



Relationships Australia

QUEENSLAND

Annual Report 2014-15

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As Chair of the Board of Relationships Australia Queensland (RAQ), having been elected in November 2014 and after having served for five years as a member of the Board, it is with great pleasure that I present the Annual Report for the 2014/15 financial year.

This has been a particularly interesting and challenging year for RAQ with a theme of change and renewal pervading much of the external and internal environment. Externally, a change of State Government can introduce a level of uncertainty however the organisation has transitioned well and was fortunate in securing funding in areas such as:

- Family Relationship Centres (Ipswich), providing a gateway to the broader family law and family support service system;
- Children's Contact Services (Ipswich, Gold Coast), enabling children of separated parents to have safe contact with the non-resident parent; and
- Partners in Recovery (Rockhampton), aiming to improve outcomes for people with severe and persistent mental illness.

2014/15 proved to be a year of transition for RAQ internally. On behalf of the Board I thank outgoing CEO, Shane Klintworth, who leaves the organisation after six years in the senior role, over twelve years in total, having made a significant contribution to the organisation over that period and leaving it soundly positioned for the future. I also have the pleasure of welcoming our incoming CEO, Ian Law who brings to the organisation a wealth of experience and vision which will drive RAQ towards new opportunities over the coming years.

I also make mention of the support provided by the Executive of RAQ and wish to recognise their contribution in embracing the challenges across the year and acknowledge their ongoing commitment to the organisation. The team has made significant contributions across areas including the renewal of the Enterprise Agreement, the development of ICT strategy, seeking and retaining state and federal contracts and delivering on the organisations strategic objectives.

I want to acknowledge the significant contribution of retiring Board member, Peter Swarbrick, who has provided years of insightful and dedicated service to RAQ. His retirement from the Board, together with existing vacant positions, provides an opportunity to instigate some renewal within our membership. I thank my fellow Board members for their ongoing support and I welcome the opportunity to work with the diversity of our new members over the coming years.

Furthermore, I thank the tremendous support of the RA National federation across the year, with particular mention to be given to the leadership of Matt Rowell (CEO of RA Tasmania and Chair, RA National Board) and Alison Brook (Executive Officer, RA National).

Finally and most importantly, I wish to recognise all RAQ staff for their tireless dedication to the essential service delivery which is made available across the expansive range of services and geography this organisation provides.

The coming year can be expected to deliver a new set of challenges and opportunities, and I look forward to continuing work with my fellow Board members, the CEO, Ian Law and his team to further the strategic endeavours of RAQ.



Barry Mahoney
Chair

Introducing our New CEO

It is an honour and a pleasure to write this introduction to the 2014-15 Annual Report as the new CEO of RAQ. I commenced on the 10th August 2015 and although I am new to Queensland I have a 12 year history in senior management at Relationships Australia. Most recently as COO at RAV and as Director of Services at RASA before that. With a prior history of working as a counselling Psychologist and a qualified Social Worker I have direct experience of most of the service delivery activities that RAQ provide.

I feel fortunate to have inherited the management of a vibrant organisation that is in a sound financial position and keen to build on its successes. Consequently I would like to pay tribute to the achievement of the last year, particularly in the areas of client outcomes, social inclusion, diversity, and community links, of which you will read more about in the body of this report. But I would also like to say something about RAQ's direction and focus in the coming year and beyond as we seek to future proof the organisation by preparing for the end of our current block funding in 2019 by:

1. Ensuring we have the reserves available to finance any transition in the funding environment.
2. Closely monitoring initiatives such as the NDIS to learn how to adapt the organisation to different funding models.
3. Developing our process for identifying, describing and measuring meaningful outcomes for our clients in a way that others can easily understand.

4. Not losing sight of outputs, productivity and the cost of providing services to our clients.
5. Ensuring we are competitive in the tendering environment.
6. Being responsible with our use of funding which is paid for by the taxpayer.
7. Being a flexible and responsive organisation that is properly aligned and has the agility to maximise service delivery with a lean but strong support structure.
8. Being up to date in a world of compliance and corporate responsibility through establishing a quality management framework.
9. Beginning to formulate the organisations strategic priorities as we approach the end of the current 2013-16 Strategic Plan.

At the hearth of all this is the constant focus from a dedicated senior management team and Central Office Support Services on supporting RAQs skilled and committed workforce in their desire to achieve better outcomes for families, children, individuals and communities through the provision of quality services.



Dr Ian Law
CEO

Mission, Vision and Values



VISION Strong, safe and healthy communities.

MISSION To promote healthy and respectful relationships, particularly where individuals, young people, families and communities are at risk or vulnerable.

OUR VALUES

Client Focus We commit ourselves wholeheartedly to our clients' success - understanding and responding to the individual needs of people accessing our services.

Social Justice We are committed to equity and social justice.

Healthy, Respectful We believe that healthy and respectful relationships are fundamental to individual and community wellbeing.

Accountability We are accountable and open in our operations.

Integrity We act ethically, honestly, and in the best interests of the community.

Respect We respect each other and the principles of equity and diversity.

