

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



STRIVING FOR A HEALTHY & CONNECTED
COMMUNITY THAT REFLECTS AND SUPPORTS
THE DIGNITY, EQUALITY & PARTICIPATION
OF ALL PEOPLE.

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

CENTACARE CAIRNS

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www.centacarecairns.org

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the traditional owners past and present of the region in which we work.

We would also like to acknowledge the support and participation of people in our community. The people that access our services, programs and work with us are central to all that we do and are the reason we continue.

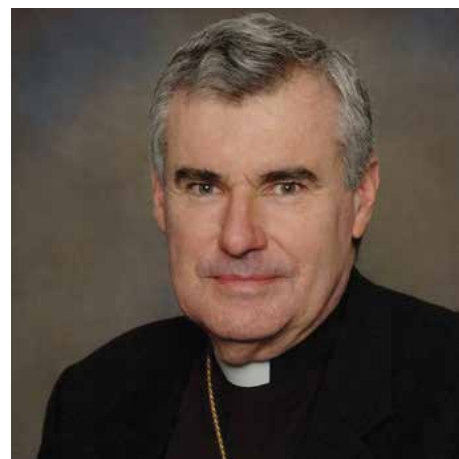
As an organisation,
we thank you.



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MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP



Pope Francis wants “a Church which is poor and for the poor.”

His words in *Evangelii Gaudium* (Joy of the Gospel): Pope Francis' First Apostolic Exhortation include: Each individual Christian and every community is called to be an instrument of God for the liberation and promotion of the poor, and for enabling them to be fully a part of society (#187).

Inspired by this, the Church has made an option for the poor, which is understood as a “special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness” (#198).

“God’s heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that he himself ‘became poor’ (2 Cor 8:9). The entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor. Salvation came to us from the ‘yes’ uttered by a lowly maiden from a small town on the fringes of a great empire.” (#197)

Centacare’s values and practice principles are based on catholic social teaching principles, and it wholly embraces the compassion and love shown to date by Pope Francis. Foremost to its mission is the practice principle of giving preference to people most in need and providing services to the areas of most disadvantage.

Over this past year, Centacare continued to enact its respect for human dignity by treating people with respect and care, striving to be non-judgemental. It sets a fine example to church and others, in our daily interactions with our brothers and sisters in the communities in which we live.

The staff at Centacare make a considerable contribution to the wellbeing of others and I thank them for their diligence and care in serving the church and community. May almighty God bless them and the people whom they serve so that together they can belong to a healthy and connected community that reflects and supports the dignity, equality and participation of all people.

† James Foley
Bishop of Cairns

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Again the year flew by the community services sector like a whirlwind, bringing with it a multitude of changes that have made our work increasingly complex and demanding.

I am reminded daily as to how fortunate I am to be working in a wonderful organisation and in a community that is as diverse as it is giving. Centacare Cairns continued to create those partnerships and connections within the community that enabled us to broaden services across the Far North Queensland region.

In 2014 – 2015, our aim was to continue to work with people who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable within our community by providing migrant, counselling, day respite, mental health and emergency relief services. We focused on strategic directions in relation to community connection, innovation and sustainability and importantly an organisational culture that strived to be responsive to the needs of the community.

Far North Queensland experiences its own share of disadvantage as a region. Preliminary findings of the Jesuit Social Services' and Catholic Social Services Australia's Dropping Off The Edge 2015 research report (to be released July 2015) revealed again that we have some of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia, with steadily increasing levels of unemployment, children in need of protection, homelessness, criminal abuse, mental health issues and financial distress. Centacare Cairns has at its core, a desire to assist members of community experiencing disadvantage and worked both at the coalface with people and advocated for our regional areas through its participation with governments, peak bodies and networks and in the background

affecting our region at a local, state and national level. We intend to utilise this report to ensure that our service responses are targeted to where they are most needed.

