Centacare NENW 2020/2 | Annual Report

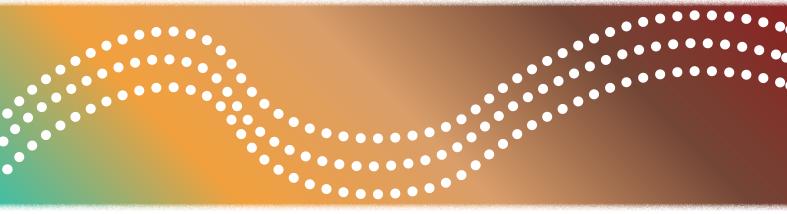






Centacare NENW: The social services agency of the Catholic Diocese of Armidale.

Supporting people's spiritual, social and emotional wellbeing



We wish to acknowledge that we are in the country of the Wainwan, Kamilaroi, Nganyaywana, Gumbainggir and Ngarabal People.

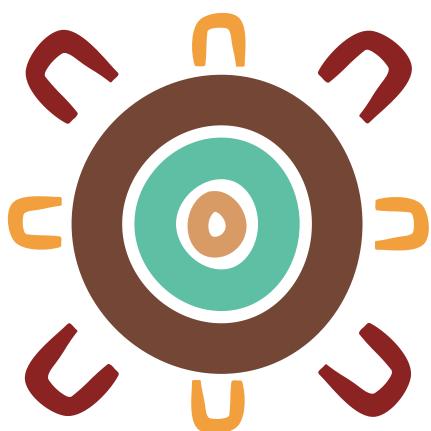
We pay respect to their elders.

We acknowledge the memories of their ancestors and celebrate their continuing culture.

We acknowledge the deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Give us the grace to walk together as one.





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Centacare NENW is a quality accredited organisation which has met the relevant Standards of the Health and Community Service Standards, the National Standards for Mental Health Services (NSMHS) and the NSW Disability Services Standards (NSW DSS).



As an instrument of Christ's liberating presence in the world, and as part of the Catholic Church in this region, Centacare NENW provides services for the social and emotional wellbeing of individuals, families and communities to facilitate and affirm life in all its fullness.

Our values are based on Catholic moral values and the Four Pillars of Catholic Social Teachings:

The Dignity of the Human Person

Common Good

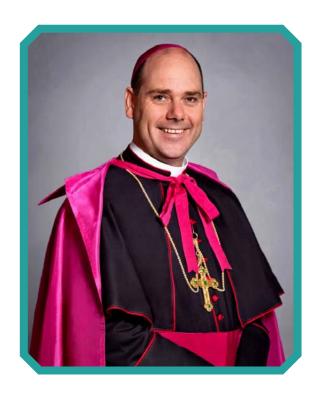
Subsidarity

Solidarity

Our vision is for a society in which there is recognition of individual and social rights and responsibilities, a society that promotes the dignity, equality and participation of all its citizens.



Bishop's Message



Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

"Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble." The Bible passage from Ecclesiastes resonates with me when I reflect on the work undertaken by Centacare New England North West.

Whilst COVID-19 remains as an ever present impact on our daily lives, the 'normal' pressures of life still remain with us. It has been pleasing to see that, through adapting our service delivery modes, Centacare has remained open throughout the pandemic, providing essential counselling, gambling help, family case management, financial assistance and youth interventions to ensure access to support for each person seeking it.

I commend the work of Centacare staff in providing these support services within our communities. Promoting and building resilience, mental health and wellbeing for individuals and families flows through every aspect of our lives and into the wider community ensuring that no one should be in a position of being alone when they fall or unable to seek support.

This year I, along with the Board and Executive Leadership Team of Centacare, have been reflecting on the purpose, mission and values that make Centacare unique. Some of the principles discussed included:

- We are building the Kingdom of God through supporting people's spiritual, social and emotional well being
- We act in response to the Gospel call to love our neighbour
- We accompany individuals, families and communities to reach their full potential and enjoy the fullness of life
- We treat and approach all our work in keeping with Catholic social and moral teaching

These are powerful principals clearly enunciating how being a Catholic social services agency our outlook is not just a foundational statement but is the essence of everything we do on a daily basis.

I express my gratitude to the Board, lead by Ms Louise Clarke and the Executive Leadership Team and staff lead by Mr Fergus Fitzsimons, for their outstanding contributions in making Centacare New England North West a successful Catholic agency making a real difference in the lives of people in our Diocese.

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy Bishop of Armidale Welcome to Centacare NENW's 2020/21 Annual Report – my first since being elected Chair of the new Governance Board.

The 2020/21 financial year, as well as facing the challenges of COVID-19, Centacare NENW began the process of becoming an incorporated entity. The first step – to appoint an external Governance Board to set, guide and monitor the strategic direction of Centacare NENW. This new board commenced on 1 July 2020.

At the close of the financial year the Centacare NENW Governance Board comprised of 7 members: Jennifer Harmon, Stephen Barlett, and Chris Hietbrink as continuing members, with the addition of new members: myself (as Chair), Anne Carroll, Rowena McNally and Robert Mulcahy. David Smith, as the Diocesan Financial Administrator attends each of our meetings ex-officio. The board members each bring a vast amount of experience to the board, including legal and financial management, strategic planning, social welfare, and administration, to complement, support and enhance the internal management team.

As a board, we are working with the management team towards the incorporation of Centacare NENW, with a proposed incorporation date of I July 2022. While incorporation is an intricate process, it is a timely one that is backed by the development and growth of the organisation over recent years. The incorporation will see Centacare NENW well placed to continue to grow and adapt to the changing funding landscape.

Centacare NENW continues to be recognised as a leading provider of mental health and wellbeing services in our region. This has been made more evident during this last financial year by the continued growth in both service delivery and resources.

This year Centacare NENW has:

- contracted with the Office of Responsible Gambling to provide GambleAware services (NSW state funding) across the whole of the Hunter New England region (in partnership with CatholicCare Social Services Hunter Manning),
- expanded our Youth Drug and Alcohol Service (YDAS) (NSW state funding) into the Moree LGA, and
- expanded the provision of employment services for youth, in conjunction with our headspace sites, with funding from the Federal Department of Social Services.

Since the new financial year has begun, we have been advised of further expansion of our headspace program, with federal funding to expand our Armidale outreach site to a full headspace Centre. While we await the details, Centacare NENW is very pleased to see increased funding for youth mental health in our region in light of

Chairperson Report Louise Clarke



recent COVID-19 mental health impacts.

Through this changing landscape, the Centacare NENW team has shown a great commitment to the community through flexible service offerings and growth in service provision, skills, and as a team. The staff have developed innovative ways of providing assistance to the community, through partnerships and collaborations both internally and externally.

These achievements and commitment to our community couldn't happen without a strong organisational culture, which begins from the top down. I would like to thank Fergus Fitzsimons, our Chief Executive Officer, his Executive Leadership team, and staff for their commitment and dedication to the underlying mission and values that underpin Centacare as the social services agency of the Armidale Catholic Diocese.

It is an honour to be a part of the Centacare NENW board. I commend my fellow board members for their contributions, time and dedication over the course of this year, in helping to advise best practice for this vital organisation.

I am confident this team of resilient and competent people will adapt with great energy and ingenuity to our ever changing landscape and the growing need for social services and support in our region.

Finally, our Bishop, the Most Reverend Michael Kennedy, is a keen supporter of Centacare NENW and myself, the Board, and the organisation are blessed to have his guidance. I thank him for his continued faith in each of us in our various roles.

We are committed to exploring opportunities that enhance the stability, wellbeing and connectedness of our local communities.



We focus our strategic direction on the mental health and wellbeing of Families, Youth, Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and CALD peoples and people living with a Disability.



CEO Report

Fergus Fitzsimons



The 2020/21 year saw many new phrases and words enter our everyday language; "self-isolating", "pandemic", "quarantine", "lockdown", "flatten the curve", "essential workers", 'new normal" to name a few. Platforms such as Zoom, Skype, and FaceTime have reaped the rewards of restrictions, with many new ways of interacting with family, friends and colleagues. WFH (Working from Home) became a common acronym on social media, as many of us entered or exited lockdown.

In last year's report I discussed our Family Services Conference, along with other events and activities Centacare NENW held prior to COVID-19 restricting groups. This year restrictions impacted many of our events, like our regular family fun days, NAIDOC week events and youth focused activities.