Professionalism We value the contribution and expertise of staff and commit to high standards of service and performance.

Reconciliation Our vision for reconciliation is that Australia's First Peoples, the Aboriginal people of the Mainland, connected islands and the Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised, engaged and respected in all our work.

Board of Directors



Barry Mahoney – Chair

Graduate Certificate of Applied Finance & Investment (Securities Institute of Australia), Master of Business Administration (University of Southern Queensland), Graduate Diploma in Computing Studies (Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology), Bachelor of Science (Griffith University)

Barry commenced his career as a research physicist working within the Reserve Bank of Australia's Note Printing Branch. In 1986 he moved his focus into IT, working within the Higher Education sector. Progressing through several different roles within the University of Southern Queensland and the University of the Sunshine Coast his responsibilities are primarily directed towards ICT governance, strategic planning, project management and service management as well as quality and risk management.

Appointed Director in 2009 and Chairman in 2014.



Helen Poropat – Deputy Chair

Helen has over 20 years' experience as a dispute resolution specialist, most recently working as an independent practitioner in resolving workplace conflict, staff and stakeholder engagement and conducting organisational reviews. Previously with Ergon Energy for 11 years providing consumer advocacy services and representing them in mediation, conciliation, and arbitration processes, Helen also provided strategic advice leading to multiple improvements across the entire corporation. Other specific experience includes creating and implementing programs for A&TSI Communities and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Groups.

Helen is currently a Board Director for the National Education and Employment Foundation Australia; and previously for the Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals Australia.

Appointed Director in 2012.



Peter Swarbrick – Board Director (Non-Executive)

Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Psychology) Queensland University, Registered Psychologist (1989 -), Member of the Australian Psychological Society (1989 -). 26 years continual practice in state and federal agencies and private practice, former Chair of APS Central Qld, Project Challenge Rockhampton, RA Rockhampton Committee, former Board Member RAQ (2005-2010).

Registered Family Consultant to the Federal Magistrates and Family Court of Australia. Appointed Director in 2012; Until February 2015.



David Abbott – Treasurer

BA Economic Studies (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK), Graduate Certificate in Business Management (Monash Mt Eliza), Fellow Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, Fellow CPA Australia, Senior Member Australian Computer Society

David started his working life in the UK as a management accountant and came to Australia in 1974 as a financial controller. From 1986 to 2007, David consulted with PwC, providing business planning and financial management advice to government and NFP sectors. Since retiring, he has continued his interests in NFP organisations which provide community support services.

Appointed Director in 2010.



Dr Lucy Craddock – Board Director (Non-Executive)

Master of Laws (QUT), Bachelor of Laws (QUT), Certificate of Professional Development in Online Facilitation, Doctor of Juridical Science (QUT), Graduate Certificate Academic Practice (QUT), Solicitor (Supreme Court of Queensland)

Dr Lucy Craddock is an experienced Lawyer and Lecturer in Intellectual Property Law and Property at QUT. Dr Craddock's legal career has included working within the corporate and government sectors, as well as pro bono work within the community and education sectors. Dr Craddock has previously held positions on St Andrews Anglican College, Buderim War Memorial Community Association and St Marks Anglican Church Parish Council. Dr Craddock was also the inaugural Student Ombudsman at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Appointed Director in 2012.



Shane Klintworth - Board Director (Executive)

Bachelor of Applied Science & Health Education (University of Canberra), Graduate Diploma in Community Counselling (University of Canberra), Masters in Business Administration HRM (Charles Sturt University), Member of Australian Institute of Management, Graduate of Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Appointed as Secretary and CEO in October 2009; Until April 2015.



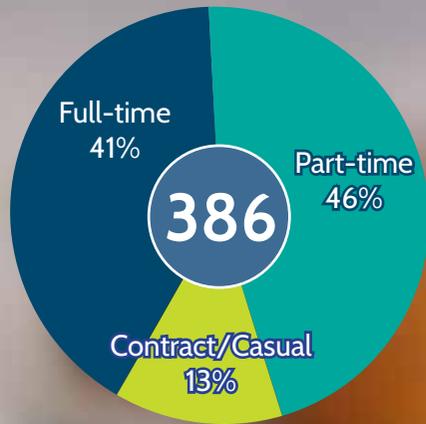
Dr Eva-Marie Seeto - Board Director (Non-Executive)

Doctor of Social Science (University of Queensland), Master of Social Science Health Practice (University of Queensland), Post-Graduate Diploma of Social Science Health (University of Queensland) Diploma of Psychological Studies (Edith Cowan University)

Appointed Director in 2007; Until October 2014.

Staff Profile

Headcount at 30 June 2015 and percentage of full-time, part-time, and contract/casual workforce



Employees identifying as:

Aboriginal



10

Torres Strait Islander



10



3

Workforce Diversity
Languages spoken other than English



Client Contact Centre



OPENING HOURS

8am to 8pm Monday to Friday

9am to 5pm Saturday



13

telephone
queues



1

email
queue



1

webchat
queue
(launching Oct '15)

The Aim of our Client Contact Centre (CCC) is to be client focused. The objective of the CCC is to maximise efficiencies, develop processes that are clear and consistent for clients, venues and staff to ensure we are accountable and accessible.

