community and stakeholder forums and relationship-building activities.

Northcott staff also supported and participated in more than 40 First Nations events including NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week, helping to strengthen relationships and build cultural learning.

The Albury team strengthened their local community connections by hosting a Walk & Roll event on International Wheelchair Day. The activity brought together customers, families, local businesses, community members and disability sector partners to promote inclusion and accessibility. Supported by a council grant, our Albury team strengthened relationships with Albury City Council, local councillors, businesses and community organisations.



Sharing expertise

During the year, Northcott's Clinical Services team provided supervision and targeted professional development to external organisations and sole practitioners. By sharing specialist expertise beyond direct service delivery, Northcott helped strengthen capability across the disability sector and supported more consistent, evidence-informed practice.

Our First Nations Program Advisor continued to strengthen Northcott's reconciliation efforts through partnerships and shared learning across the sector. By connecting with other disability service providers, Northcott shared its experience in developing and implementing Reconciliation Action Plans, while also learning from organisations further along in their reconciliation journey. These relationships helped inform our approach and supported progress towards achieving our reconciliation goals.



Technology and innovation

Improving organisational efficiency

Technology and innovation helped to improve experiences for both customers and staff. We expanded the use of AI through pilot programs and explored innovative applications to support customer outcomes, service delivery and operational decision-making. Work also progressed on a new integrated telephony platform, providing staff with improved access to customer information and enabling faster, more informed responses. Investments in data quality, system simplification and digital customer experiences are creating a stronger foundation for future growth while supporting a more customer-centric approach across the organisation.

A Good Life

Using feedback from customers and staff, enhancements were made to Northcott Innovation's (NI) A Good Life tool. This web-based tool helps frontline staff and practitioners build a clearer understanding of what matters most to each customer. It is used with Northcott's Home and Living customers to strengthen how supports are designed and delivered based on customers' preferences, goals and outcomes.

A  Life

Nest

NI's home matching platform, Nest, continued to support people with disability to find and secure suitable housing. The web-based system connects participants, providers and support networks in one central place. This year, NI worked closely with users to better understand their needs, including exploring opportunities for greater transparency and incorporating feedback to shape improvements.

8,599 ▲ 9%
people with disability
currently looking for a home

4,236 ▲ 5%
carers/agents using
the platform

9,631 ▲ 15%
properties listed


nest
gonest.com.au

Early Childhood

Northcott has been a trusted NDIS Early Childhood Partner in the Community since 2018.

Our impact in FY2026

23,633

children and families supported

1,620

families accessed Early Supports

8,160

families accessed the Early Connections program

3,490

First Nations children and families supported



2,400

Children and families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds supported

>220

Early Childhood professionals across early childhood education, social work and allied health

>4%

of staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

>18%

of staff identify as having a disability



Northcott provides coordinated and multidisciplinary early intervention support for children aged 0-9 years and their families and carers across New South Wales. As a NDIS Partner in the Community, we support children and families in Western and Northern Sydney, Northern NSW, Hunter New England, and the Mid North Coast.

Dedicated First Nations Coordinators are the first point of contact for First Nations families seeking early intervention support. They partner with families and communities to deliver positive, culturally responsive outcomes for children, while promoting equitable access to services and opportunities for all children and their families.

Throughout FY2026, Northcott maintained high customer satisfaction ratings in the NDIS Performance Framework. These strong results reflect the effectiveness of our service delivery approach, the responsiveness of our teams and our focus on building trusted relationships with participants and their support networks.

Northcott also exceeded expectations in referring and connecting families to mainstream and local community services, strengthening inclusion, early intervention opportunities and access to broader community supports.



Early Supports Program

Our Early Supports Program provides family-centred early intervention for children with low to moderate support needs. Trauma-informed and disability-informed, evidence-based supports are delivered through flexible and accessible approaches. This includes practical information related to child development, early intervention strategies, family-based education and parenting workshops and coaching. With strong connections in our communities, our Early Childhood coordinators link families with local services such as playgroups, health services, childcare and family support services. Where appropriate, the team also supports families to access NDIS funding.