But that does not mean that Centacare NENW did not achieve great things this year. As an essential service, Centacare NENW continued to open their doors every day, remaining available to our whole region for the provision of quality mental health and wellbeing care.

Irish actor Thomas Moore is quoted as saying "The ordinary acts we practice every day at home are of more importance to the soul than their simplicity might suggest." I have taken the liberty of changing this to "the ordinary acts we practice every day are of more importance to the soul than their simplicity might suggest", and I follow up with this: During the past year I have often had discussions with our Centacare team, asking them about the impact of our current times — on themselves, on their families, on their colleagues, and on their clients. What I have discovered in the course of these conversations is that many of our team don't see the extent of their actions on

the people around us.

Many of our staff, when asked to reflect on the past year and name the 'wins' fail to do so – and not because there were none. When specifically asked "Why didn't you talk about the work you did for [Client X] and their family?" their response is that they were just doing their job. For them it was just an ordinary act. It's when you talk with the clients and their families that you start to realise that these ordinary acts are of more importance to the soul than their simplicity might suggest. In a year that has been overshadowed by this "new normal", the feedback from our clients, regarding our team's performance, has been overwhelming:

- Bob (not real name) provided feedback recently about his experience in the [Men's Behaviour Change] program, and the supports offered via his engagement with Centacare. "I think the course has changed my life to be honest with you. I can see huge benefits in it for anyone going through what I've gone through."
- Mum, who came in for the last session, thanked the counsellor and headspace for being so accommodating, commenting that her daughter [F14] was like a new person calmer, more confident, and able to express her feelings.
- "I have learnt so many different, useful tools and opened my eyes to the bigger picture in life. [My psychologist] has made an enormous difference to my life. Thanks again."
- "[Our support worker] is the best! Very supportive of all the different struggles that different people face. Down to earth and practicable in her approach to the topics."

I would like to thank our staff – this humble group of individuals who come together every day to enrich, improve and expand the wellbeing of our communities. They have adapted to the new normal, rolling lockdowns and zoom meetings without batting an eye.

I would like to thank our Bishop, the Most Reverend Michael Kennedy and the Centacare NENW Board, for their faith in the team at every level of the organisation. We truly appreciate their time, input and dedication to Centacare NENW, especially as we continue to grow and add new programs to our services.

2021/22 is gearing up to be another big year with new and expanded programs and collaborations on the horizon. As an essential service, Centacare NENW continue to seek innovative ways to deliver necessary support, advocacy and assistance to our community. I look forward to continuing to work with our humble, energetic, motivated, and compassionate team for the betterment of our diocese.

Corporate Services David Holzigal

Once again Centacare NENW had staff working from home on a rostered basis during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The IT component of Corporate Services delivered a platform that ensured Centacare staff could perform all duties from home while maintaining systems that were also safe and protected client confidentiality.

The Corporate Services Team adjusted continually to the challenges of the past year. From changing the way advertising was done with the use of animation for TV advertisements, to HR conducting nearly all recruitment via video/teleconference and the administration team ensuring that vulnerable clients that Centacare NENW support were able to complete sessions.

The positive financial result has enabled Centacare NENW to consolidate on the great results of previous financial years, to ensure Centacare NENW is in the strongest financial position in its history. You will note on the financial graphs that the gap between block funded revenue and non-block funded is continuing to close. This reducing gap enables Centacare NENW to be less reliant on government funding and adds to the financial sustainability of the organisation.

As Corporate Services Manager I would like to congratulate not only the Corporate Services Team but the organisation as a whole on an outstanding 2020-21 financial year.

The 2020/21 financial year, much like the 2019/20 financial year, has seen a year of constant change.

The Corporate Services portfolio that includes Quality Assurance (QA), Finance, Human Resources (HR), Information & Communication Technology (IT), Media and Marketing and all Centacare NENW Administration continued to build a strong platform for Centacare to service our clients.

The 2020/21 financial year saw Centacare NENW retain accreditation through the Quality Improvement Council audit for a further 3 years, an amazing effort not just by the QA department but all of the Centacare NENW team.



Executive Leadership



Cigdem Watson PsychoSocial Support



David Holzigal Corporate Services



Fallon Roberts
Families, Wellbeing & Justice



Grahame York Disabilities



Josefina Hofman Psychology

Our Team

Managers



Amber Varcoe Western Wellbeing



Anne Lane Community Visitors Scheme



Kourtney Orman Tamworth/Gunnedah Wellbeing



Nichole Corby HR, WHS, Risk



Rhonda Partridge Catholic Schools Program



Matt Andrews Armidale/Inverell/Glen Wellbeing



Brenna Castro Media



Alex Byrnes Information Technology



Amy Quinlan Families, Wellbeing Business Manager



Sam Davis headspace/NRG



Pranjal More Clinicial Services



Tim Rawson GambleAware

Quality Assurance Nichole Corby

Centacare NENW has successfully gained its 4th Quality Accreditation 3 Year Certification, meeting the QIC Health and Community Services Standards 7th Edition and the National Standards for Mental Health Services in October 2020.

And for the first time Centacare NENW has received Accreditation under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

To assist Centacare NENW meet the criteria and standards the Quality Department continues to implement Centacare NENW's Total Management System.

The ongoing training of staff at all levels, the consistent approach to continuous improvement, community engagement, implementation of corrective actions and support by the Board, Management, Staff and Stakeholders has ensured our success and recognition as a Quality Organisation.

With continued support, commitment and dedication from our staff, our partners and community members Centacare NENW will continue to strive to maintain its accreditation and be recognised for their commitment to best practice, quality, high performing systems and processes and continuous improvement.







We Wish to Thank...

External Members of the NSW Government funded Youth on Track Regional Governance Committee:



Department of Education: Julie Kirk, Julia Ramsay and Jane Boulton

Department of Communities and Justice (Formerly known as FaCS): Sarah Bradford and Rebecca

Area Manager New England Youth Justice: Lyle Young

Area Manager Maitland/Upper Hunter Youth

Justice: David Lowe

Assistant Manager Tamworth Youth Justice: Elise

Assistant Manager Glen Innes Youth Justice: Tina

Assistant Manager Armidale Youth Justice: Graham Smith

NSW Police Oxley LAC: Snr Constable Michelle King and Inspector Phil O'Reilly

NSW Police New England LAC: Snr Constable Fiona McCormack and Inspector Matt Hemsworth Tamworth Local Aboriginal Land Council: Fiona Snape

Tamworth Regional Youth Centre: Katey Allwell PCYC Armidale: Snr Constables Darren Griggs and Penny Wain

PCYC Tamworth: Snr Constables Andrena

Sanderson and Trevor Roberts

PCYC Gunnedah: Snr Constables John Croger and

Sarah Hobson



Members of the External Stakeholder Committee:

Len Waters Suzanne O'Neil Jaimi Lim Amy Devrell Along with many other Agency representatives



Members of the Federal Government funded headspace Consortium:

Northwest Health: Dr Ian Kamerman; Independent

Hunter New England Local Health District Peel Mental Health Services: Trish Blackman

Aboriginal Employment Service: Damien Allan

PCYC: Debby Herdegen

Tamworth Family Support: Joely Brennan

Best Employment: Rebecca Riley

NSW Police Oxley Local Area Command: Michelle

King and Inspector Phil O'Reilly Family and Friends: Karen McGregor



Members of the Federal Government funded Early Start Committee:

Pius X: Dr Hamze Hamze

Moree Family Support: Felicity Curtis

NSW Police New England LAC: Martin Burke Moree East Public School: Lorinda Potter

Moree Early Intervention Services: Deb Hamilton

Hunter Health, Aboriginal Health: Candice

Dahlstrom

Aboriginal Community Member: Barry Swam Hunter New England Primary Health Network: Bronwyn Penny



External Members of the Clinical Governance Committee:

Ibrahim Dib (external consumer representative) Steve Flak (external consumer representative) Azaan Vohra (external consumer representative)



Rural Resilience in New England North West

Psychology & Clinical Services

Josie Hofman Pranjal More

Our Clinical Services Psychology staff worked hard to provide support to our communities during this particularly difficult year. With the uncertainty of COVID-19 coming on the back of fires and drought, we continued to support our region through natural disasters. As a way of improving accessibility during this time, clients were offered bulk-billed telehealth sessions. This ensured people were able to remain connected to primary mental health support regardless of circumstances, with over 1100 psychology sessions delivered via telephone/video during the year.