The CCC supports streamlining administration and client response activities across RAQ programs, ensuring a seamless interaction for clients where possible.

The CCC supports RAQ venues across the State, including:

- Implementation of new programs
- Supporting continuity of Program Service Delivery
- Supporting venues to implement approved trials and innovation of service delivery

The CCC works closely with other departments and venues to support organisational systems and assist in the collection of data to evidence service delivery improvements, and has been actively involved in the development of a Business Process Map to support the integration of web chat within the Client Contact Centre.

Collaboration with key stakeholders is occurring to develop a Resource Tool to support the introduction of web chat, where scripts and program related content can be accessed by the team to assist in providing first point of contact service to the community.

1 July 2014 – 30th June 2015

75,352
RAQ calls

64,166
Family Relationship
Advice Line (FRAL)
First Point of Contact

139,518
Total calls taken

Domestic Violence Orders and Court Orders processed total : 2,943

General Enquiry emails processed total : 6,776

Support link referrals processed : 1,965

Our focus this year...



Client Outcomes... Social Inclusion... Diversity.



Neighbour Day

Neighbour Day is Australia's annual celebration of community, bringing together the people next door, across the street or on the next farm for a beer, a barbie or just a cuppa.

The principal aim of Neighbour Day is to build better relationships with the people who live around us, especially the elderly and vulnerable.

Neighbours are important because good relationships with others *can* and *do* change communities. Social connection also makes us feel better as it helps prevent loneliness, isolation and depression.

Neighbour Day brings together like-minded people, resources, and organisations to grow stronger, well connected communities.

Relationships Australia (nationally) became the new home of Neighbour Day in 2014, with all states encouraged to embrace the concept in the hope that the idea would spread, and we would break down community barriers—creating safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.

This year, staff across all Queensland venues were Neighbour Day champions, encouraging clients and friends to get to know their neighbours, and work towards forming the type of friendly, connected communities which existed 'back in the day'.

The response from staff, clients, and community members alike were inspiring, as street parties, neighbourly get togethers, sausage sizzles and cupcake days happened in cities and towns throughout the state on Sunday 29 March.



Key Events (cont'd)



Responsible Gambling Awareness Week

One of the highlights in Queensland this year was Responsible Gambling Awareness Week (RGAW). RGAW is an annual event which encourages gamblers to develop responsible gambling habits and also highlights the support available to people who feel gambling may have become a problem. RAQ's Gambling Help Service team headed this year's RGAW, working closely with the Office of Regulatory Policy (Liquor, Gaming, Fair Trading) within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

This year was the first time that individual states celebrated separately, and the Queensland Gambling Help Network quickly got on-board with the new format, responding with a calendar of events which were colourful and effective. In addition to this being a great example of spreading such an important message to the community, it also showed what can be achieved when multiple like-minded organisations work together to strengthen that message. Other collaborative partners included headspace, Canefields Clubhouse Meadowbrook, Treasury Casino, Clubs Queensland, Metro South Addiction Services, Radio Logan, Mackay Regional Council, and Keppel Council. All of these groups participated in or supported a number of 'green' themed events and local initiatives around the state to support Responsible Gambling Awareness Week.

Our new CEO, Dr Ian Law, was off to a busy start in his new position, chairing the industry launch event at the

Broncos Leagues Club, before his official starting date at RAQ. The Queensland Attorney-General and prominent gambling experts spoke at this well-attended function.

Two of the highlight events of the week were all about light and colour. The Kurilpa Bridge, which connects South Bank to Brisbane CBD, was lit up green to support RGAW on Sunday 2 August. Further up north, Mackay Regional Council's fountain turned green for the entire week, encouraging many locals to discover the RGAW message.

BBQs, meetings, information sessions, morning and afternoon teas, lunches, mail-outs, shopping centre and library displays, and even green-themed barefoot bowls days were held across the state, with cooperation from a plethora of community organisations. It was also encouraging to see staff from several casino and betting organisations getting involved through attending education sessions with our teams.

Combined with the year-round efforts of the Gambling Help Service team, RGAW is an exciting annual event allowing us to spread the message of responsible gambling, and also the information, counselling and support which is available to individuals and families affected by gambling.



Mackay fountain



RGAW Launch

Key Events (cont'd)

NAIDOC

NAIDOC is celebrated across RAQ service regions annually. Each year staff engage in NAIDOC activities with local community members across our service regions as a sign of respect and commitment to our work within these communities.

The 2014 NAIDOC week Theme was *Serving Country: Centenary & Beyond*. This year RAQ honoured all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who fought in defense of country, including those who served with honour and pride in Australia's military conflicts and engagements across the world.

Head Office hosted a marquee activity centre in Musgrave Park. Staff from Head Office and several of our Greater Brisbane and Ipswich venues supported the children's colouring-in activities, young girls waited in long lines to have their hands decorated in exquisite henna designs, while parents and visiting organisations' representatives talked with staff about our diverse services.

