



The Merger News

Friday, 10 April 2015

Released fortnightly, keeping you up to date with what's going on with the STAR-Cosmos merger.

Executive appointments

We are pleased to announce the following appointments will start from 1 July 2015:

Executive Manager, My Home: Darryleen Wiggins

Executive Manager, My Time Away: Ally Valetich

Executive Manager, Case Management: Lena Mitchell

Executive Manager, My Community: Emily Daniels

Service and Business Development Manager:
Megan Cunningham

They will be working in the next few months to embed the organisational structure and develop transition strategies in the new entity, including exploring ways to incorporate skills, programs and ways of doing from each organisation into future service delivery.

Service Managers

The four Executive Managers will now meet and refine the services included in each of their areas. They will then provide an opportunity for Service Managers to express their interest in the area that they would prefer to be.

From the issues register:

 **Concern:** *The merger is beginning to feel a bit like a STAR takeover of Cosmos with most of the Executive Managers in the new organisation coming from STAR.*

 **Response:** The merger is about what we want to achieve as one new organisation with a

vibrant, dynamic culture reflecting our values and providing a high quality service to clients. STAR, due to its significantly larger program already had three staff operating at that level and these were directly appointed. The fourth position has now been resolved and Emily Daniels from Cosmos has been appointed.

All Executive Managers, including the new Executive Manager: My Community, will be working to ensure the best of Cosmos and STAR is retained in terms of service delivery, reputation, relationships, professional development and skills – and at the same time, create a new brand where everyone's input is valued.

Client workshops

Anna Holliday has held a couple of client workshops and received some terrific feedback so far. We'll be sending out an update to clients early next week but in the meantime here are some issues that were raised with responses:

I am supported by STAR at home and go to Cosmos during the day, but I don't want the same staff at home and at Cosmos.

We want to make sure that the staff you work with at home and at day support are different. There may be times when you see your home staff during the day but they will be working in different programs and not directly with you.

I find it difficult to cope with change. How will you help me through the merger?

We understand that change can be difficult for many people. Your staff team will know which of

you have difficulty coping with changes. Talk with them about how you feel and what will help make it easier for you. We will keep sending out information to you so that you hear about the changes as soon as possible.

Do staff from both Cosmos and STAR understand our rights and responsibilities?

Yes, **all** staff have received training and information to ensure that they understand your rights and responsibilities. They have all been interviewed and chosen to work with you because of their skills, experience and fantastic attitudes. Everyone at Cosmos and STAR want to support you to reach your full potential.

Remember, we love (and need) to hear what you think, so any time you want to discuss how we support you, we are ready to listen.

Remember: support is available to you

If you feel you need a neutral ear to listen to you, we can support you through the external support service, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Talk to your manager to arrange a confidential appointment.

Culture workshops: feedback

Thanks to all those who attended the culture workshops. Below is a summary of the feedback you provided by you over the four sessions. The next step is for the Transition Team to look at the feedback and implement effective strategies to bring your thoughts to life.

What does success look like?

- Happy and satisfied clients, families and staff
- Staff retention, development, growth and satisfaction
- Greater exposure and awareness leading to a positive reputation: valued, known, respected and recognised, within the disability sector because of
- All one entity delivering great service, meaningful engagement and a growth in the

range of opportunities where client needs are met, leading to more clients and positive feedback

- Bigger, better, happier

What are the biggest barriers to success?

- Not coming together as 'one' with cultural clashes, development of clichés, resistance and refusal to change, attitudes
- Gossip and a lack of communication
- Lack of training and unhappy staff – need motivation, reward and recognition, training and support (when it gets tough)
- Not people centred
- Lack of understanding of NDIS and its roll out and uncertainty because of that
- Bad management with a 'you and us' attitude
- Community attitudes and public perception
- Lack of resources

How might we get around those barriers?

- Good – great – clear, transparent, accessible and open communication that is honest, upfront and inclusive
- Listening, monitoring feedback and continual review
- Valuing staff
- Confidence in leadership with everyone working as a team – top to bottom
- A single clear vision – the proper structure
- Our image
- Patience
- Do not forget why you are there
- Adaptability, being prepared to change, seizing opportunities
- Adequate funding

What do we do?

- Provide disability support services
- Support clients with a disability. Teaching skills in a learning environment.

- Provide tailored individual support services for people with a disability with right staff and right resources.
- Support people with a disability to live life to the full.

How do we do it?

- Individual care programs
- Create and give opportunities
- Relevant processes and procedures
- Professionally
- Individually
- With respect
- Empower staff
- A united team fighting to succeed
- Training, knowledge, aware of needs, listening

Why do we do it?

- To enable them to live life to their best
- Because everyone has a right to a good life - brighten their lives.
- Because we love it.
- Give a meaningful high quality life.
- Because we are passionate. It is rewarding. We care. We have fun.

How to bring the purpose to life

- Get together more, both formally and informally to get a better understanding of one another
- Transparent and open communication accessible to all, keep everyone aware
- Proper induction of new staff
- External communications plan – open days, expos, a great interactive website, consider TV
- Interact with, listen to and consult with all – clients, families and staff
- Match staff to clients
- Find the commons threads of each entity – use strengths of each
- Keep current services going