Psychology Services were provided across Medicare, NDIS Clinical (National Disability Insurance Scheme), EAP (Employee Assistance Program), WorkCover, DVA (Department of Veteran Affairs), and General Counselling.

The first Centacare mobile app was developed as a collaborative project with Psychology and Centacare IT department. This mobile app is currently being trialled, and demonstrates an innovation in service delivery, aimed at supporting data collation and feedback regarding client behaviours.

Our NDIS Clinical program has focused on supervising clinical staff towards a better understanding of the standards set by NDIS Quality & Safe Guards Commission for the provision of services. Progress towards this overarching goal has enabled clinical staff to be better acquainted with the procedures and forms associated with NDIS clinical services. Consequently, clinicians have been able to provide an increased number of services to disabilities clients under the NDIS Clinical program.

Case Study:

Couples Counselling Clients accessed our services, indicating significant concerns within communication and connection within their relationship. Factors such as anxious and depressive symptoms, including relocation from another town, also reportedly impacted their relationship. During the course of treatment, the couple identified an increased awareness of each other's needs, including shared goals and strategies to promote quality time and recognition of their strengths and capabilities. At cessation of treatment, they reported improved communication and connection through 'having fun together' and 'respecting each other again'.

These programs are funded by a mix of Federal and State Governments, private organisations and fee for service

Catholic Schools Program Rhonda Partridge

The CSO team are working within the new Living Well, Learning Well framework that all of our schools have adopted and implemented this year. Our staff are now more embedded in the school community with not only additional days for some schools but also as part of an intervention team that looks holistically at student's needs. Feedback from staff and schools alike is that this is a much more effective way of supporting students and outcomes have been positive.

In addition to school counselling sessions, the CSO team participated in numerous classroom and staff presentations. Our team initiated creative approaches during the lockdown period in supporting schools, including the provision of resources, e-therapy sessions and regular check-ins.

Staff have been investigating games and activities that translate to use in a digital format to maintain engagement and rapport with clients. Anecdotally, the proximity of COVID 19 outbreaks in our previously safe regions, has seen more of our students presenting with exacerbated symptoms of anxiety and necessitated more regular check-ins during lock down with many positive outcomes.

Case Study:

Ben (alias) had a Sensory Processing Disorder and presented with symptoms of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). A method was devised with the client where he would give himself 'blocks' of 16 minutes to focus on work. He then uses a timer to stop what he is doing and for a quick break before returning. If he catches himself being distracted or way off track at the end of the block of time he writes it on a post-it to come back to when he has time to be distracted. The client gently (without self-criticism) brings his attention back to what he was intending to do.

"I have increased the breaks [blocks] from 16mins to 20mins as it was too quick of time, as the stop and starting were becoming annoying and it made it easier, as well having 20-minute slots works with having 3 slots in an hour and then a proper break for an hour. I fill up my bottle or whatever every 20 minutes, then for the big break go to the toilet or have something to eat e.c.t and it keeps me focused on the task at hand. Dad helped me make a timetable for each day (incorporating these 20mins breaks) to help me get a particular amount of content looked at before the following day of the exam for that subject, so like spending an hour and having a realistic Goal to getting a specific amount done in that hour really helped, making me feel like I could do it and it kind of motivated me. The last few days have felt really satisfying, as I've got so much work done in such little time compared to the past few weeks in lockdown. So even when I might get a bit distracted, I think to myself, you're still doing a lot better the usual and it doesn't mean all the time was spent bad, it's just 5mins or so."

This program is funded via a contractual agreement with the Catholic Schools Office



Psychosocial Support Services Cigdem Watson

Centacare NENW's National Psychosocial Support team servicing Narrabri, Moree and Walgett LGA's have continued to proactively assist people with severe mental illness who have reduced psychosocial function, overcome adversities and work towards their individual goals via a range of non-clinical psychosocial support service streams, namely Continuity of Supports (CoS), National Psychosocial Support — Transition (NPS-T) and National Psychosocial Support Measure (NPSM).

Our Centacare NENW caseworkers have engaged CoS clients in their choice of care setting providing psychosocial assessment, care planning and flexible support that has been adaptive to meet the Clients' individual needs and goals. Our team proactively supported previous PHaMs participants whom have severe and complex needs due to their mental illness receive appropriate levels of psychosocial support as they test eligibility for supports under the NDIS and transition to ongoing arrangements either through the NDIS or CoS.

In 2020 /2021, Centacare NENW were successful in securing the NPSM component of the NPS service stream for Walgett LGA. NPSM was warmly welcomed by the Walgett community as a vital and much needed support service for individuals with a severe mental illness which has an impact on their psychosocial functional capacity.

Our Centacare NENW team in Walgett have welcomed new clients under the NPSM service stream; providing clients with strengths based recovery orientated psychosocial services through individually tailored Recovery Plans to assist clients overcome barriers and work towards achieving their unique goals. Our Team utilised their local knowledge and expertise in supporting clients access services to meet their individual support needs through case management, mentoring and care coordination.

Case Study:

Ann (56 years old) and her husband had a thriving scrap metal business and they had two older sons, a daughter and a younger son (22) with autism.

Her mother passed away and within weeks her husband died quite suddenly, leaving Ann and her sons to control the business. Ann felt like she had lost control. She had no real experience running the business and the grief she encountered was overwhelming.

Unfortunately, Ann's eldest son became involved in multiple criminal activities, including embezzlement from the family business. The business went bankrupt and Ann became financially strained. Her son's behaviour became violent, so she and her youngest son decided to move to regional NSW. Her eldest son did a home invasion and stole what little that she had left.

Ann's mental health and confidence hit an extreme low. She became socially distant and withdrawn. She began experiencing panic/anxiety attacks. The demands of caring for her son with disabilities was also impacting her mental health. Together they had formed a co-dependant relationship which was causing severe anxiety and stress for both of them. They began isolating themselves and were verbally abusive to each other. Neither could leave the home without the other due to overwhelming fear.

Centacare came into Ann's life through her sons NDIS plan. Over time Centacare developed weekly support for her son to access community activities and support programs. Relationships built slowly with Centacare and Ann was identified as requiring psychosocial support for her mental health. Centacare assisted with counselling support and Ann was identified as having Post-traumatic stress disorder. Centacare provided her support to attend appointments and is currently applying for a NDIS Plan to ensure Ann continues to qualify to receive psychosocial support.

Gambling Help Program Tim Rawson

The Gambling Help Service provides therapeutic counselling and support, either face-to-face, by video link or telephone, to individuals, couples and families impacted by problem gambling behaviour. The program also engages in promotion, networking and community education activities to raise awareness of problem gambling issues and services, work toward building organisational capacity, and optimise the scope and quality of service delivery in the New England North West region.

The 2020-2021 year saw another strong year and a lot of change. The uncertainty of COVID-19 resulted in higher demand and more people accessing support. The surge in cryptocurrency popularity also resulted in people participating in a new form of gambling.

The state wide redesign of the Gambling Help program was finalised during year and Centacare NENW was successful in obtaining funding to deliver the redesigned service to the Hunter New England LGAs. As of the 30th June 2021 the Gambling Help program came to an end and has been replaced by the new GambleAware program. Centacare NENW worked closely with the NSW Office of Responsible Gambling in the development of this new model and is excited for the new support opportunities it will create for our communities in the coming years.

Case Study:

A previous client of our Gambling Help service who had been managing their gambling and mental health well for approximately 2 years reached back out to us for support this year. They had been exploring cryptocurrencies and started "investing". However, they quickly found themselves buying/selling on a daily basis and trying to win back losses. The client lost a significant amount of their savings in a short amount of time.