The CEO posted a series of communications on our intranet, and Head of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Programs emailed a series of articles to all venues explaining the significance of the 2014 theme to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander People to raise awareness of their community's role in active service and defense of Country.

RAQ Cairns celebrated NAIDOC in the Park 2014 at Fogarty Park on Friday 12 July. The local community theme was – "We value the vision: Yirrkala Bark Petitions 1963", which celebrates the 50th anniversary of the presentation of the Yirrkala Bark petitions to the Federal Parliament in 1963.

Cairns staff from the Go Forward for Men program in Cairns attended the NAIDOC week celebrations at Lotus Glen Correctional Facility. The men performed in several bands and four traditional dance troupes representing the Torres Strait Islands and Aboriginal language groups from three geographically diverse regions.

As is customary our RAQ Townsville staff closed our venue and joined the Community NAIDOC March. NAIDOC in Townsville culminates in a community



NAIDOC Townsville

day in the local park and all of our staff participated in a range of fun activities that supports our work with local women and families.

Ipswich hosted NAIDOC stalls in Ipswich and Lowood, giving out brochures, and providing animal shaped balloons throughout the day. Another highlight was the fun and healthy eating activities during the day and staff joyfully participated in the NAIDOC Lowood's Got Talent Quest.

Rockhampton and Mt Morgan NAIDOC focused on children through our children Vacation Care Program. Staff and Community members collaborated to host traditional dance, Hip Hop, arts and crafts and healthy cooking activities.

Key Events (cont'd)



Sunshine Coast Pride Fair

February 28th, 2015 saw the second collaboration between the Sunshine Coast Pride Fair Day and the beautiful Eumundi Markets. The popularity of these well-established markets has helped introduce a broader local audience to communities of sexual and gender diversity on the coast.

In addition to the enthusiasm of our Sunshine Coast Rainbow Reps, Steve and Roxanne, the management and staff at our Maroochydore venue have long been committed supporters of local lesbian, gay, bi, transgender & intersex (LGBTI) communities, ensuring that RAQ always has a welcoming presence at the Pride Fair Day event.

Fair Day saw an eclectic mix of entertainment and community support, with musical performances taking place on the amphitheatre stage and a range of community services represented with stalls and other activities.

In the light of the high rates of suicidality and mental illness across the LGBTI communities, the integration of events such as Pride Fair Day into existing social activities and celebrations goes a long way to reduce the risk factors of invisibility and marginalisation, which impact many within this target population.

Photo Caption: Maroochydore staff members, Françoise and Pam embrace their roles as LGBTI advocates at Sunshine Coast Pride fair Day.

White Ribbon Day

November 25 marks the day that Australians come together in a campaign to stop violence against women. With an average of one woman killed every week as a result of intimate partner violence, RAQ recognises and actively supports this important campaign. White Ribbon Day is of particular importance in the fight to stop violence against women because it recognises the positive role that men play in preventing the violence. The campaign encourages men to demonstrate leadership and take a stand against violence against women, based on the understanding that most men are not violent.

RAQ venues and staff across the State showed their support by wearing white ribbons, participating in local events such as "In Her Shoes" and holding their own local events and BBQs.



'In Her Shoes' event

Filipino Community Education

Diversicare is a division of the Ethnic Communities Council Queensland which provides culturally appropriate in-home care to older people and younger people with disabilities and their carers from different language and cultural backgrounds. Many clients attend ethno-specific respite activities and on 12 May this year, Diversicare, Partners In Culturally Appropriate Care (PICAC) invited us to share our expertise in the area of building healthy and better relationships, conflict resolution strategies and practical communication skills.

Our staff, Tamara Penny, Relationships Counsellor and Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP) of the Greater Brisbane Region, delivered a 2-hour long session for the Filipino Carers' Group of Diversicare at the Acacia Ridge Community Hall. The workshop was attended by 16 members of the community, both men and women. The members are carers of sick, disabled or elderly relatives and many are wives and husbands of the people they care for.

It was a very lively group as Tamara was able to capture the attention of the

members and related well with the carers. Tamara presented the information by sharing her personal experience as a carer to her mother, her practical knowledge, and skills as a counsellor and an FDRP and from the perspective of a worker from the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background.

The feedback from this group was positive and the group was very responsive during the session with lots of questions. In the feedback survey, attendees said they had enjoyed the informal style of the workshop with the chance to clarify their doubts and ask questions pertaining to their caring for their loved ones. Many of them said that they had learned something new and that the workshop was conducted in a clear and friendly style. As for future sessions, the participants mentioned that they would like to gain further skills in conflict management and to learn and practice ways on being assertive in a loving and concerning way.

This workshop was co-ordinated by Dee Lim, RA (Qld) CALD Program Leader and Amanda Bowden, PICAC Project Officer.



The Josh Blow Memorial Weekend

The Mackay community has been deeply affected by the tragic death of Joshua Blow; a popular, young (20 years) Indigenous male, killed in a workplace accident at the Marian Weir in 2010.

