



womens health
& family services

Annual Report 2017

-  medical & health
-  alcohol & other drugs
-  family & domestic violence
-  mental health
-  health promotion
-  aboriginal family support
-  rural in reach
-  body esteem program

CEO Report

Dear Stakeholder,

Womens Health & Family Services continues to provide a growing and diverse range of quality services to women and their families in Western Australia. We have again recorded an overall upward trend in the numbers of women accessing services across the organisation.

This year has been dominated by the need to critically reflect upon and further define the organisation's strategic direction and future sustainability. The Womens Health & Family Services Board engaged an external consultant to facilitate the work of the Board, CEO and Executive team to assess the present business model and to assist us in clarifying our sustainability options going forward. This was done with a focus on consolidating existing services, extending the capacity of the organisation by broadening its financial base and seeking meaningful partnerships. We remain proud of our past achievements as we position ourselves to meet the ongoing challenges.

The Board is actively involved in the process of exploring market opportunities, more diverse income and resource streams for future service funding. They bring their experience and expert knowledge of other sectors to strategic planning sessions to support our quest to sustain Womens Health & Family Services into the future, to continue to provide unique opportunities to advance services to women in the community.

Central to the success of our integrated service delivery, are our staff who combine their efforts with a great deal of professionalism, enthusiasm, cooperation, dedication and respect. As well, our Board members consistently give generously of their time, knowledge and invaluable skills.

I would like to also extend sincere thanks and appreciation to all funders, sponsors, stakeholders, volunteers, students, donors and especially clients of Womens Health & Family Services.

Ann Deanus
Chief Executive Officer

Womens Health & Family Services acknowledges that we gather on traditional Nyoongar land and pay our respects to elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Therapeutic art created by child client

Chair Report

Responding to the challenges of funding changes for the not-for-profit sector has continued to be a focus during 2016/2017.

The Board and Executive have analysed the organisation's current business model and considered a range of opportunities for the future. Key to these considerations is our ongoing commitment to the history and values of Womens Health & Family Services, the integrated model for service delivery, and the protection of gender specific services for women and girls. We expect that 2017/2018 will deliver a new business model for the organisation that will strengthen services for women and their families.

Hand-in-hand with this review was the articulation of our service delivery model as part of the 'Health of Women and Their Families' project, which included a cost benefit analysis of integrated women's health services. This has become an important communication tool for presenting the value of the organisation's approach to potential funders.

This strategic focus has been supported by continuing work on Womens Health & Family Services' governance, policies, systems and processes. Reviews have been undertaken in the critical areas of finance, IT and insurance, with additional resources provided where necessary to enable improvements to be implemented.

It's pleasing to report that due to a concerted effort by the Board and Executive to improve efficiency and effectiveness, the organisation has returned a healthy surplus for the year and improved the quality of financial reporting.

Most importantly, Womens Health & Family Services kept its eye on delivering outstanding services to our clients. We were delighted to have successful reviews of our ISO and Mental Health Accreditations and to be able to report outstanding outcomes to funders across a number of programs.

I would like to welcome new Board Members Pina Cafarelli (Treasurer) and Victoria Campbell, who bring

important financial and commercial skills to the Board. I would like to make special mention of the Deputy Chair, Sue Barnett and Chair of the Finance and Risk Management Committee, Jo Robinson-Smith who have supported me during this busy year.

Again I would like to recognise our Chief Executive Officer Ann Deanus who has continued to build important strategic relationships across the sector, facilitating government and funder support.

I would also like to acknowledge the hard work of the Executive and their staff in responding positively to the changes in the sector, their commitment to Womens Health & Family Services and our clients.

Anne Banks-McAllister
Chair



Therapeutic art created by child client



Children and Family Services

The Domestic Violence Service continues to provide advocacy and support to women and children affected by domestic violence. Our programs include Domestic Violence Advocacy Support, Multicultural Women's Advocacy Service, Coordinated Response Service, Kids in Focus and Multicultural Kids In Focus. Our model of advocacy is based on supporting women and children through legal processes, securing safe accommodation, improving financial stability, and developing extensive safety plans.

The range of services available are further improved through close collaboration with other programs within Womens Health & Family Services such as clinical services, alcohol and drug counselling, parenting programs, support groups, psycho-educational groups, exercise, nutrition, job club and onsite TAFE courses. Visiting services such as the Domestic Violence Legal Unit, Western Australian Police and Department of Child Protection and Family Support further enhance our services to women experiencing domestic violence.