Once engaged back in our services, strategies were revisited and implemented, but this time with a focus on their cryptocurrency trading. We identified that some underlying depression and life stressors had reemerged which had triggered a need for escapism. The client worked on building mental health resilience in the sessions and reported significant improvement in their wellbeing. When sessions concluded the client was no longer experiencing their depressive symptoms and felt more confident in their ability to cope with life challenges - they also had held on to cryptocurrency they owned without being caught up in unhelpful gambling cycles

This program is funded by the NSW State Government



Rural Resilience in New England North West



Belly Casting
July 2020

Family Rural Resilience

Amber Varcoe Kourtney Orman Matt Andrews

The Family Rural Resilience Program (FRRP) team have gone from strength to strength this financial year with the ongoing delivery of family case management and groups across the region. While COVID-19 presented initial challenges, the team excelled in their innovation to ensure the service continued to reach current and new clients, services and schools. Face to face support continued where necessary and within public health guidelines, while other clients were supportively transitioned to online service delivery with some innovative enagagment strategies:

- A weekly social group utilising the Dungeons and Dragons tabletop game as a tool to explore concepts such as peer pressure, identity, communication strategies, problem-solving, critical thinking and teamwork. Staff oversee the game as a 'dungeon master' and participants play through quests and challenges that they must overcome as a team.
- Utilising videogames during COVID restrictions to engage young people in discussions around online identity, schooling, anger, teamwork and general wellbeing. Positive feedback on this intervention has seen the development of a schools based program.
- An online art workshop for children which includes sending out packs with the exact materials needed for the work shop. Staff step out each step with the children via teams to complete the art activities.

• Gardening packs, with egg cartons and cress seeds, have been mailed to participants. Children plant the seeds and send progress photos of how the plants are growing. Staff check in with the children during sessions in regards to how their plants are growing which assists with engagement.

FRRP have worked closely other Centacare programs, including Family Counselling, Youth Drug and Alcohol Service, and Youth on Track in client coordination and service collaborations. This has included information sessions with schools and justice organisations as a joint service approach. FRRP has also been working closely with external organisations across the region. Most notably, teams worked on numerous collaborations with their local PCYC police delivering various tailored courses to at-risk youth.

During the 2020/21 financial year, outreach services continued to smaller communities across the region. These communities included Barraba, Manilla, Tenterfield, Glen Innes, Mungindi, Boggabilla and Toomelah. Feedback from these smaller communities has been that they have found "Centacare to be a highly professional and committed organisation, with a consistent approach to support".

FRRP as a team continues to participate in development activities to ensure they provide a wide variety of programs and respond to community needs. The team have developed and implemented several new programs across the region, including an anxiety program (Super Kids) and a social support group based on the tabletop game, Dungeons and Dragons.

Rural Parenting Resilience

Amber Varcoe Matt Andrews

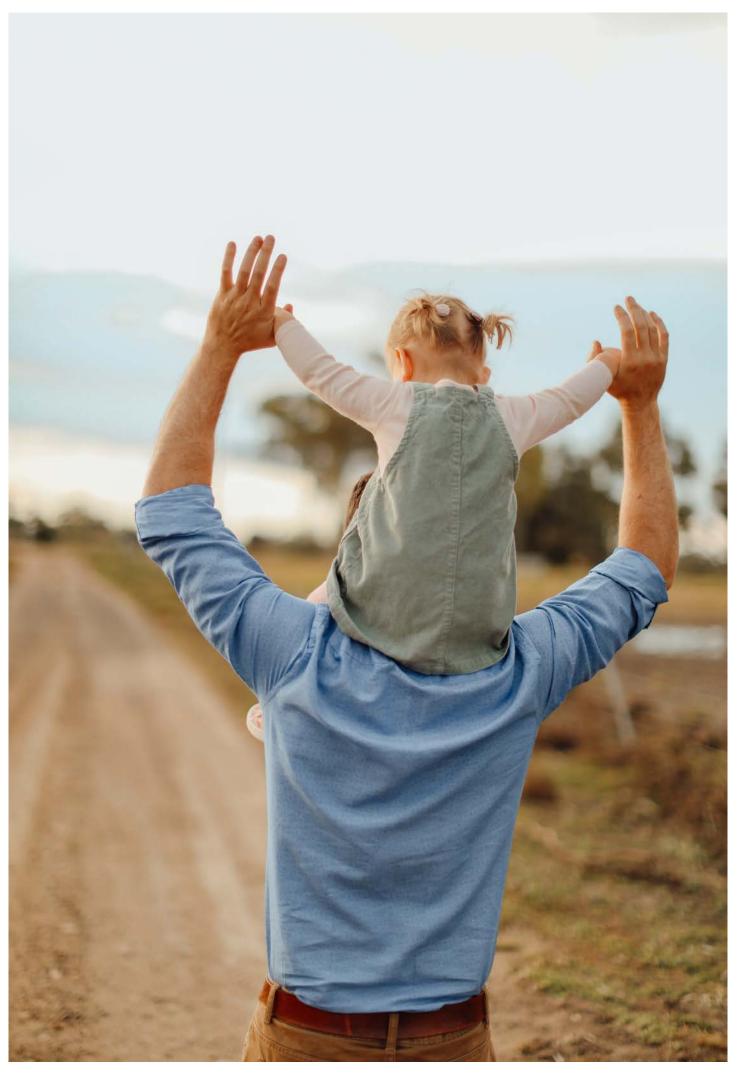
The Rural Parenting Resilience Program (RPRP) team have transformed the suite of services they offer to the Inverell, Moree and Narrabri communities. Over the past 12 months the RPRP team are now trained in and offer the Shark Cage program, Parents as Teachers program, Tuning into Kids and Bringing up Great Kids programs. These programs are proving highly successful with consistent uptake and great client outcomes. These are in addition to exsiting successful RPRP programs including Circle of Security, weekly peer support groups and weekly playgroups.

Through the dedication of the RPRP team, consistent outreach services have continued across the region. During the 2020/21 financial year, RPRP staff provided weekly services in Mungindi, Ashely, Walgett, Lightning Ridge Tenterfield, Emmaville and Glen Innes.

Service collaboration was a focus of the RPRP team this financial year allowing new experiences for clients. The team collaborated with Agronomist, Megan Adams aka the 'Gingham Gardener', to deliver a Mums & Bubs Gardening Workshop. The gardening workshop was held in the spacious gardens of the Moree Uniting Church. Megan taught the Mums, bubs, kids and carers about the basics of starting a vegetable garden. Participants planted capsicum, silverbeet, snow peas, lettuce, tomatoes, basil and parsley, and looked forward to witnessing their growth throughout the program. Other topics included establishing a worm farm, caring for chooks, and establishing an insect home. The program was focused on building peer supports among parents, establishing ongoing support networks, health and wellbeing among parents, carers and families.

RPRP facilitated four community days across their service footprint to showcase their program to the broader community. These days were held across Moree and Inverell LGA's and saw good community participation. These events were run in conjunction with other Centacare NENW programs and community organisations. The community days included family activities, bowling, movies and sports with some events attracting over 150 people.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the RPRP team implemented innovative techniques to ensure RPRP continued to reach those in need. Playgroups and parenting education courses were converted to an online platform and resource packs were mailed to clients to be used during courses and groups. Face-to-face service delivery continued for those who were unable to engage online.



Family Law Services

Amber Varcoe Kourtney Orman Matt Andrews

The suite of family law services (FLS) is comprised of the Family Relationship Centre, the Regional Family Dispute Resolution Service for more complex mediation cases and Post-separation Cooperative Parenting which is delivered through parenting education courses.

During the 2020/2021 financial period, the family and property law mediation team managed ongoing demand for services though a streamlined team approach utilising the client pathways officer and the family advisor. Internal referrals to manage the demand has also proved effective with a high internal referral rate.

The FLS team have seen an increase in requests for Property and Financial mediation services, supporting clients to reach agreement prior to or alongside the legal process. This increase has seen innovation and training within the team, including the introduction of specialist software packages which further streamlines the property settlement process for clients and practitioners.

The education programs have been refreshed during the year with Education Facilitators being trained in, and providing, Tuning InTo Kids and Tuning In To Teens across the region. The value of our education facilitators has been highlighted this year, with a number of requests for education programs to be delivered through partner organisations, including schools and other community stakeholders, alongside requests for training and upskilling opportunities for external sector staff.

COVID-19 impacts over this year have continued to see adaptability and innovation within the team, with service provision continuing via a mix of face-to-face and remote service delivery. Education courses, such as Building Connections, Keeping Kids In Mind and Tuning In To Kids have been delivered ongoing via Zoom, and seen positive impacts around making education opportunities more accessible for clients who live outside major centres.

Family Counselling Amber Varcoe Kourtney Orman

The family counselling team have been managing ongoing high demand for service across the region. While counsellors are based in Tamworth and Moree, weekly outreach schedules are provided in Armidale, Narrabri and Inverell.