Notwithstanding the report, at Centacare, in our daily interactions with people who use our services, we see the hope within the community. In compiling this year's annual report, we acknowledge and celebrate the connections we made and the inherent strength of community which continues to flourish. This year, we made even further collaborations and connections with increased service and support to the Cassowary Coast, Mossman, Cape York, Northern Peninsula Area and Torres Strait regions.

In this respect, I appreciate and value the community services, organisations and businesses within the region that have continued to support and work with Centacare Cairns.

I sincerely thank the staff of Centacare Cairns. It is because of these dedicated people that Centacare is able to deliver the quality and breadth of services and initiatives to the community.

I am grateful to the funding bodies that invest public monies into our organisation in order to assist people seek better outcomes in their lives and I commit Centacare to continuous improvement of our services.

Diocesan support is never underestimated and I also thank the Bishop for his continuing faith in Centacare.

Helga Biro
Executive Director

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR VISION

A healthy and connected community that reflects and supports the dignity, equality and participation of all people.

OUR STORY

Centacare Cairns has been delivering social services to the Far North Queensland region since its establishment as the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau in 1981. As an organisation that grew from an identified need for counselling and family relationships services within the Cairns area, Centacare has strived to maintain its commitment to assisting people in need of support.

As is the wont of human service organisations, due in the main to the variations in government funding, many wonderful programs have come and gone throughout the history of Centacare. The following programs still exist today and assist Centacare to provide a broad range of human services that are underpinned by catholic social teaching.

Centacare Counselling Services (CCS) continued to grow and now offers a broad range of therapeutic services to individuals, couples, children, adolescents, families and groups.

Connections were made to cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in 1986 through the Grant-In-Aid programs for Filipino women and their families. The Migrant Employment pilot program commenced in 1993 and 5 years later Migrant Settlement Services was formed and is now known as Centacare Migrant Services (CMS). In 2005, a multicultural systems advocacy worker was employed that broadened the ability of CMS to effect systems change at the state level. The Humanitarian Settlement Services and Settlement Services programs continue to enable Centacare to support the CALD community, through CMS.

Emergency Relief (CER) commenced in 1987, to provide assistance to people in financial crisis. Despite recent funding cuts, the service continues work in collaboration with other agencies to ease the burden of poverty on people in our community.

Mental Health Help was established in 2000. In 2006, the service was rebadged to Centacare Mental Health Resource Service (CMHRS) and relocated to 10 Thomas Street, Cairns. It currently offers recovery-based coaching and group programs to Cairns, the Atherton Tableland, Mossman and Cassowary Coast regions.

In 1993, the Aged Respite Care Centre opened in 1993 in Smithfield. Respite care for people under 65 was introduced in 1994 and Centacare Marlin Coast Respite (CMCR) now operates at Oak Street helping people to continue to live in their own community.

Partners in Recovery initiative in Far North Queensland (FNQPIR) was established in 2013, with Centacare Cairns as the lead agency of a consortium of rural & remote, regional and local service providers. PIR providers offer individual case coordination while its systems change component promotes collective responsibility and encourages innovative solutions to ensure individuals are able to access the services and supports needed to sustain and support their optimal health, wellbeing, and recovery.

Throughout its 34 years in Far North Queensland, Centacare has continued to maintain quality standards in all areas of the organisation. In 2004, Centacare established a quality framework, the Integrated Quality Business Management (IQ-BM) system which considers organizational policies and processes, and how as an organisation we can deliver quality services and programs into the future. It plans to be accredited early 2016.

Centacare continues evolving its services to be responsive to community needs as well moving towards a strategic framework that considers sustainable and long term programs.

OUR VALUES

Our values are translated into practice principles and applied in our daily work. It's how we work as an organisation with our employees, people, families and the community.

We have adopted the core principles of Catholic Social Teaching as our guiding values.

HUMAN DIGNITY

All people are equal in dignity and have equal rights.

Those most directly affected by a decision or policy should have a key role in the decision-making.

SPECIAL CLAIM OF PEOPLE WHO ARE MOST IN NEED

Recognises that achieving equity for client means that some people may require additional assistance.

