

# Candidate Statement for Mark Brown

To the Members of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW),

I am writing to express my strong interest in joining the Board of Directors. I believe my clinical background, experience in governance, leadership expertise, business acumen and passion for the profession make me a suitable candidate to contribute meaningfully to the AASW's strategic direction.

## My vision

My vision for the AASW is to further strengthen its advocacy, leadership and strategic direction for all social workers. I would like to see the AASW continue to champion our profession as being able to help improve the lives of our Australian community. Underpinning this is my commitment to our professional values which include social justice, service, the inherent value and respect of the individual and the importance of human relationships.

We have entered an era of rapid technological advancement, and I believe the AASW is in a unique position to play a pivotal role in driving innovation and the integration of emerging technologies, such as AI, telehealth, and data analytics, to enhance service delivery and create expanded opportunities for professional development. I envision the AASW as a driving force in this transformation, ensuring that emerging technologies are harnessed ethically and effectively to complement human-centered care. This requires a commitment to strengthening partnerships with clinicians, researchers, policymakers, and consumers to ensure that social work remains cutting-edge and transformative.

## What I bring to the role

I became a social worker at a mature age and this considered decision was a result of searching for a profession that reflected my values of equity, fairness, social justice and the rights of each human. My social work experience is diverse including aged care, rehabilitation, palliative care, and mental health has given me a well-rounded understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing social workers in different fields.

Beyond my clinical work, I have strong leadership skills. I firmly believe that effective leadership is built on trust, communication, and the ability to unite people toward a shared purpose. Throughout my career, I have cultivated a leadership style rooted in active listening, thoughtful reflection, and patience; qualities that enable me to engage meaningfully with colleagues and stakeholders. I take pride in fostering inclusive environments, where individuals feel valued and empowered to contribute their expertise and experience. Importantly, I believe that difficult discussions, when approached with openness, respect and integrity, can lead to meaningful progress and stronger collaborations.

As the Head of Quality, Safety, and Risk within the private health sector, I was responsible for overseeing clinical governance across the organisation to ensure that our work met the highest standards of quality and safety and adhered to the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards. This role required me to think strategically, manage complex issues, and collaborate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders including consumer advocates.

In my previous career, I owned and operated my own businesses in the private sector for over 20 years. This has given me a practical understanding of corporate governance, including managing expenses and ensuring financial sustainability. I believe my business acumen can contribute to the AASW's financial oversight and strategic planning.

## My passion

One of my greatest passions is driving the future of social work. One of the ways I believe we can do this is by developing and mentoring the next generation of social workers. I believe it is our responsibility to support and guide those who are entering the profession, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge they need to succeed. Most recently I have been working in educational institutions where I have had the privilege of shaping and supporting social work students. This experience has reinforced my commitment to education and professional development within the AASW.

Overall, I am a dedicated and hardworking individual with a strong commitment to the social work profession. I am confident that I can make a valuable contribution to the Board of Directors, and I am eager to work with you to shape the future of social work in Australia.

I believe I am a kind and compassionate person who has a positive regard for all people. I think others recognise and appreciate my warmth and approachability. I have a strong commitment to providing service to all. Central to this is my sense of cultural humility and awareness of the importance of having all voices represented at the table.

I appreciate your time and consideration and would be honoured to contribute to the AASW in this capacity.