A number of exciting partnerships throughout the year saw the family counselling team support services and atrisk community cohorts. For example, a partnership with the PCYC saw the a family counsellor run a group with young women focused on increasing self-esteem, building confidence, improving mental health and recognising healthy relationships. At the completion of the group, a number of young women continued to see the counsellor for individual counselling sessions. Following the success of this program, a mens group was organised and delivered on the same principles.

Family Counsellors across the region quickly offered alternate platforms for service delivery when face to face services where impacted due to COVID-19 lockdowns. Counsellors organised wellbeing packages for clients during this period and these were used by participants during sessions. Journals were also a popular resource during this period with many clients benefiting from journaling techniques.

Family Counsellors have developed and strengthened relationships with schools across the region to enable them to provide services in an educational setting to children experiencing family difficulties, where the wait for a school counsellor would be lengthy. This has been welcomed by schools across the region.

Case Study:

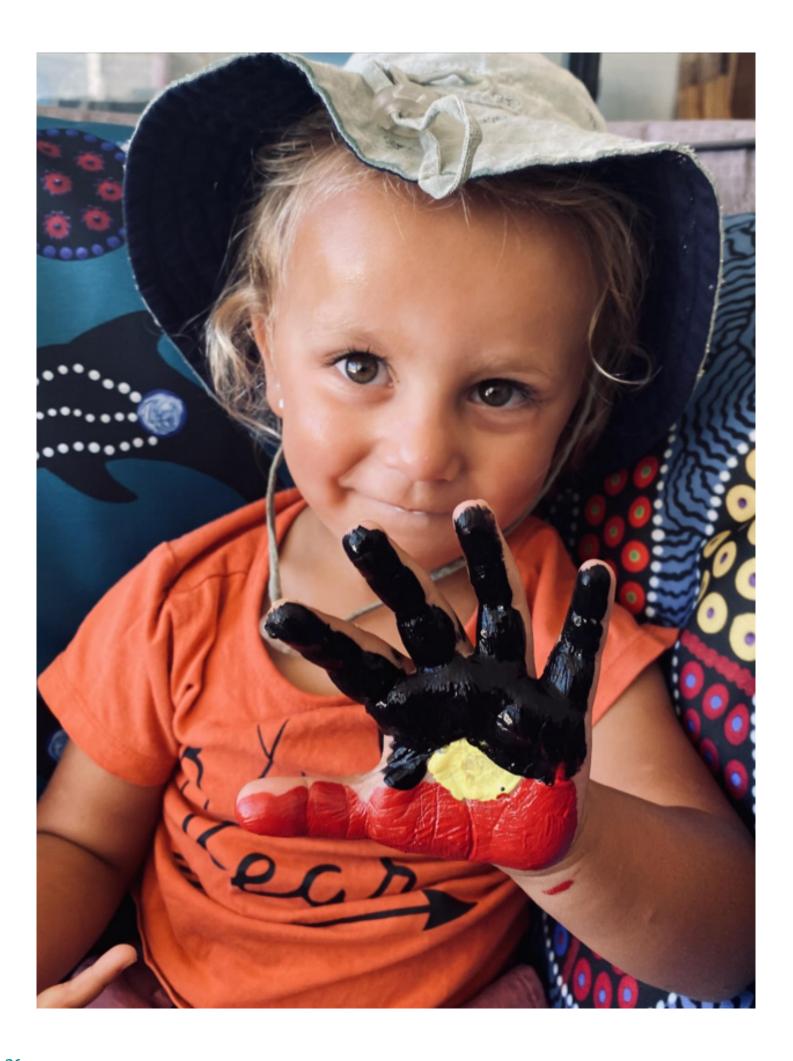
I began seeing Tom in March this year. Tom is an II year old boy whose family home had separated within the past 12 months. Following his Mum and Dad's separation, Tom became angry quite quickly and did not feel heard by his older brother, younger sister and parents. Tom would get so angry he would yell out "I just want to kill myself!" School teachers did not know how to support Tom in times of distress and this was upsetting to Tom.

When I began seeing Tom in March it became clear he was not sure how to voice what he was feeling. Tom did not want to kill himself, he wanted people to understand how frustrated he is that no one is listening to him.

We played games such as Emotional Bingo, strength cards, and made cool down cards for Tom to pull one out when he is finding he needs to self soothe. Tom has been implementing these activities in to his life – including taking the cool down cards to school and letting the teacher know when he is triggered and that he needs a few minutes to himself.

Tom has not felt the need to say he wishes to kill himself since April as he feels he has not gotten to this point of anger since using these strategies both at home and school.

Mum reports there being a difference in how Tom and the family communicate through using the "emotional thermometer" morning and night to check in with one another.



Specialised Family Violence Kourtney Orman

The specialised family violence team worked closely with field expert, Ken McMasters, to develop a tailored Men's behaviour Change program that would cater to the needs of our regional communities. The program, Disrupting Family Violence, commenced in September with the first group run in Tamworth. The group runs over 20 weeks. The Family Safety Worker supports women and children who are connected to the men attending the group to ensure safety. Free psychology support is also offered to the women and children in this program through a direct internal referral to Centacare's psychology team.

On January 29, 2021 Centacare NENW held a showcase to launch the new program to our community partners. Over 60 Government and non-Government organisations attended with Mayor Cr Col Murray for Tamworth, providing an opening address. Lizette Twisleton – No to Violence NSW Sector Development Coordinator and Ken McMasters – Director of Hall McMaster and Associates (HMA) Family Violence Services New Zealand were the keynote speakers.

Since the program commenced in September over 70 participants have been referred to the program. Referrals come from a variety of services including, Community Corrections, Legal practitioners, housing support services, local courts and self-referrals. Over 35 women and their children have been supported throughout this period.

COVID-19 has presented us all with challenges and SFV has been vigilant and mindful of increases of domestic and family violence during lockdown restrictions. Staff have managed not only the risk of the pandemic but also the risk of harm and levels of safety for participants, women and children. While face to face services continued, staff quickly adapted to phone or on-line services, providing information, support and community connectedness through these mediums.

Case Study:

Jane, with four children, accepted support from the Family Safety Worker after her ex-husband had been referred to the program.

At the first appointment Jane spoke about her relationship and how for many years she had been subjected to various forms of domestic violence. This was the first time Jane had disclosed the severity of the violence.

Jane and the Family Safety Worker discussed her safety and the safety of the children. Together, they developed a safety plan and she was referred to "Staying Home, Leaving Violence" and to the Homes North Start Safely program.

After a few weeks Jane was ready to report the assault to police and requested a no contact AVO. Jane was supported through the process of making a statement, as well as setting up her own bank account, getting a new phone, transferring the lease of her home into her name and gaining an understanding of the cycle of violence and her acts of resistance to keep herself and her children safe.

After several months of working together Jane stated to the family safety worker "she can't believe how happy and calm the children are and how happy she is out of the relationship." Jane stated "she didn't believe she could do it on her own and is looking forward to the future". Jane and the family safety worker are still working together on goals that Jane has identified she would like to achieve.

Early Start Amber Varcoe

concentrate and learn; and

 Students considered it important to have the same lunch choice (equity) rather than bringing their own food.

AMIHS

- Better outcomes in AMIHS classes, with an increase in breastfeeding to 98% on discharge;
- Smoking cessation increased to 75%;
- 98% compliance which includes outreach centres;
- 100% immunisations:
- 100% ceased drinking;
- I 00% attended for specialist appointments;
- 100% reporting to Children's Services;

As a result of the Early Start Pilot Program, AMIHS have been recognised by their peers:

- The 'Awakening the Birthing Spirit' launch was featured in the CEO's report for Hunter New England Health;
- The Strong Women, Strong Babies calendar was recognised in the 'Close the Gap' report. This report is presented to the Ministry of Health;
- The team have been asked to present at the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder workshop; and
- Finalists for the High Value Health Care Team Awards.

The Early Start Program wound up in March, 2021. Centacare NENW continues to raise awareness of the project outcomes.

Centacare New England North West successfully delivered the Early Start project through two Moree based agencies with exceptional outcomes. This project saw two community organisations appointed to deliver services under three service streams – Maternal Health, Building Resilience and School Readiness. The successful organisations, Moree East Public School and the Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Service, Moree Community Health (AMIHS), delivered a school cafeteria program and built upon their existing program which allowed the service to offer a more holistic healthcare experience, respectively.