Through this approach, we aim to build family capability and confidence to support children's participation, development and long-term outcomes at home and in the community.

Increased capacity and stronger referral pathways significantly improved access to the program for families. Reduced wait times and earlier access to support contributed to more consistent and equitable developmental outcomes for children.

Our supported playgroups are designed to strengthen early childhood development and family wellbeing by fostering social connection for children and meaningful engagement for parents. Guided by Early Childhood professionals, parents are supported to enhance their skills, confidence and capacity to contribute to their child's development. In FY2026, we strategically expanded our program reach by scaling delivery across all service regions to increase accessibility and impact.

To build the capability and confidence of parents and carers to support children's development and wellbeing, we ran a series of parenting workshops to build skills and knowledge. Topics included *The Emotional Bridge – How to Journey with Your Child*, *Toilet Training Success* and *Can't Sleep, Won't Sleep*. These sessions were well attended, with families reporting increased confidence and skills.

Supporting our team

To ensure our families continue to receive high quality support, we invested in building the capability of our Early Childhood workforce. This year, staff completed early intervention training including:

- *ARACY Common Approach*
- *Routines-Based Interview*
- *Hanen SPARK*
- *Bringing Up Great Kids*.

Specialist practitioners also trained in evidence-based programs including:

- *Primary Care Triple P*
- *Circle of Security*
- *Tuning into Kids*.

Our First Nations Coordinators also completed Triple P for First Nations families.



Supporting Clare through big changes





“There aren’t enough words to describe how grateful I am for our Northcott Early Childhood Coordinator.”

Lauren
Mother of Clare

Clare was almost five when her mother Lauren connected with Northcott’s Early Childhood service. The one-hour daycare drop-offs with Clare, emotional dysregulation and challenges with eating were taking its toll. With the family relocating to a new area and Clare starting school in 2026, Lauren was looking for support to help her daughter navigate the big changes ahead.

“I thought Kylee our coordinator would help Clare with her emotional regulation, separation anxiety and fussy eating. I never dreamt that she would also help me become a better mum,” Lauren says.

Lauren and Clare were supported by Northcott for almost a year, after a referral from Clare’s daycare educator. Through regular home visits, Kylee worked closely with the family, providing guidance, practical strategies and reassurance to support Lauren with Clare’s behaviour and development.

Together, Kylee and Lauren developed strategies to help Clare manage big emotions, cope with anxiety and build her independence and confidence. Kylee also supported Clare to recognise feelings, learn when to ask for help and understand the links between mood and nourishment. To improve her social skills, particularly during playtime and group games, Kylee gave Lauren tools including social stories and other techniques to help Clare build confidence in group settings and understand others around her.

Over time, Lauren began to see positive changes in Clare’s confidence and behaviours, including her ability to manage new situations.

When Clare started school in 2026, Lauren and her husband were extremely proud of how she handled the transition.

“She is so confident at school and is doing surprisingly well. The separation anxiety has become a lot better. That was my worry,” Lauren says.

“I used to stay until she walked up to her classroom, but by Term 2 she was telling me I didn’t have to walk her in.”

Lauren says the support her family received from Northcott made a huge difference during a period of major change, including moving house, starting at a new preschool and preparing for school.

“Kylee changed our lives. The passion, care and commitment was like none I have ever seen or heard of before. There was never any judgement, only encouragement, support and care,” Lauren says.

“She gave me the confidence to start to become the mum I always hoped to be. I now have the tools and confidence to keep supporting Clare as she grows.”