THE COMMON GOOD AND COMMUNITY

Our dignity and rights are fulfilled in relationship with others, in community. We are connected with other people and we value the rights and aspirations of others and the well being of all.

SOLIDARITY

A shared vision to empower people to reach their full potential.

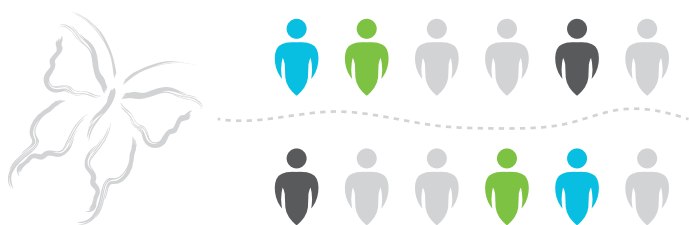


STRATEGIC GOALS

Centacare continues to develop its Strategic Goals for the future and working long term with local communities.

Our Strategic Goals are underpinned by our vision and values as a framework for organisational practice.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS ARE SUMMARISED AS:



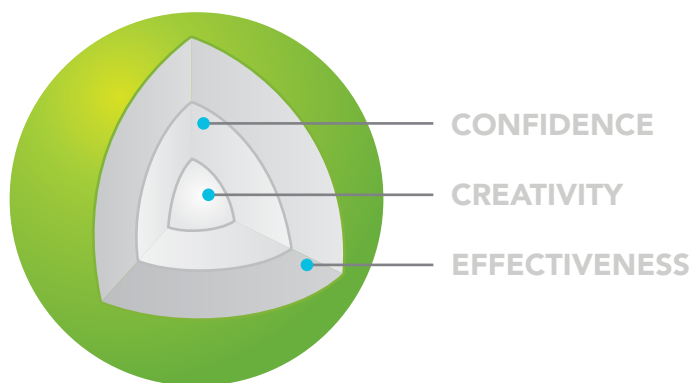
COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Centacare actively engages with our community to guide our service provision and our place in the community.



INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES

Centacare is recognised for delivering quality, diverse and sustainable services in the community.



ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Centacare has a healthy organisational environment that fosters a confident, creative and effective workforce.

2014-2015 OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

CALD COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



COUNSELLING

COMMUNITY CONNECTION & COLLABORATION



EXTENSION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

QUALITY SYSTEMS REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION



SYSTEM REFORM AND CAPACITY BUILDING

OUR REGION

Centacare Cairns works across the Far North Queensland region.



COLLABORATION

Working together, in the community, with people accessing services and supports as well as with other providers to improve collaboration for more effective service outcomes and communicate issues affecting the social services sector.

COLLABORATION

This year our annual report reviews the collaboration that has occurred through our services and the advocacy efforts of Centacare as an organisation.

Collaboration was practiced through participation at the local, state and national levels, including government. Centacare locally participates in social sector networks in Cairns relating to issues such as mental health, migrant services, aged care, disability and economic participation.

Centacare responds to issues and engages at the national and state level through peak bodies such as:

- Catholic Social Services Australia
- Queensland Council of Social Services
- Community Services Industry Alliance
- Queensland Mental Health Alliance
- Settlement Council of Australia

Centacare's Executive Director chairs the Cairns Alliance of Social Services (CASS), a group of social service providers working on common issues that affect community wellbeing.

CASS objectives:

- Act collectively on identified issues and/or gaps in service delivery affecting Cairns and its surrounds
- Undertake systems advocacy
- Support national/state social action campaigns by providing local perspectives
- Raise community awareness by organising forums and media releases
- Lobby local MPs

Through the Executive Director's role as chair of CASS, Centacare has actively engaged in a variety of submissions, working groups and lobbying including:

- Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee regarding the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Funding Announcement
- Senate Inquiry into The impact on service quality, efficiency and sustainability of recent Commonwealth community service tendering processes by the Department of Social Services
- The Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia with a subsequent appearance at a hearing
- The Inquiry into the role of the Technical and Further Education system and its operation
- State and Federal members of parliament attendance at CASS meetings
- information provided to members of parliament for lobbying purposes.