COVID restrictions impacted both organisations throughout the year, however, altered service delivery approaches enabled both organisations to continue to support clients and communities during these times and still achieve outstanding results:

Moree East Public School

- Students were calmer and less anxious;
- Students felt more confident and empowered;
- 76% of students acknowledged that the cafeteria helped motivate them to want to come to school;
- 83% considered that the cafeteria helped their family;
- 81% students felt that the cafeteria helped them to

Family Law Pathways Kourtney Orman

The Family Law Pathways Network (FLPN) facilitates a Steering Committee across the Tamworth Region supporting a network of representatives from legal firms, community legal services, family services, Children's Contact Services, family violence services, community based Aboriginal services and family support services.

The Network has continued to provide support to the community via the court kiosk, providing this service online as required and offering access to video conferencing technology for community members to assist with online attendance at court proceedings

The Tamworth FLPN has been working closely with the state FLPN to provide ongoing education and professional development opportunities to both legal and non-legal practitioners with in the Family Law sector. This has included a series of webinars around topics such as Parental Alienation and working with high conflict clients.

Promotion of service and sector development has included the opportunity to work with local high schools to deliver a Mock Mediation experience, with FLPN Steering Committee members volunteering time to work with teams of students to teach and coach them through the experience of delivering a property and financial mediation. The Tamworth schools who contributed teams for the mediation have provided positive feedback about the experience and the support provided to the teams by committee members who participated.

Further work around information provision to the wider sector and community who are engaged in Family Law proceedings are being undertaken by the development of a FLPN website in collaboration with the wider FLPN. This includes a general 'umbrella' website, which provides information and advice about family law services, other supports and general information for families who are moving through the system. A localised site is also in development which will more specific to the New England North West and our local FLPN.



Emergency Relief Cigdem Watson

Centacare NENW's Emergency Relief (ER) team have worked collaboratively with relevant stakeholders to recognise and support vulnerable people with complex needs by providing immediate financial or material aid to eligible people.

Our Emergency Relief team contribute to improved outcomes for eligible vulnerable people, families and communities by helping people who are unable to pay their bills or are at imminent risk of not being able to pay their bills, improving financial capability and fostering the improved use and management of money, assisting clients to navigate life transitions and/or financial stress, improving financial resilience and pathways to mainstream financial services, and delivering services in a way that maintains the dignity of the individual and families.

During 2020/21, the team assisted communities with:

- Food and hygiene products;
- Rent or bond;
- Utility bills including phone/internet;
- Prescriptions and other medical costs eg prescription lens, X rays or ultrasounds;
- Fuel;
- Clothing;
- Clothing hire for job interviews;
- Transport to essential events/appointments;

- Funerals;
- Essential household repairs;
- Household furniture;
- New phones for people leaving a domestic violence relationship;
- Vehicle registration or servicing;
- Crisis accommodation, including for people Leaving a domestic violence situation or homeless;
- Providing sleeping bags, tents and/or backpacks for homeless people; and
- Essential back to school items for young people.

This list is not exhaustive, with many families and individuals provided support during the past 12 months.

Community Visitor Scheme Anne Lane

The Community Visitor's Scheme, in its ninth year running with Centacare NENW, has again seen another challenging year with many nursing homes restricting access to visitors due to COVID-19.

Centacare employs one manager located in Tamworth and four coordinators located in Tamworth, Armidale (incorporating Glen Innes), Gunnedah (incorporating Narrabri and Quirindi), Inverell (incorporating Moree and Warialda), who work together towards alleviating isolation to residents in approved aged care facilities.

Our wonderful volunteers have been getting creative in order to keep in contact with many of the residents due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The volunteers have visited, written letters, called and sent postcards to 869 recipients in the twelve months from July 2020.

We are extremely grateful for the work that both our coordinators and volunteers perform in the community by providing dignity to the aged care recipients that they so deserve.

We look forward to continuing the service into the new year by engaging additional volunteers who have something to give back to the community.





Rural Resilience in New England North West

Aboriginal Wellbeing Amber Varcoe

The Aboriginal Wellbeing Program (AWP) received the news in April this year that funding would cease in September 2021. The AWP team have worked tirelessly this year to ensure that all clients accessing the service have continued support with alternate service providers.

The AWP team continued to provide services in Care Coordination, Peer Navigation and Group capacity throughout their service footprint. Some of the service highlights include:

- The team delivered a weaving group in conjunction with Gunidah Gunya between to a group of local Aboriginal Elders. All Participants were extremely happy with the group, one participant completed baskets for both facilitators as a thank you gift.
- The team delivered a popular Cultural Group in Moree which was delivered on Country. The group was attended by people across the age spectrum to share stories and cultural knowledge.
- The team delivered Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid courses in Narrabri, Moree and Gunnedah, reaching over 70 community members and service providers to upskill them in assisting Aboriginal people experiencing mental health concerns.

• To celebrate NAIDOC Week, the team invited the Narrabri High School girls weaving group to the Narrabri Local Area Lands Council Group for a luncheon with Elders. An Acknowledgement to Country was completed in traditional language by two of the Narrabri High School Group before activities started. The Narrabri High School Group was able to prepare and serve a lunch, including a cake that was made and decorated by the Narrabri High School Group. The Narrabri High School Group and The Narrabri Local Area Lands Council Elders Groups sat together to have their meal and stories were shared from the Elders about the experiences they had growing up.

With the winding up of the program, Centacare is proud of the service delivered through the Indigenous Mental Health funding and staff should be proud of the difference they made to their clients and their communities.



Culturally Appropriate Services Fallon Roberts

Our Community Multicultural Officer has been busy in the community, and has been a regular face at community events such as Fiesta La Peel, and holding events to support, celebrate and acknowledged the strength of our migrant and refugee communities and the diversity they bring to our communities. The Community Multicultural Officer has also introduced programs, including "Finding My Way", which provides connection and guidance for negotiating society, and "Chats to Connect", an online space in which the multicultural community can connect and share educational and other resources and combat the feelings of isolation which can be experienced when learning a new community.

The Aboriginal Liaison Officer has continued to provide valuable support to men and youth through Men's Groups and Youth Groups. Both the Men's and Youth groups have participated in cultural activities on Country, in collaboration with key community members enabling education around sourcing food and cooking, knowledge sharing, building support systems and hands on learning such as digeridoo and clapstick making.





Rural Resilience in New England North West

headspace Sam Davis

The headspace team worked tirelessly this year to provide high quality services to young people and their families across the New England Region. headspace services were highly sought after in the last financial year, with service modality averaging 80-90% face to face and our average attendance rate being 82.6%. This resulted in staff working actively in offices across our sites to ensure effective client service provision.

The implementation of our BAC (Brief Assessment Clinic) was a key innovation during this year. This innovative program worked with our stepped care model in order to improve access for young people. The BAC team were available to undertake intake assessments with young people soon after receiving referrals, provide brief interventions and support with welfare checks, case management support and self-help resources.

Outreach and community connection is an integral part of our headspace services and throughout COVID-19, we ensured attendance at multiple community events, Schools and engaging with interagency meetings.

A key event that included Centacare staff across all programs was our Push Up Challenge. The project aimed to promote awareness of mental health and created positive team connection, physical activity and healthy competition during COVID. Staff that participated were provided with fun rewards to recognise their efforts during this event.

Case Study:

Jake is a 12 year old male who presented to headspace for concerns around bullying and suicidal ideation earlier in the year.

Jake was refusing to go to school or engage with any social connections. Jake attended three sessions but was resistant during the process and did not respond when asked any personal questions.

After several sessions of rapport building and a brief break from the service, Jake has now re-engaged. He has shown significant positive changes in school attendance, and now reports feeling confident in his ability to talk about and regulate his emotions

This program is funded by the Federal Government



Nurturing Resilience and Growth Sam Davis

Case Study:

A young person has been working with their clinician since October 2020 with a goal to reduce self-harming. Since working together, the client has ceased self-harming for over 100 days. Initially, the client had also ceased work to focus on improving their mental health and has subsequently reported feeling well enough to return to work and has commenced a new job

Nurturing Resilience and Growth (NRG - also known as Youth Complex Mental Health) Program has been an essential service for young people during the critical COVID period spanning across this year.