Ongoing positive feedback has strengthened our commitment to continue to deliver Circle of Security attachment-based parenting groups and individual sessions. Kids in Focus work collaboratively with other service areas to deliver this highly successful program.

The Power to Change groups continues to be extremely popular with waiting lists for each group. These psycho-educational groups provide a safe environment for women to examine their experiences and how they have informed their concepts of self, interactions with others and worldviews.

Lisa Craig

Children and Family Services Manager

Aboriginal Grandparents and Family Service

Aboriginal Grandparents and Family Service (AGFS) secured funding from the WA Country Health Service under Footprints to Better Health to enable continued delivery of services that improve knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyle behaviours.

AGFS aims to strengthen and empower Aboriginal grandparents and their families to embrace sustainable and effective change through the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) service, family, grief and loss counselling, information sessions, parenting programs, advocacy and referrals, as well as group activities, peer support groups, early years playgroup, art therapy and school holiday programs. AGFS provides a holistic wraparound client-focused service, providing internal and external referrals. Clients receive specialised assistance from experienced practitioners, tailoring to their specific individual and/or family needs.

The highlight of 2016/2017 was the increased the number of internal and external programs delivered by AGFS. These include the Deadly Thinking grief and loss workshops with our Health Promotion team, and a weekly relapse and prevention workshop delivered in partnership with our AOD team.

Averil Scott

Aboriginal Client Service Manager

"WHFS has been giving me and my child great support. All the staff are really friendly and helpful."

Training and Education

Our Training and Education arm is now up and running, with services being promoted on our revamped website and via regular email newsletters. A focus for the ensuing year is the development of online training modules around family and domestic violence, community mental health and eating disorders.

Pilot projects have been run in metropolitan secondary schools for 'The Making of Good Men and Women' program with great success and keen interest for future programs. Workshops aimed specifically at teenage girls have been developed and will be marketed to schools towards the end of year. A presentation at the Education Department Engagement Forum in December 2017 will strengthen commitment to these programs.

Our Leadership and Moving On programs continue to empower women to advantage employment and education opportunities. 2018 will see a potential move to more STEM-related courses. The Health Promotion team continues to assist women with education around stress, first aid, bonding with baby, nutrition and physical activity. In excess of 2500 clients were seen in the past 12 months.

Womens Health & Family Services collaborated with researchers from the University of Western Australia to develop and pilot a Workplace Wellbeing survey. The evidenced-based survey will assess and identify psychosocial risk factors in the workplace, as well as practices that promote thriving in the workplace.

Jenny Carter

Executive Manager Business Development and Strategy



Body Esteem Program

The Body Esteem Program (BEP) traversed another successful year, with increased focus on community training opportunities. The Reaching out for Hope program, developed in collaboration with the BEP, was embedded within service delivery at the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services' Eating Disorders Program. The BEP anticipates ongoing delivery and expansion of this program to ensure its long-term sustainability.

A total of 141 clients attended the BEP core services. Within the 20-week groups, 62 sessions were delivered to 509 attendances and an overall attendance rate of 72 per cent was achieved. Post-program, 66 per cent of participants stated that there had been a decrease in their eating disorder behaviours.

Three workshops were delivered to various audiences, with a focus on eating disorder education. For the first time, Womens Health & Family Services delivered a community forum on Binge Eating Disorder. Guest speakers included a dietician and general practitioner, both of whom have a wealth of experience in the field of eating disorders.

Feedback from the three Parent/ Partner Education and Support Program workshops reflected that 96 per cent of attendees gained an enhanced understanding of eating disorders, while 100 per cent of parent/partner participants stated that they were better equipped to support their loved ones.

Staff represented BEP at two conferences - the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) 2017 Congress and the Bridges Eating Disorders Association's Connecting the Dots: *Making Sense of Eating Disorders* conference. BEP staff welcomed the opportunity to speak at the RANZCP Congress in Adelaide, embracing the theme - '*Speaking our Minds, Telling our Stories*'.

Closer to home, the BEP team was able to provide enormous support to the Bridges Eating Disorders Association including chairing sessions, completing oral presentations and conference organisation.

BEP is representative on a number of relevant committees, namely the Bridges Eating Disorders Association of WA's Management Committee and Reference Group, the WA Eating Disorders' Mental Health Sub-Network Committee and the Australian and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders Non-Government Organisation Special Interest group.