MIGRANT SERVICES

Centacare Cairns works together with migrant people and families to help them make Australia their new home.

BUILDING RESILIENT FUTURES WITH YOUNG ADULTS

The children of migrant families experience many pressures when settling into a new country - adjusting to a foreign culture, learning a new language, developing a bi-cultural identity, and managing traditional family roles among many others. Centacare Cairns Migrant Services (CMS) worked together with Queensland Health over the past year to deliver the BRiTA program*, aimed at increasing the personal skills and resilience of young migrant adults in this journey.

This year's program saw the opportunity for richer cross cultural connections as participants connected with and learnt from the stories and lived experiences of the area's Traditional Owners, who share many parallel experiences. Burmese and Bhutanese youth joined Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander communities during the 'Feast of Cultures' event and National Youth Week programs. The participants enjoyed open conversations with Aboriginal Elders from Yarrabah, who generously shared their personal histories, values and culture as First Peoples. In return, the migrant youth of newly arrived Chin, Rakhine and Bhutanese backgrounds shared their own settlement journeys fostering a shared understanding and recognition of mutual strength and resilience. In the words of one participant, 'this made my eyes and heart open'.

*Building Resilience in Transcultural Australians Futures Program (Queensland Health, Transcultural Mental Health).



CREATING PATHWAYS TO ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

Like all Australians, economic independence is a strong aspiration for many newly arrived migrants. While many face significant barriers to accessing mainstream employment such as language, lack of formal education or recognition of previous skills or qualifications, they also possess an array of skills and strengths that can generate a livelihood and are an asset in the workplace.

Traditional skills include carpentry, tailoring and textile and basket weaving as well as soft skills in community leadership and organising among many others. CMS worked with migrant communities during the last year to find ways to turn these strengths into a livelihood.

Together with the Cairns business community, employers and education providers, this included continuing support for communities to establish cottage industries and social enterprise via local



craft markets, building an awareness of workplace law and culture, mentoring small business opportunities and showcasing career and employment pathways through two inaugural Pathways to Employment Forums.

The innovative forums held in February and March 2015, focussed on the needs of youth and adults. Each incorporated an employment and training expo together with employer Q & A panels representing diverse industries. The panellists shared their perspectives on industry needs and pathways to enter the workforce. Over 200 participants attended the forums from 20 nationalities, with the three largest groups being Bhutanese, Burmese and Hmong. The event was supported by over 20 local and regional businesses.

COMMITMENT TO THOSE MOST VULNERABLE

ONE FAMILY'S STORY OF REUNIFICATION

Working to support the settlement journey of people from a refugee and humanitarian background is a richly rewarding experience. The front-line work of volunteer, case management and bi-cultural worker teams to meet the early settlement needs of new arrivals in ways that foster independence and increased capacity is a key focus of CMS' Settlement Services teams. Across their suite of case work, orientation and life skills and case management programs, the team delivered services to approximately 600 clients in the 2014-2015 period.

While practical settlement supports include housing, schooling, medical needs and employment among others, of equal importance is the non-tangible supports of mental health and emotional wellbeing. A key impact of the resettlement experience is family separation and

the anxiety of lost family members. Over the year, CMS Settlement Services team has given ongoing and high levels of support to many families to meet the requirements for family reunification applications (such as DNA testing, document certifications, financial assistance, travel, etc) for family members still overseas.

An example of the healing effect of reunion was demonstrated in late 2014. The culmination of three years of sustained effort by an African single mother came to fruition as she was reunited with her son, from whom she had been separated during the conflict in Rwanda twenty years ago. The child was two years old when they lost contact, and when he arrived in November 2014, he was a young man of 22. The relief and joy to this woman was palpable and the African community celebrated the reunion as a milestone.