A close friend of Josh's, along with RAQ's Indigenous Community Links team, initiated a memorial event after identifying there were a number of young people directly and adversely affected by Josh's passing. Many didn't seek support or counselling at the time, and were starting to show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety, relationship breakdowns, and self-harming and suicidal ideations.

On Friday, 21 November 2014, a Memorial Tribute was held at the Marian Weir Memorial Site, attended by 60 people including family members, Elders and Community Groups, as well as a range of service providers such as Qld Health. The local Traditional Owners performed the 'Welcome to Country', later followed by a traditional corroboree and a large community Friday Night Dinner.

On Saturday, 22 November, the inaugural Josh Blow 'Memorial Shield' Rugby League game was held. Attracting 150 community members, the days' activities included an NRL Clinic, a mixed Softball Game, followed by the main game of 'Mackay Vs Inala'. A Facebook Page was created keeping other members up-to-date with the weekend.

For many, healing occurred on many levels for different ages. A female Elder shared her story of the loss of her sister in the 1970's, through drowning at the same location. She said this was her first visit to the site since, and a time for her own personal healing.

Family Groups from all over were able to grieve together and find closure, service providers from Indigenous and non-Indigenous services also shared their personal healing journeys.

The Brisbane community and family groups would like to host the 2nd Memorial Tribute in Brisbane, and will continue to make it an annual event.



Welcome to Country



Stock image

Children's Contact Centre (CCS)

Two new CCS services... Gold Coast and Ipswich

The role of the Children's Contact Service (CCS) is to promote and provide safe and positive contact arrangements for children whose parents are separated either with a parent or another significant family member such as a grandparent or step-parent. The CCS team and management are always striving to ensure they best meet client needs as well as ensuring a high quality, sustainable service.

RAQ started the year with four CCS locations; Eight Mile Plains, Far North Qld, Greater Townsville Region, and Rockhampton. We then temporarily acquired three additional services (Gold Coast, Ipswich and Logan) in July 2014, which turned into permanent acquisition of the Gold Coast and Ipswich CCS services after a tender process.

The most common issues present are long wait lists, staggering cases, staffing skill sets, an increase in the complexity of families acquiring the services, and financial deficit.

To address these issues, several changes have been made over the year. The primary change has been moving from a casual workforce to a permanent workforce, who are full or part-time (casual workers can be accessed to assist when required). Each location has a highly skilled Coordinator and two part-time Family Support Workers. These staff have formal qualifications

and underwent a robust recruitment process including a skills assessment and role plays on conflict and escalation management. They have access to clinical supervision and ongoing training.

All CCS staff are trained to do intakes and conduct ongoing risk assessments, and our ability to support clients due to capacity is constantly assessed, with referrals made to other funded and private CCS services to support families if required.

We are also aware that integrated services lead to the best outcomes, and clients are given a pathway for access to CCS services based on internal resources such as Parenting Orders Program (POP), counselling, mediation, external psychologists and referrals to legal practitioners. The aim is always that clients move toward safe self-management. Our staff assist clients to develop strategies which allow them to work towards this, which includes helping them form effective relationships with independent children's lawyers.

Over the next 12 months, we will secure a suitable, permanent site for the Gold Coast CCS. There is a continual rise in clients using Ice and also women with children, often due to issues of neglect, drug use and mental health issues. To address these needs we will continue to build on our strong community ties, specifically with other services such as mental health, drug and alcohol services.

Children's Contact Centre (cont'd)

CCS FNQ located within the Early Years Centre

When Relationships Australia Queensland's Cairns FRC and the Manunda venue merged in 2011, the Children's Contact Service (CCS) lost the outdoor space they had enjoyed for years. It quickly became an issue, as families and family law practitioners were unhappy that the new CCS location only offered indoor play space.

In an effort to address client and stakeholder feedback, we surveyed all current CCS families (both 'time with' and 'live with' parents) about aspects of the service that were important to them. We asked about geographic

location, days and times of service, and issues around the type of space they wanted to have for their children's visits.

As a result, we have partnered with The Benevolent Society's Early Years Centre in Bentley Park (a southern suburb of Cairns) and now provide a second CCS service location there. This is in addition to our previously existing Grafton Street location in the Cairns CBD.

Our location has outdoor space that includes multiple play areas, sand pits, grassy areas, a garden and a

chicken coop complete with several chooks. There is covered space which allows for outdoor activities even in inclement weather, as well as a space for messy play with finger paints. The feedback from parents and kids has been uniformly positive.

We recently hosted the local Independent Children's Lawyers for an open house so they could visit the new facility, and the response from them has also been very positive. The new space has afforded us an opportunity to have more 'normalised' activities during CCS visits, which is a positive all around.



The Community Healing Project

In December of 2014, all of Australia was shocked by the senseless loss of eight young lives in the Far North Queensland Cairns suburb of Manoora. RAQ was immediately involved on the ground in working with individuals and community members who were impacted by this enormously tragic event.

As the months have passed, work continues, but the focus has shifted from the immediate care of individuals affected by this tragedy to include initiatives to enhance the resilience and emotional wellbeing of community members and communities in general.