Jemma Caswell
Body Esteem Program Coordinator

Clinical Services

Our Northbridge and Joondalup clinics strive to provide excellence in women's healthcare. Our services include information, health screening, diagnosis, treatment, and counselling on a wide range of women's health issues by specially trained doctors and advanced practice nurses. The client group are diverse and often present with complex, sensitive medical and psychosocial conditions that require time and a skilled multidisciplinary approach.

In the past year there have been over 9000 consults, with 3390 clients aged 13 to 76 years being seen for a variety of health issues.

General practitioners (GPs) refer patients to our clinics for specific women's health consults such as cytology screening, testing for and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, contraception options (specifically IUD and Implanon insertion/removal), pregnancy planning, fertility advice, menopause advice and management, and mental health issues pertaining to all of the above.

This year in collaboration with Perth Maternity, we have had a midwife providing bulk billed consults across both clinics. Women can self-refer or be referred by their GP, giving them the opportunity to have affordable, accessible care from conception through to their six-week post-natal check.

Our doctors and nursing staff provide training and present educational talks on a variety of women's issues. In association with Western Australian General Practice Education and Training, the clinic offers the next generation of GPs the opportunity to develop their skills, education and practice in women's health. Similarly, midwifery students from Charles Darwin University now attend Womens Health & Family Services for their practicum.

Over the past year, the nurses have provided telephone information to over 2500 women from metropolitan, rural and remote areas. Many calls were around very sensitive health issues, with women expressing relief and gratitude at the ability to access a confidential service often lacking in small or remote communities.

A client satisfaction survey was conducted in July; 95 per cent of respondents reported that their health needs were met. 85 per cent of respondents felt that their health was improved and that they had increased knowledge and skills for dealing with health issues.

Sharon Maxwell
Clinic Manager

"If it wasn't for the doctor and psychologist here, I would be in a very bad place. I didn't want to live because of what was going on."



Alcohol and Other Drug Programs

The Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) service provides a range of programs to women and their families experiencing alcohol and other drug related problems. This includes individual, family and couples counselling, as well as therapeutic groups. Services are provided at Northbridge, Joondalup, Fremantle, King Edward Memorial Hospital and Bandyup Women's Prison.

In 2016/2017, approximately 268 clients received treatment over 2000 sessions, the majority being individual counselling; around 150 group sessions were delivered to more than 1000 attendees. This included an open group that supports women in developing practical skills.

The results of a client survey indicated that the most beneficial aspects of their treatment are the counselling sessions, therapeutic groups and support with their mental health and parenting. Almost 80 per cent of clients expressed satisfaction with the services received.

The weekly arts and craft coffee morning held at the Northbridge clinic has experienced a significant increase in attendance, with 66 per cent of participants reporting an increase in their self-esteem, and 80 per cent stating they felt more confident to participate in other Womens Health & Family Services' groups.

Of note, trauma informed care principles are continually being practiced, and clients with AOD issues receive assistance to strengthen their relationships with their children through one-to-one Circle of Security sessions.

Mental Health Programs

Previously known as the Mental Health Community Outreach Program, the 'Be Well' mental health program provides a range of services to women experiencing persistent mental health issues within the North Metro Health Service. These include group and one-to-one support, wellness recovery action planning, social and physical activities, health and nutrition, and arts and crafts.

Key stakeholders and referrers include general practitioners, community mental health teams, hospitals, community justice services and housing support workers. The programs are designed to provide support to clients by reducing isolation, creating supportive networks and enhancing personal coping strategies.

The 'Be Well' program has been enhanced to provide more structure with a skills and peer based approach. It encompasses several wellbeing domains that assist group participants with their recovery in a fun and inclusive manner. In particular, the Art Therapy group continues to be a popular and effective therapeutic program, allowing women to explore their experiences in a gentle and creative way.

It integrates other internal services to best support clients – for example, a dietician for nutrition and cooking, a wellbeing officer for yoga, fitness and meditation – as well as linking in with external community and mental health services.

Over the past year, 54 group sessions were attended by 363 participants, and more than 339 individual sessions were provided to 198 clients. Many clients took advantage of the free crèche in Northbridge, enabling them to access the programs with the security of knowing that their children are being cared for.

Partners in Recovery

Over the past year, the Partners in Recovery (PIR) team has provided support to more than 100 clients living with severe and persistent mental illness, with multiple complex needs.