STAFF PROFILE

CAIRNS TO IRAN - Bridging the Divide of Cultural Understanding

CMS was extremely proud to support Kiran Biswa's successful application to the highly sought after AUSCO Exchange Program 2015 in his role as HSS Orientation Program Project Worker. Kiran was selected to undertake the exchange to Iran from 16-26 May 2015, after more than three years delivering the life skills orientation program in Cairns to newly arrived Bhutanese and Burmese refugees.

The aim of the AUSCO program is to build cross cultural awareness and a first-hand appreciation for the experiences of refugees from a particular region or country, including a deeper understanding about the culture and their pre-settlement journey. This includes building stronger links between the Orientation Program (in Australia) and AUSCO pre-embarkation training, allowing for greater sharing of information and life skills training techniques to increase outcomes for participants.

"This was a brand new and eye-opening experience for me," said Kiran. "I now understand more about people from that part of the world and in the future I can use this knowledge to provide the most culturally appropriate training and ensure a continuum of information for people coming to Australia. This will ultimately make their post-settlement experience much easier."

Kiran's visit included meeting with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Tehran staff, Australian Embassy staff, UNHCR staff and participating in AUSCO delivery, including being a guest trainer to 23 participants over 5 sessions on a range of topics. CMS then reciprocated, by hosting the IOM Tehran AUSCO exchange participant from 11-21 July. As part of the exchange, Mr Hami Khalkhali, participated in local Orientation Program sessions and met with HSS case managers and service providers. Both participants participated in the AUSCO Conference in Brisbane in June, and provided reports with their reflections and recommendations related to their experiences.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

Centacare Migrant Services (CMS) will continue to work across three key thematic areas in the coming year: Self-determined Communities; Economic Participation; and Strong Families and Wellbeing.

A key focus will be to achieve outcomes in economic participation and raise awareness of the needs of diverse communities through greater links to mainstream regional economic development initiatives. CMS will work with mainstream business and economic development organisations to seek new collaborations and tailored supports to meet the aspirations of culturally and linguistically diverse communities in small business ventures, social and micro-enterprise as well as innovative employer partnerships.

CMS will expand its support for new and emerging communities in community leadership and community-based problem solving. This will include development of the Community Navigator Program (a partnership with Griffith University), currently focussed on primary health - mental health and women's health. Support includes building leadership skills, navigating the system, community practice frameworks and self-care. This includes supporting the Ethnic Community Council of Queensland's Community Leadership Program in late 2015 and Social Enterprise training.

The Service will continue to invest in professional development opportunities in best-practice community development and case management frameworks and models. This includes facilitating access to training including Multicultural Development Association's Working with Refugees Training and SCOA's Navigating Government systemic advocacy workshop as part of its sector development strategy.

COUNSELLING

Healthy and connected communities start with healthy and connected relationships and resilient people.

CORE COUNSELLING PROGRAM EXPANDS

This year has seen our core counselling program continue to offer a range of counselling services for adult individuals, children, couples and families. Centacare offers on-site counselling services at its Aplin Street Cairns location.

Counsellors work in providing services and therapy options that promote positive and healthy connections. These have continued to expand with additional services being offered as outreach to the southern suburbs of Cairns.

Our school program continued with the addition of several courses for school-aged students in understanding and communicating regarding issues such as bullying, wellness, acceptance and participation. We recognise the importance of providing such information to school students and continuing the relationships created through local schools as a role in promoting better mental health.

Additional services included offering Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) to regional organisations, businesses and employers. This enriched our approach, developing EAP services that are responsive to home or work related stress that may interfere or impede workplace productivity. EAP will further develop in 2015 – 2016 as we continue as a provider to understand the regional issues that affect job performance and work in supporting local industries.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

The Counselling team will undertake cultural awareness training specifically with regard to working with Torres Strait Islander people. This continues the commitment to increasing the teams' knowledge and understanding of Indigenous cultures to ensure that practice is as fully informed as possible.

Professional development and evaluation of service delivery will equip counsellors with personal insight and knowledge to enhance outcome for the people seeking our services.



WHAT PEOPLE SAY...

"... life's done a big circle for me and even though challenges rock up from time to time as they do with everyone, I have the strength again to face them."