The Community Healing Project (CHP) is a multi-faceted, community based initiative to address the emotional well being of individuals, families and communities throughout Far North Queensland. Key organisations in Cairns, the Northern Peninsula area and the Torres Strait Islands are working together in efforts coordinated by Red Cross and Department of Communities.

RAQ's current initiative with the CHP is in providing three full day workshops to elders and community leaders in three strategically identified locations: Cairns, Bamaga and Thursday Island. Each has very strong ties to the families directly affected by the tragic event which happened in Manoora.

The goal of the workshops is to build capacity and self-care for those who are often – due to their status in the community – expected to care for their community members even while dealing with their own sorrow. The workshops will focus on community leaders and Elders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, and are being led by RAQ staff. At each location, two clinical staff (one male and one female) from RAQ will be assisted by RAQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to assure cultural sensitivity. The workshops are free and will be offered in October and November of this year. A team of RAQ staff including relationship counsellors, specialists in trauma counselling, mediators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have developed the content.



Arts, crafts and other activities were available for children and interested adults in the days following the tragedy.

Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland

2014-15 has been an important year on the calendar for the efforts to put an end to domestic and family violence in Queensland.

The Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence delivered its report to the Premier of Queensland in February. The report outlines recommendations that are intended to provide a framework to inform the creation of a State wide domestic and family violence prevention strategy.

The Australian of the Year award for 2015 was awarded to Rosie Batty for her powerful work as a family violence campaigner following the tragic murder of her 11 year old son, Luke, at the hands of his father.

Despite the increased profile of domestic and family violence prevention in Australia, women (and their children) are still dying and suffering at an alarming rate at the hands of current and previous partners. Australian police deal with an estimated 657 domestic violence matters on average every day of the year. That's a devastating one every two minutes.

Much of the important work RAQ does is in the space of supporting victims and survivors of domestic and family violence, and across all our programs we work with vulnerable clients, including children who have been impacted.

Our range of services within the domestic and family violence space (including male perpetrator programs) hold the safety and wellbeing of women and children as a priority, and encompass information, advice and practical support. In addition, RAQ is a strong advocate in the community for promoting healthy and respectful relationships.

Our current offerings include:

- Counselling for women
- Counselling for children
- Court support
- Service system support
- Men's perpetrator intervention service which includes individual and group work for men who perpetrate D/FV in relationships

We are increasing our work with the Queensland Police Service who are so often the first point of contact for victims. Equally, we are focused on violence prevention in the support we provide through our family and relationship support services as well as our targeted men's behaviour programs.



Stock image

Family Dispute Resolution For One FDR41

FDR41 has been growing and developing within RAQ as a mediator led service for clients who previously would have found no service offered: those who cannot attract the other parent to mediate; those whose mediation have been unproductive; those who have difficulties with the whole business of conflict within their extended family system.

Last October the first cohort of six experienced mediators began offering FDR41 at four venues. This October six more practitioners will be trained from our mature mediator cohort and so five additional venues will be able to offer FDR41 with clear advantages for referring points such as the FRAL and CCC. We confidently expect that this valuable FDR service will join the suite of separation services in a way that will confirm RAQ as the leading provider of separation services. We expect that research and feedback from the new practice will be featured and reported upon at the forthcoming Mediation Conference to be held on the Gold Coast in September, 2016. Relationships Australia is a loyal sponsor of the Conference.”



The effects of the Mining Downturn

From approx. 2002 to 2010 demand for coal and iron ore was high. The GFC resulted in decreased demand for construction, car-making and other industries. Eventually the price of coal and demand for volume dropped. Mining companies reduced workforces and even closed some mines where extraction costs were too high.

During the mining boom accommodation costs escalated. Since the downturn rental and purchase prices have come down. Many people who had relocated to the Central Qld area have left and home vacancy rates are now high.

Housing is now affordable and available. For people fleeing domestic violence situations or other crises, there are options to secure accommodation locally rather than having to leave the area. Gaming venue managers have reported that during the early stages of the downturn meals, overnight accommodation and gaming revenue all dropped considerably. As some of these businesses have closed the demand for these services has plateaued.

At the same time the impacts of the mining downturn were being felt locally the previous state government discontinued many much-needed services. One such service was Qld Health Child & Family assistance with some of the staff moving to private practice when their roles were also discontinued. RAQ Mackay sought to offset the deficit in services by providing child and family counselling. However, the RAQ team member with the qualifications and experience in this field relocated interstate due to her husband's work. He and other partners of RAQ staff have been effected by job losses within the mining industry. As a result, this service is no longer available in Mackay and the only remaining referral option is to private practitioners.

Other services such as mining-related industry, taxis, coffee shops and retail businesses have closed or reduced staffing as demand has decreased. The impacts have been felt throughout Queensland, including Brisbane with retail workers and taxi drivers relating the slump to the downturn in the mining sector.

Black and Deadly Program

RAQ Mermaid Beach venue are proud to share that they have partnered with Yallburru, a Not for Profit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation, on the Gold Coast. RAQ collaborated with a select few organisations to develop the Black and Deadly Youth Program.

