Grandcarers SA

Chairperson's Report
Annual General Meeting 2025

It is my privilege, as Chairperson of the Board, to present this report for 2024–2025, a year of progress and consolidation, with the Board focused on ensuring Grandcarers SA remains a strong advocate and support for informal kinship carers across South Australia.

Strengthening Governance and Strategy

The Board has remained focussed on strong governance and long-term planning. We launched our Strategic Plan 2025–2028 and achieved ASES accreditation at Certificate Level in August 2025. These milestones reflect the professionalism and quality of our organisation and provide a framework for growth.

We were also pleased to welcome two new Board members, Heather Blanco and Marilyn Lennon, whose skill and experience strengthen our leadership.

Financial Stewardship

Financial sustainability remains a challenge for Grandcarers SA and while the Mutual Support grant from the South Australian Government provides a secure base, indexation has not kept pace with rising costs.

The Board oversaw careful financial management, supported by grants from government and philanthropic entities, and donations and practical support from community partners.

To diversify our income and create future sustainability, the Board endorsed the development of an Op Shop initiative. Building works at our Pitt Street office were completed thanks to pro bono support from NJH Constructions, with a Pop-Up Op Shop partnership with Treasure Boxes to begin in late 2025. A larger stand-alone shop remains a future ambition.

Services and Programs

Despite financial constraints, Grandcarers SA delivered vital services, including 12 Villages across the state (with new groups at Kadina and Somerton Park), statewide workshops, major community events, and over $67,000 in education and development support for children.

Advocacy and Influence

Our advocacy work remained a strong priority. Our Board continued to support the push for recognition and support for informal kinship carers, including:

- An Informal Grandparent Carer Payment
- Reform of the Carer Recognition Act
- Increased funding for Grandcarers SA

Our CEO engaged regularly with Ministers, MPs, and senior officials, presented to a parliamentary committee, and worked to achieve practical policy changes for carers.

Partnerships and People

Strong partnerships with organisations including Carer and Community SA, Lutheran Care, Families Growing Together, Backpacks 4 SA Kids, and Treasure Boxes, have been key to our continued growth and success during the year

The dedication of our staff, volunteers and student placements and the valued contribution of a Senior Social Worker seconded from the Department for Child Protection is gratefully acknowledged, as is that of our former Deputy Chairperson, Enzo Belperio who resigned earlier in the year. I would like to thank him for his enthusiastic contribution and support, especially for his assistance with the review of our Constitution.

We are also grateful to our Patrons, the Hon. Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia and Mr Rod Bunten, and also our dual ambassadors, Mrs Lan Le OAM and Ms Jane Reily OAM for their continued support of Grandcarers SA.

Looking Forward

Priorities for the year ahead include:

- Developing the Op Shop as a new income stream.
- Securing increased government and philanthropic support.
- Growing the Village program and outreach.
- Continuing strong governance and IT improvements.

Conclusion

In closing, on behalf of the Board I would like to thank our CEO, staff, volunteers, donors, and partners for their commitment and passion. Grandcarers SA remains the only organisation in South Australia dedicated solely to informal kinship carers, and we are proud of the impact we continue to make together.

Kathryn House AM DSJ
Chairperson, Grandcarers SA October 2025