Our NRG program focuses on supporting young people who present with high and complex needs. Our staff work across the New England Region, based in Tamworth, Armidale, Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah, Glen Innes and Inverell. Service demands over the year have amplified due to COVID, with young people reporting increased stress and uncertainty. Our NRG staff have worked diligently this year to provide services to vulnerable young people in our communities, ensuring case management across services and providing much needed individual counselling and support.

This program is funded by the Federal Government

Youth on Track

Kourtney Orman Matt Andrews

The Youth on Track program (YOT) delivers intensive early interventions for young people at risk of continued engagement in the criminal justice system.

During the 2020/2 I financial year, YOT saw the completion of the randomised control trial overseen by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. This completion resulted in the removal of the shorter term 'FastTrack' variant of the program – with staff delivering the full Youth on Track program to all new clients.

Stakeholder collaboration remained a focus for the 2020/21 financial year, with YOT staff assisting in delivering collaborative programs and events across the serviceable area. YOT staff collaborated with services including PCYC, Family Rural Resilience Program, Armidale Secondary College, Glen Innes Public School and Barbara High School. Future collaborative groups in the serviceable area are currently being planned for the 2021/22 financial year. Many of these collaborative programs provided staff with an opportunity to utilise new interventions made available to them through training; including Rock and Water, Love Bites and Drumbeat.

During 2020/21, YOT New England secured a licence to deliver the Department of Communities and Justice's Alcohol and Other Drug intervention (X-Roads) to their clients. This addition will allow YOT to further support clients who are battling with substance use issues.

YOT staff have transitioned to a more paperless approach to service delivery. Staff have been utilising electronic notepads and voice to text applications to streamline processes and minimise the need for printing and paper.

With restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, staff built on their initiatives from last year. Online videogames were utilised to develop and maintain rapport with young people who were isolated, care packages were created for clients and face-to-face services continued to be offered where possible. Interventions continued to be adapted for electronic delivery using video conferencing, phone calls/text messaging, emails and gaming. In addition, YOT provided clients and their families with financial assistance in the form of food vouchers and phone credit to ensure that they were supported during periods of lockdown. Restrictions also provided YOT staff with an opportunity to strengthen stakeholder relationships, using this opportunity to undertake welfare visits with PCYC officers.

As a result of the hard work, innovation and dedication of the YOT team and their stakeholders, the 2020/21 financial year saw a 5% increase in the number of clients who have stabilised or reduced their formal contacts with police I year after referral.

YOT will continue to engage with new stakeholders and referrers to engage with and support additional clients and their families. The addition of new interventions and training opportunities will see YOT staff expand on their ability to work holistically in addressing factors contributing to the young person's risk of reoffending

This program is funded by the NSW State Government

Youth Drug and Alcohol Service Maree Dewson

The NSW Government approved continuation of the Drug Package investment to expand access to youth specific services for young people aged 10-19. Centacare NENW was approved for an expansion of services to include a full-time YDAS youth counsellor for the Moree LGA.

The Centacare NENW YDAS service focuses on the holistic care and treatment of young people with alcohol and other drug issues. YDAS offers high quality psychosocial counselling and case management services within a 12-week period to improve overall quality of life and improving their relationships.

Whilst, 2020/21 brought with it the unique challenges of COVID-19, our YDAS Team readily adapted to these challenges by swiftly offering vulnerable young people across our service area age-conducive mixed modal service delivery including, e-supports and face to face appointments.

Case Study:

Luke a 17yo young male was referred to the Centacare NENW Youth Drug & Alcohol service for AOD counselling, case management, care coordination, psychosocial support, psychoeducation and mentoring.

Luke has a diagnosis of depression and significant trauma history. Luke presented as shy and withdrawn and admitted to chronic polysubstance abuse. Luke also suffered from poor dental hygiene and low self-esteem.

Through intensive weekly appointments, his YDAS Youth AOD Counsellor utilised the YDAS strengths based recovery principals. Luke was referred and supported to access Community Mental Health for a medication review; dentist; GP and a Job employment agency.

Luke, with support from his YDAS counsellor developed positive coping strategies. His confidence and self-esteem has improved. With assistance from his YDAS counsellor Luke is proactively engaging in daily exercise regime and now also has a 'pets for therapy' dog which he has formed a positive bond with.

Luke enjoys a drug free lifestyle and has been abstinent from all substances including cigarettes for 3-4 weeks. Luke no longer requires Antidepressants and has gained fulltime employment as a Drover.

This program is funded by the NSW State Government



Rural Resilience in New England North West

Disability Services Grahame York

The Centacare NENW Inclusions Disability Program continues to experience consistent demand for its National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) services. The growth of the NDIS has continued with the scheme now having over 400,000 participants Australia wide. The Inclusions program has gone through a consolidation process during the year with Centacare NENW concentrating on Supported Independent Living (SIL) and Plan Management services.

Centacare NENW has continued to provide services to the three Supported Independent Living (SIL) homes located in Tamworth. The five SIL clients have been accessing SIL services through Centacare NENW since they became eligible for the support.

The SIL staff assisted with the vaccination of the five SIL clients during the year. Staff assisted the clients in getting the vaccinations organised prior to the NDIS providing assistance.

The current pandemic conditions have seen an increase in support for the SIL clients as their day programs were shut down. As a result of the restrictions, SIL residents requested an increase in supports. Previously, 5.5 hours of I:I supports per week were being provided; after the pandemic I:I supports hour have increased to 33 hours per week.

Centacare NENW NDIS Plan Management supports have continued to experience consistent growth with

total client numbers increasing over the last 12 months. During this period, over 60,000 invoices were processed and payments made in excess of \$51 million.

The Plan Management team, like the majority of businesses, have been required to deal with the challenges created by the pandemic. Due to restrictions, the NDIS was unable to review client's plans in a timely manner and had to resort to a new method of rolling and extending plans so the client's services could continue.

The Centacare NENW Plan Management Portal is being accessed by over 800 clients, carers and suppliers. The portal provides the recipient with live data and assistance with their budgeting and invoicing. Centacare NENW is continually looking to improve the portal so clients can develop a greater understanding of how their funding works.

Along with the improvements to the Plan Management Portal, Centacare NENW continues to explore innovative ways in which we can provide a more efficient and effective service to our plan management clients. During the past 12 months, Centacare NENW has invested heavily in automating the processing of invoices. Looking forward, Centacare NENW has requested access to the real time payment method, OSKO. OSKO will greatly assist in meeting the NDIS Plan management obligations and reducing the wait-time of payments to suppliers.

Centacare is very grateful for the opportunity to manage the Inclusions Disability Program and providing assistance to some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

This program is funded by the Federal Government



Rural Resilience in New England North West

Centacare New England North West (NENW) was established in 2001 by the Bishop of the Armidale Diocese, Most Reverend Bishop Luc Matthys, to extend counselling services to families and children of the Diocese of Armidale. Since then, Centacare NENW has grown to offer a wide range of programs and provides a significant portion of mental health and family based services in the New England and North West regions of NSW. We have nine offices located across the region from as far north as Tenterfield and Mungindi, to Werris Creek and Quirindi in the south, and all localities in between.

As one of the leading providers of Mental Health and Wellbeing within the New England North West geographic area, we aim to provide information, education and referral pathways to individuals, families and carers. We have highly qualified staff working across a broad range of programs and currently hold contracts with various federal and state funding bodies, and private organisations for the delivery of services.

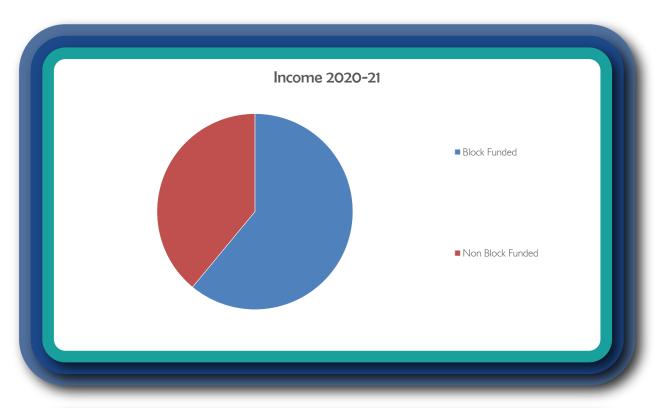
The Centacare NENW service delivery model is a clinical based model, underpinned by the Catholic faith and the Catholic Social Teachings. Centacare NENW is well versed in the requirements surrounding clinical service delivery, such as professionalism relating to confidentiality, record keeping, private meeting rooms, professional support, qualification and on-going upskilling of staff, best practice service delivery and Clinical Governance. Centacare NENW is committed to the ongoing training and development of staff and we encourage our team to pursue the highest standards in performance and provide opportunities to attend relevant training courses, workshops, forums and conferences.