The Gold Coast school based program is designed for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, aged between 13 and 18 years of age. The six month program aimed to develop a sense of connectedness with their cultural heritage and other young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The young people in the program are given the opportunity to make a strong connection with Program Elders, Traditional Owners and other broader community members, which will allow participants to understand their own culture, advocate for their culture, and to gain a sense of personal empowerment.

This is the first year that RAQ have been given this opportunity to take part in this inspirational community program and initiative, which will hopefully see a future involvement in the new program cohort in 2016.



Morning Tea with CALD Police Liaison Officers

Police Liaison

The FRC Upper Mount Gravatt (UMG) is committed to delivering a culturally inclusive Family Dispute Resolution Practice. Recently, a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner was appointed to develop a profile among the CALD communities and to help break down barriers which they face when using mainstream services.

As a result, the FRC UMG has established positive collaborations with the South Brisbane Upper Mt Gravatt Police Cross Cultural Liaison Officers to assist with promoting the Family Dispute Resolution services offered to the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities.

We value the partnership with the South Brisbane Qld Police Service and appreciate their support in delivering the UMG FRC's objective of encouraging CALD communities in Brisbane to participate in our services when needed. We are offering a unique opportunity for CALD communities to have access to our specialised family dispute resolution service.





*Maroochy Barumba - Elder delivering
Welcome to Country at a Pathways event*

Family Law Pathways Network

The Family Law Pathways Network was funded by the Attorney General's Department as a response to recommendations from 'Out of the Maze' report in 2001.

The Network operates to a vision of an integrated family law system which is broader than the Courts by interfacing with the support, mediation and legal services working with the same families. The overarching objective of the Network is to assist families who are experiencing complex and difficult relationship issues to access the services they need as quickly and seamlessly as possible.

This practice of bringing together professionals from across the 'family law system' at a local level to share information, network and participate in professional development activities fosters close collaborations and partnerships between relevant stakeholders, which is important in creating an effective referral environment.

Current membership for the Greater Brisbane Pathways Network is over 500 members – with 50% split between legal and social services.

The Network has links with Peak Bodies including FLPA, QAILS, ATSILS, ATSIWLAS, Legal Aid, Qld Council of Grandparents, and DV Connect. Network members also work with Courts, other NGO's, Community Legal Services, Centrelink, CSA, Child Safety, and FMCs.

For more information, visit www.qldfamilylawnet.org.au

Events in 2014-15

- New Ways for Mediation (Megan Hunter) 12th August 2014
- Child Safety Webinar 26th November 2014
- Domestic Violence in FDR (Jenny Rimmer) 12th March 2015
- ASD and the Law (Kathleen Davey) 23rd April 2015
- A View from the Bench (Judge Demack & Justice Forrest) 19th June 2015
- Annual Christmas event with GLBTI Choir 7th November 2014

Victim Services Building Capacity Funding Program

Relationships Australia Qld (RAQ) is funded through the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to provide counselling and support to victims of crime living in Queensland – the Victims Counselling and Support Service (VCSS) is available to victims of crime, their family members or anyone witnessing a crime.

Each year, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, through its Victim Services Building Capacity Program, makes additional one-off funding available to organisations to who can demonstrate a gap in the current service delivery system or have been able to identify a particular service delivery need. During 2014 RAQ made a successful application to the Building Capacity Program to develop a Digital Service Delivery Project which would include a web-based counselling capability and social media presence for community education and referral.

The VCSS digital service delivery project will be available to victims of violent crime, family, friends and members of the general community by the end of December 2015. This will include the capability of offering web chat/online counselling across Queensland and a social media presence accessible via a newly developed VCSS web site enabling regional and remote victims and community members to access services digitally.

As part of the website rollout, RAQ has also produced eleven short videos promoting the VCSS service. These videos are in a range of styles and

cover themes such as 'Should I call the VCSS?', 'I'm glad I called', 'Anti one-punch messaging', 'Looking out for your mates', and specific videos for both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities. Many of the clips feature professional, experienced actors from Brisbane, who agreed to work for reduced fees for the cause.

These videos will also be featured in multiple social media channels, providing relevant, interesting content for followers. The RAQ Executive team, VCSS team and Marketing team are honoured to work on this worthwhile project, spread the news about the service, and reach new potential clients, especially younger audiences, through this initiative.

Much work has also been going on behind the scenes to raise awareness about VCSS to ensure those who are impacted by crime, including victims, family, friends and witnesses, can access the support they need. Our VCSS State Education and Engagement Co-ordinator, has been working closely with referring agencies such as the Queensland Police Service to enhance relationships and to ensure clients receive accurate information about accessing the service.

As part of this capacity building work, the VCSS logo was given a refresh and new brochures and pull-up banners were designed. The online promotion campaign includes a VCSS website, multiple social media channels and ten videos about the service that will be featured on the website and social media.