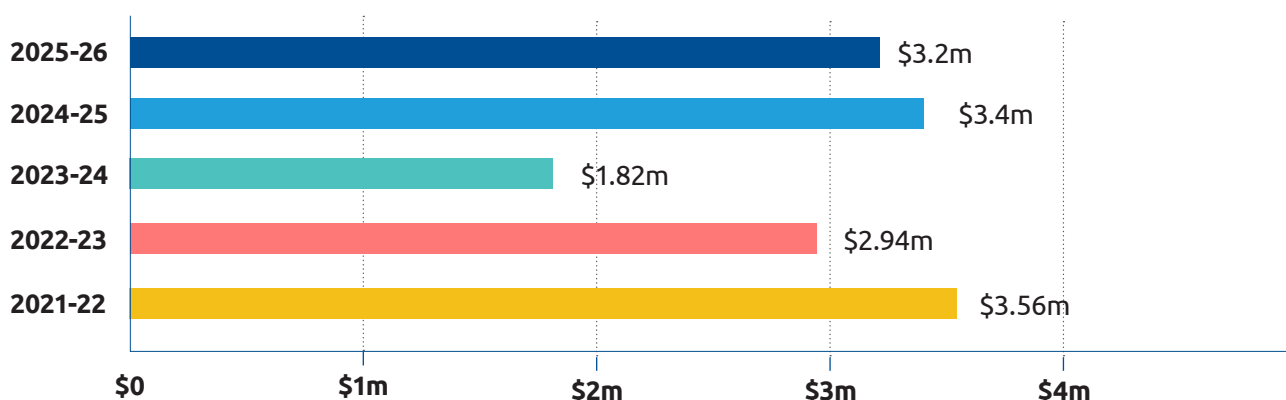
Financial summary

Five Year Financial Summary

	2025-26 (\$'000)	2024-25 (\$'000)	2023-24 (\$'000)	2022-23 (\$'000)	2021-22 (\$'000)
Income & Expenditure					
Operating Revenue**	217,022	225,547	228,087	217,402	216,942
Operating Expenditure	(225,836)	(246,536)	(249,128)	(236,864)	(223,642)
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	(8,814)	(20,989)	(21,041)	(19,462)	(6,700)
Financial Income/(Loss)	1,283	3,475	4,130	3,779	(5,045)
Capital Grants Income		–	–	–	–
Estates and Bequests	1,214	2,538	325	656	354
Other Non operating Income/(Loss)	445	669	43	2,788	393
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(5,872)	(14,307)	(16,543)	(12,239)	(10,998)
Assets & Liabilities					
Total Assets	85,781	92,765	100,998	112,167	123,662
Total Liabilities	63,247	64,359	58,285	52,911	52,167
Total Equity	22,534	28,406	42,713	59,256	71,495
Cash Flows					
Net Cash(used in)/ from Operating Activities	527	(15,392)	(9,149)	(6,773)	(6,729)
Net Cash (used in)/ from Investing Activities	7,301	8,355	(11,981)	39,465	5,283
Net Cash (used in)/ from Financing Activities	(2,939)	2,044	(4,469)	(4,698)	–
Cash and Cash equivalents at 30 June	5,426	5,426	10,419	36,018	8,024
Ratios					
Current Assets/Current Liabilities	0.93:1	1.06:1	1.22:1	1.57:1	1.93:1
Total Cost of Services/Total Expenditure	85%	86%	87%	87%	88%

**Operating revenue excludes Revenue from Capital Grant income

Total Fundraising Revenue (including bequests) (\$)



Total fundraising revenue shows all funds (cash) received within the year.

94%

of our total income
comes from
Government funding
including capital grants

87%

of our total
income is spent on
delivering services

See www.northcott.com.au for the full Financial Report 2025-26.

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Life Governor

Mr Michael Briggs

Mr Nicholas Cardno

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Acknowledgements

Northcott is grateful to receive donations, financial assistance, sponsorships, in-kind and pro bono gifts, support and advocacy from our Members, other organisations, individuals and communities. This support enables Northcott to provide the services and supports children, their families and people with disability need to achieve their goals. While we cannot acknowledge all contributions here, we greatly appreciate all the support we receive.

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Estate of the late Edith Roche

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Estate of the late Mr Ronald Glinn

Estate of the late Mr Warren
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Shirley Estelle Buxton

Estate of the late Patricia
Lynn Matthews

Estate of the late Peter Fox

Estate of the late Roberts Family

Estate of the late Wang Yeh Leng

Estate of the late William
Ronald Bradford

Harry L Howden Charitable Trust

In memory of Sir Kenneth Coles
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K & G Gluck Trust

Matthew Roy Charitable Trust

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