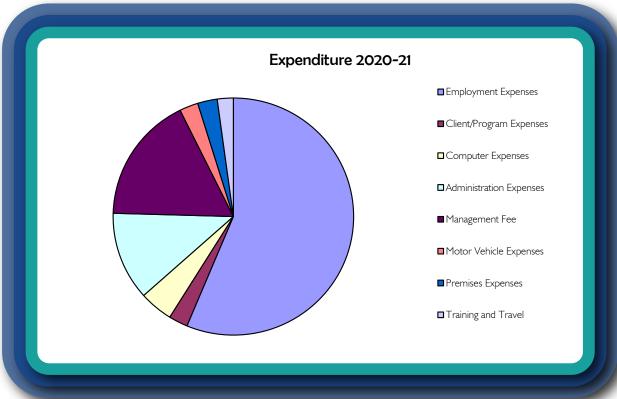
The operational policies, procedures, and quality commitment of Centacare NENW demonstrate and support this approach in practice. Centacare NENW has Governance, Management, Financial, Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) including Risk, and Quality frameworks all meeting the requirements of third party accreditation and external financial audited acquittals. We have embedded a Total Quality Management system (TQM) ensuring we develop, deliver, manage and monitor all program objectives and the needs of our communities and individuals. We focus on evidence based practice and outcome evaluation is crucial. We also believe in embedding research based practice into our service delivery with a number of our existing programs now either having published research on their client outcomes or in the process of publication. This is a large part of our Strategic and Quality service commitment to our communities and families and formally embeds client/stakeholder consultation and feedback into our processes. Centacare NENW is Quality Accredited by Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) Australia's most comprehensive not-for-profit accreditation and certification organisation. We are accredited under the QIC Health and Community Service Standards, Mental Health Standards and Disability Standards. The accreditation ensures high standards of practice including - Policies and Procedures, Governance, WHS, Human Resources, Quality Assurance, General, Service Area Specific, Clinical and Financial all reviewed annually.

Our vision is for a society in which there is recognition of individual and social rights and responsibilities, a society that promotes the dignity, equality and participation of all its citizens. We work within the Catholic Social Teachings, working for dignity, common good, solidarity and subsidiarity for our communities and those who live and work within them. We care about people. We care about children. We are committed to enhancing quality services to ensure client and stakeholder needs are met through best practice models.



Our Finances





Future Directions

As a growing organisation, Centacare NENW seeks to provide sustainable mental health and wellbeing services to our community.

We will achieve this goal through:

- I. Continual improvement in holistic client service delivery;
- 2. Improvement in our client feedback processes;
- 3. Improvement in the attraction and retention of quality team members;
- 4. Maintenance of Centacare's quality accreditation with QIP;
- 5. Improvement in the areas of data collection, management and analysis;
- 6. Preparing for risk and opportunity;
- 7. Source opportunities for growth by way of funding and submission tendering;
- 8. Build and formalise partnerships with other agencies, both Government and non-Government;
- 9. Continued upgrading of the organisational information technology capacity.

To provide further opportunities for funding and growth in future years, Centacare NENW will become an incorporated entity from 1 July 2022. Incorporating will increase transparency for our funding bodies, as well as provide professional governance to further facilitate growth and development as one of the leading menthal health and wellbeing organisations in the New England North West NSW.

Centacare NENW is committed to providing services that enhance the stability, wellbeing and connectedness of families, youth, Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) persons, the mentally ill, and those living with, or caring for someone with, a disability.



Centacare NENW Board Members



Louise Clarke - Chair

Louise is an Executive Leadership Coach with over 30 years of senior executive experience in the banking and financial services sector. Louise is Chair of the Board and Governance Committee and a member of the People, Quality and Safety and Finance, Audit and Risk Committees. Louise is a non-executive director of PN Bank and a member of their Risk and Governance Committees. Louise is a beef cattle producer in the Walcha District.

Louise holds a Bachelor of Business and is a member of Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Anne Carroll - Deputy Chair RN, BHst(N), MPH, MAICD

Anne is the Principal Consultant of QH Australia, specialising in consulting in Clinical Governance, Quality and Health Care Management. Prior to this role, Anne was a senior Hospital Manager for over 25 years with experience in all aspects of acute and sub-acute hospital management. Anne is a Non-Executive Director for Catholic Healthcare Limited, Arthritis NSW and Family Drug Support. She was also a Non-Executive Director for Uniting NSW.ACT and is the Chair of the Private Hospital and Day Surgery Benchmarking Groups. Anne is Chair of the People, Quality, and Safety Committee.



Jennifer Harman

Jennifer is the Chancellor and Professional Standards Manager for the Catholic Diocese of Armidale and has worked in the Diocese of Armidale for over 30 years. Jennifer became involved with Centacare when Bishop Luc Matthys first started considering establishing Centacare over 21 years ago.

Jennifer has experience in organisational administration, Church & secular governance, Canon Law, financial administration, strategy and risk. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Economics and Masters in Business.



Stephen Bartlett

Stephen is a career veteran of Local Government with more than 40 continuous years employment in the industry. Stephen has held Council Senior Staff positions for more than 30 years and was formerly employed at Tamworth, Gunnedah, Dubbo and Nundle Councils. Currently Stephen is a director of Destination Country & Outback NSW Ltd, a tourism promotion and capacity building organisation and member of a number of committees and foundations in the Tamworth region.

Stephen has a Bachelor of Business (Local Government), Master of Local Government Management, Master of Local Government and Environmental Law and Graduate Diploma in Legal Studies.



Chris Hietbrink

Chris is currently a Board Member of Centacare NENW and is a member of the People, Quality and Safety Committee. She is also a Committee Member of Armidale Neighbourhood Centre. For almost nine years and prior to retiring in early 2021 she was the Coordinator of The Hub at Guyra, Guyra's neighbourhood centre; and coupled with that role Chris was also the Convener of the Guyra Interagency Group and Convener/Chair of the Local Community Services Association NENW Region. She sat on the Armidale Regional Council's Wellbeing Committee for three years.

Chris has had a long career in various community service roles in and around the Guyra community and in Sydney, and volunteered as President of the St Mary of the Angels St Vincent de Paul Conference Guyra for eight years.



Robert Mulcahy

Robert has over 30 years senior executive experience in the financial services and for purpose sectors nationally and internationally. Robert has experience in general management including strategic planning, operational excellence, business development and risk identification and mitigation.

Robert has been directly responsible for children and family services including innovative social and financial transactions which include the NEWPIN Social Impact Bond and the Foyer Central Youth Accommodation initiative. Robert's financial services background is complemented with a strong understanding of the social and community housing sector, in particular with regional locations especially in First Australian communities.



Rowena McNally FAICD LLB FRI FIML

Rowena is a facilitator for the Australian Institute of Company Directors, an associate of VUCA Trusted Advisors and has regularly provided governance training to boards in Australia and overseas. She has previously served on the boards of St Vincent's Health and Aged Care Limited (Northside, Toowoomba and Brisbane) and the North West Health and Hospital Service (Qld), chairing the Quality and Safety Committee for each. She is a former chair of Catholic Health Australia and Trustee of Mary Aikenhead Ministries. She served for a number of years as a dicastry healthcare advisory member (Vatican) and is a member of Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice. She has chaired numerous not-for-profit boards, including Cerebral Palsy Qld, National Employment Services Association and is an Immediate Past President and honorary life member of the Resolution Institute. Rowena has served on many other NFP boards including Cerebral Palsy Australia, the Governance Institute, Open Minds and various water and energy boards and professional associations. She is a member of the AICD NFP Chairs' Forum and a member of the NDIA's Industry Chief Executive Forum.

Rowena is currently Chair of Mercy Community Services SEQ and Mercy Health and Aged Care Central Queensland, and Isa Rodeo and a director of Mercy Community Services North Queensland. She serves on the Development Fund advisory board of the Brisbane Catholic Archdiocese and is a Trustee Director of Mercy Ministry Companions.

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