With the support of the PIR team, participants are encouraged to reach their individual goals through the development of recovery-orientated and person-focused action plans.

Working in collaboration with the health promotion team and external stakeholders, PIR coordinated the 'Munching, Movement and Mindfulness' (MMM) workshop. Funding has been secured from the City of Joondalup to offer two MMM programs in 2017/2018.

PIR again delivered 'Buried in Treasures' training workshops for service providers, concurrently delivering two 15-week groups to support people living with a hoarding disorder.

With PIR coming under the National Disability Insurance Scheme in the next two years, we are continuing to monitor the arrangements for Western Australia. Our aim is to ensure a smooth transition for consumers and increase opportunities to deliver psychosocial disability support services in a changing funding environment.

Fiona Reid

Executive Manager Services



Perinatal Mental Health Program

The Perinatal Mental Health (PNMH) program offers therapeutic groups, individual counselling and peer support for women experiencing, or at risk of, postnatal depression and/or anxiety. Group programs consist of 46 sessions per year, including the cognitive behavioural therapy group Adjusting to Baby and Change, the Circle of Security parenting course and the Making Sense of Motherhood group for mothers and babies.

Many external agencies have ceased delivering this service due to lack of funding in the North Metropolitan Health Service sector, resulting in increased demand at Womens Health & Family Services. Over the last year, program staff provided direct support to over 175 women and engaged with more than 1,000 individual contacts.

Womens Health & Family Services has a long established reputation for providing expert and consistent PNMH support in the community.

We are committed to demonstrating an ongoing and vital investment in the mental health, wellbeing and protection of mothers, families and children.

The Mental Health Commission completed a successful audit of the PNMH program documentation and record keeping.

Judi Barrett-Lennard
Perinatal Mental Health Coordinator

“Maybe if I hadn’t come here things would have gotten too much, maybe I would have turned into a psychiatric patient. It’s a bit scary for me to think about.”

General Counselling Program

The general counselling service of Womens Health & Family Services follows a bio-psycho-social model of health. The major issues clients present are complex trauma, grief, domestic violence, anxiety/panic attacks, self-esteem, family of origin and parent/child issues. A special program is offered for women who have experienced trauma during consultation with a health professional. In June 2017, a support group commenced for women suffering injuries caused by mesh implants.

Held each semester, the Power to Change group continues to transform the lives of women who have experienced domestic violence. Evaluations indicate that participants experience a vast improvement in both their physical and mental health.

A total of 296 women attended individual counselling sessions and 24 women attended groups. The issues women present have increased in complexity, which necessitates longer-term therapy. Women from culturally

and linguistically diverse backgrounds comprised 20 per cent of clients from 31 different countries. Evaluations of the outcomes of counselling are overwhelmingly positive, with clients reporting major health benefits. The **free crèche** facility enables women to attend services and programs whilst knowing the wellbeing of their children is secure. The integration of services continues to result in lasting improvements in the health and wellbeing of women and their families.

Four Masters Students from Murdoch University completed their placement at Womens Health & Family Services. This enabled more clients to be seen and provided the students with a wealth of experience in women’s mental health issues. The demand for counselling services has increased markedly in recent months, as other community-based organisations were faced with reductions in their funding.

Dianne Rickman
Manager Counselling and Clinical Supervision

“So it is a great big journey that I’m on... They didn’t necessarily give me a path to walk down, but they actually helped me to put my shoes on so I can walk on my own, and that was such a big thing. It made me feel stronger and at ease with myself.”



MAJOR FUNDING FOR 2016/2017

Australian Government Department of Social Services
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Department for Child Protection and Family Support
Department of Corrective Services
Department of Health
Department of Justice
Lotterywest
Mental Health Commission
Black Swan Health Limited
WA Country Health Service
Western Australia Primary Health Alliance

MINOR FUNDING FOR 2016/2017

City of Joondalup

DONORS

Australian Leisure and Hospitality Group

BOARD MEMBERS

Anne Banks-McAllister – Chairperson
Sue Barnett – Vice Chairperson
Pina Caffarelli – Treasurer
Emma Oldfield – resigned 17 March 2017
Jo Robinson-Smith
Danielle Davison – resigned 8 May 2017
Jo Wilkie
Victoria Campbell

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

We are committed to transparency and accountability in our operations. A complete set of audited financial statements is available at our Annual General Meeting or on request.

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