"I appreciate and value the time that is given to me. My sessions really help me to move forward with my life."

RESPITE

Respite not only provides social and recreational activities, it is a direct way for people to connect with their community.

LIVING INDEPENDENTLY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Working with people requiring respite services allows people to live independently in the community. Whether respite is required due to functional or cognitive needs the respite services team provide tailored activities to facilitate this independence.

The Centacare Marlin Coast Respite (CMCR) services located to the north of Cairns at Holloways Beach provided a relaxing, respectful environment for people accessing its services. Current respite activities continued in 2014-2015 with the addition of transportation to enable increased access for clients.

CMCR continued to explore opportunities to engage with community members and organisations and recently became part of a mutually beneficial partnership with Cairns Training Academy (CTA). CTA will utilise the CMCR twice a year for the training of students in 'Manual Handling' and in return CMCR staff will be able to undertake the 'Manual Handling' refresher training each year.

CMCR strives to maintain a healthy relationship with a variety of different community groups and organisations. In the past year, relationships with the Holloways Beach Sporting Complex and Strait on the Beach Café were strengthened and CMCR clients are always made to feel welcome there.

Over the past twelve months, CMCR organised a number of additional activities including:

- A representative of Legal Aid visited clients to discuss awareness of their rights and accessibility to free legal services for seniors.
- A local musical group called 'Joyful Praise' attended the Centre on a regular basis to entertain clients with uplifting popular songs from the past.
- A movie session, with the screening of short cuts of legendary movies of all decades was presented by Joel Archer.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

CMCR has been exploring ways to enhance the various wellbeing programs offered to clients. CMCR is developing an extension to existing programs based on moderate exercise, nutrition education, information/awareness sessions on health risks and common ailments of the third age such as diabetes, hypertension and osteoporosis and how to prevent/ decrease these risks. These enhancements will commence in the second half of 2015.



MENTAL HEALTH

Working to offer compassionate, non-judgmental, reliable and free coaching services that enable people experiencing severe and persistent mental illness to negotiate their own recovery.

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Centacare's Mental Health Service successfully tendered for a three year contract from Queensland Health to provide mental health support to adults with persistent and complex mental illness. This new contract expanded coaching and group services from the Cairns region to the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health District.

The service officially re-launched in the Cairns Region in November 2014 with four new outreach 'hubs' at Ravenshoe, Mossman, Innisfail and Tully in early 2015. These events were attended by community members, current and potential service users and local representatives. The service can now offer quality support services for individuals experiencing mental illness and their carers, family and friends across the whole district.

This year, as part of the new extended (outreach) contract with Queensland Health, CMHRS introduced two specific groups to service delivery - 'Thrive' and 'Drumbeat.'

'Thrive' is a six week introduction to mental wellbeing offering a range of topics including growth, understanding your emotions, relaxation stress and mindfulness. The invitation is for people who are interested in being the best they can possibly be. 'Thrive' was designed to be an easy introduction to personal recovery within new locations. The first sessions were held at The Cottage in Mossman, in partnership with the Mossman Community Centre and the Douglas Shire Community Services Ass Inc. CMHRS was pleased to see, that following the first group, people who

attended are encouraging others in the community to attend the next group.

'Drumbeat' is a nationally recognised program to build resilience through rhythms. CMHRS chose to include this in the program because the beneficial aspects include improved emotional control, improved self-esteem, improved social skills leading to better relationships and an increased sense of belonging. CMHRS invested in specific training for team members to be able to facilitate this group. The first 'Drumbeat' was held in Ravenshoe where direct service delivery commenced for the first time in September. CMHRS plans to include this as a regular program throughout the Cairns and Hinterland Health Service.

Over the last 12 months, Centacare Cairns has focussed significant effort on improving the integration of individual service areas to improve relationships and establish a sense of belonging to a wider program area with common values and desired outcomes.

A highlight of this work was the successful 'Social Services Program Team Development' event hosted by CMHRS in late April and attended by staff from Counselling, Emergency Relief and Marlin Coast Respite. Social Services staff had the opportunity to learn about the operational requirements of the various Service Agreements that fall within CSS; the commonalities and potential areas of interface. Feedback from staff was very positive with the majority requesting that this become a six monthly event.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

In the 2014/15 financial year, CMHRS partnered with Anglicare to plan a Carer Retreat for Carers, Friends and Family Members of people with a severe or persistent mental illness. The first of these retreats will be held in late July 2015. It is envisaged that these retreats will provide a much needed opportunity for carers, friends and family to come together in a fun, relaxed and therapeutic environment



EMERGENCY RELIEF

Not just about providing a crisis financial service, it is about working with people who are disadvantaged, in a way that is hopeful, understanding and respectful.

SCALED BACK SERVICES STILL DELIVER

Though Centacare was successful in the 2014/15. Department of Social Services (DSS) tender for Emergency Relief (ER) services, funding offered was significantly reduced and Centacare was forced to scale back on the size and scope of the previous ER Program and service delivery. Operationally, this meant the consolidation of what had been four outreach services into one and reducing the Case Worker service from two full time staff to one, resulting in fewer client appointments and less funds available for distribution. On the positive side, the service now includes subcontracting of services to two other organisations in Cairns and one at Yarrabah.

Through the combined partnership of Centacare Cairns, Mission Australia, Cairns Regional Council, REAP Cairns and BP Edmonton, Centacare was able to continue operating an ER Outreach operated by volunteers at Hambledon House once a week for people in the Cairns Southern Corridor. REAP Cairns provides donated fresh produce once a week; Mission Australia donated a fridge for storage; BP Edmonton allows the fridge to be located and powered free of charge on their premises and Cairns Regional Council provided free rental of a room at Hambledon House for ER delivery.

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

Centacare Cairns is currently exploring opportunities to partner with organisations such as businesses in an effort to increase the ability of ER to meet the needs of people who are most vulnerable within our community.

PARTNERS IN RECOVERY

A collaborative
community based
approach to recovery
that reflects & supports
the dignity, equality &
participation of all
people.

COMMUNITY BASED RECOVERY

The Partners in Recovery Initiative (PIR) aims to better support people experiencing a severe and persistent mental illness by providing a coordinated, person-centred approach, aimed at meeting the person's own aspirations for their mental health needs and personal recovery.

Following on from its successful launch in Cairns and regional centres in 2013, PIR began progressively rolling out into the remote and rural areas of Far North Queensland from the second half of 2014. The PIR team recognises the unique challenges that living in a rural and remote area brings, particularly for people experiencing a severe mental illness. The aim is to build the capacity of the agencies located in these areas, to better

respond to the needs of participants and to work more effectively in a person-centred and collaborative way.

The participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people is a high priority for FNQ PIR and we worked collaboratively with ATSI agencies and local Elders/leaders, to ensure that the most respectful and effective support is provided in rural and remote communities.

Centacare Cairns, as the lead agency for FNQ PIR, sub-contracted local agencies to host PIR personnel in targeted communities across Cape York Peninsula, the Northern Peninsula Area, the Torres Strait Islands and Yarrabah.



PIR is in the final year of its current funding cycle. The first two years saw the successful implementation of the initiative across the region. A large number of people have been linked into the services and support they need and have built up their resilience and self-determination along the way. With one year left to run, FNQ PIR has already exceeded its target number of participants for the entire program duration, thus demonstrating the need for such services.

One of PIR's key aims is to build the capacity of agencies to better meet the needs of people with a lived experience of mental illness. Importantly, PIR sees mental illness as a community issue that requires a community response. To this effect, PIR will be promoting the engagement of the general community to form 'natural supports' where possible for participants, so that reliance on government and/or non-government services is reduced.

Together with our consortium members, FNQ PIR commenced specific system reform projects in the region aimed at finding new ways to address and overcome the barriers that many people experience when accessing the support they require. Further, we will be working with agencies to develop a greater emphasis on recovery-oriented practise.

PIR aims to be different. We don't want to duplicate what is already out there. In fact, the very clear message given by the funding body was that PIR had to be driven by the needs of people with a focus on developing complementary and/or alternative responses to existing clinical style services. The people who are PIR participants often have a complex range of personal and support needs. Prior to PIR, many people would most likely have been provided with a clinical response, targeting only one of two of their needs. The PIR approach is to place the person in charge of their own recovery; treat people as experts in their own lives; proceed at the pace determined by the person; link the person to the services and supports they require; and importantly, PIR also works with the agencies/family/carers to build their capacity to effectively and collaboratively provide support. Evidence to date indicates that nationally and locally, the approach taken by PIR has been a huge success.

FUTURE SERVICES DIRECTION

At the same time as facilitating access to a wider range of services for people experiencing a mental illness, PIR will also be creating and promoting a cultural shift amongst those agencies that have traditionally cared for and supported people with a lived experience of mental illness. The shift will be towards listening more and acting on the needs of participants and their carers/families; more open communication with participants; enabling participants to drive their own recovery; encouraging agencies to break down silos and to think outside the box; moving towards an “I can” approach to service delivery; and ensuring services have seamless collaboration within their core values.

CORPORATE

In order to provide the best service delivery as an organisation you require corporate support that is responsive, organised and connected.

We have that.

CORPORATE SUMMARY

Our Corporate Services area provides financial, policy, administrative and business support functions to all our services and programs. Corporate Services ensure a high standard of quality through its support function to all Centacare Cairns staff.

SERVICE ACHIEVEMENTS TOWARDS THE THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES OF CENTACARE:

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

- Liaised with Centacare service areas around a marketing plan to communicate information about Centacare services to the community.
- Information gathering re options for a new website to better communicate to stakeholders.

INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES

As part of the continual improvement process, systems were reviewed.

- Centacare is moving towards client information management on one system – CSnet®. The systems area of Corporate Services coordinates this so that:
 - o Programs are able to utilise CSnet® for the efficient running of their programs.
 - o Staff can utilise CSnet® as an efficient tool to assist in their daily practices with clients and record keeping.
 - o Management is able to utilise the information and reports in CSnet® to aid their work practices for reporting and to identify trends
- Existing computer networks were reviewed and revised to make them more user friendly.
- Commenced work towards the switch from ADSL to NBN. This will improve internet speed allowing improvements in efficiencies.

- The quality system was reviewed and upgraded.
- Commenced reviews of policies and procedures in relation to financial management, asset management, information technology, record management, human resources, work health and safety and quality system.
- Moved the annual asset stocktake from a manual to computerised process using AssetGuard Pro. This is a cloud-based asset management software program. Assets are electronically managed using custom asset tags. For the stocktake, a laser barcode scanner is used allowing fast and accurate updates to an internet connected computer. Comprehensive reports can be extracted from this system.
- Administered funding budgets:



1% Diocese of Cairns

2% Other Income

23% State Government

**2014-15
FUNDING
INCOME**

74% Commonwealth Government

Other achievements:

- Participation in negotiation of new Enterprise Agreement to commence 1 July 2015.
- Participated in preparation of funding tenders

ORGANISATION CULTURE

- Work health and safety (WHS) is vital for a happy, healthy team. The Corporate Services Human Resources area coordinates regular WHS committee meetings, training and audits to ensure compliance and safety for staff and visitors.
- In addition to position induction, new staff participate in a quarterly organisation induction to learn about Centacares' purpose, values and strategic goals.
- Coordinated the annual Centacare Staff Day on 19 February. This year, the theme was Practice Principles. Participation was identified as a core principle of Catholic Social Teaching. Applying the Participation principle means we work with people to enact their right to shape their own lives and the society in which they live and to participate in decision processes that impact on their lives.
- Notification of 2015 compliance from Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)

FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

- Obtain Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) certification for the quality system
- Bring more Centacare programs onto the Client Management System
- Implementation of a new website to better meet the needs of the organisation, clients and the greater community

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The Catholic Diocese of Cairns



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