Videos

Victim Services Building Capacity Funding Program (cont'd)

Careers Links Locations Contact

victims
counselling & support services
1300 139 703

1300 139 703
24 hour appointment, making information & telephone referrals

CALL US
LIVE CHAT coming soon

HOME WHAT WE DO TALK TO US REAL LIFE STORIES RESOURCES FAQs BLOG EVENTS

CALL US
1300 139 703
24hr

LIVE CHAT
Mon-Fri: 8am-8pm
Sat: 10am-4pm

VIDEO LIBRARY
Watch our range of videos with information about our service and tips for keeping safe.
VIEW LIBRARY >>

DID YOU KNOW?
A 'crime' includes:
Assault Murder Robbery Cyber Fraud Manslaughter Sexual Assault Domestic Violence Break And Enter Historic Sexual Abuse

LATEST BLOG
What counselling involves and what you can expect - Sep 2015
Hi! I am a counselor within Relationship Australia Queensland's Victims Counselling and Support Service and I wanted to write a little about what counselling actually involves and what people can expect when they book in to see a counselor. I find this is a common question which lots of my clients like to...
READ MORE >>

WITNESSING A CRIME
We understand that witnessing a crime can be traumatic.
Talk to us.

WE OFFER:

- Information, advice & referral
- Telephone counselling
- Face to face counselling
- Counselling & support through the Youth Justice conferencing process
- Assistance with Victim Impact Statements
- Community education & training
- Counselling & emotional support with the impact of natural disasters or other traumatic events

Relationships Australia QUEENSLAND

Website TWITTER POPULAR BLOG POSTS FACEBOOK

victims
counselling & support services
1300 139 703

www.vcss.org.au
www.facebook.com/victimsofcrimeqld

have you been impacted by crime?

Counselling & support services are available.

Relationships Australia QUEENSLAND

Pull-up Banner

Client Outcomes, Social Inclusion & Diversity (cont'd)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Program 2014-2016

RAQ's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Service Delivery Framework is an organisational guide which aims to inspire and enhance the workforce capacity in operating effective services to meet the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It includes key priorities set out to assist staff members from RAQ with practical strategies to achieve cultural competence and provide equitable access to CALD clients and communities.

Direct Contact and Interpreter Services

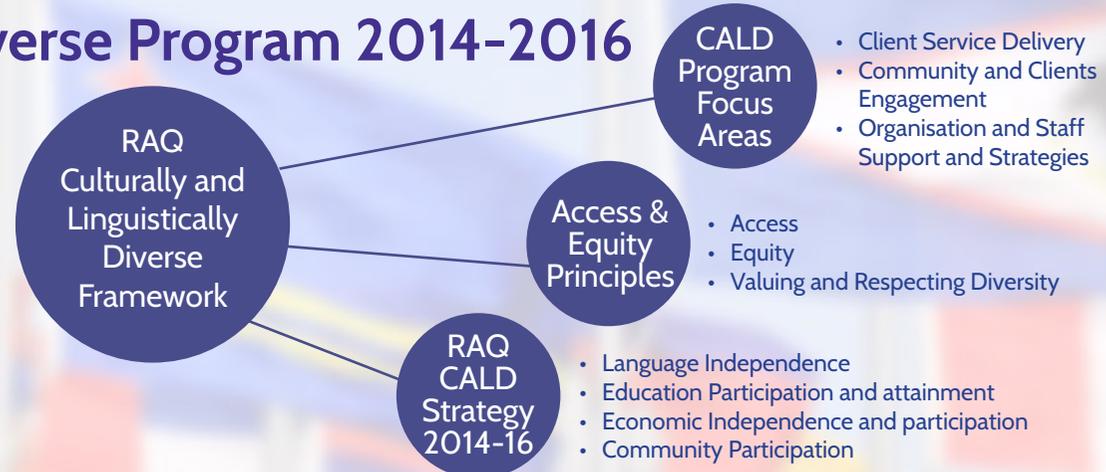
This year, we are exploring the options available for our clients to speak directly with staff in their preferred language, as an alternative to engaging interpreters. We are currently looking into work procedures which would facilitate this direct interaction where possible, and where a gap exists, the Department of Communities will continue to provide RAQ with a fee-free interpreter service.

Document translation

We periodically translate important documents, information and tip sheets into the languages most frequently used in Queensland, and our new website has a page dedicated to introducing RAQ's services in eight different languages.

Equal employment opportunities

We practice equal employment opportunities in recruitment for staff and also students engaged in placement/work experience. Students of CALD backgrounds are supported by us with pathways for integration into the Queensland workforce when they graduate, and this year our students have been from Burundi, Indian and Chinese backgrounds.



Collecting Information

From Oct 2014, we included fields in our Client Information System which collect details such as country of birth, ancestry and preferred language spoken at home. This has already highlighted various community needs, including the desire for information and referral service to the Chinese community living on the Southside of Brisbane. Our CALD Program Director is now in residence once a week, for an eight week pilot community information program.

We are also continuing our efforts in providing refugees and humanitarian entrants to access Relationship Counselling.

Training

Our Training and Professional Development team is currently planning a training program with the objective of increasing our CALD competencies. There will be three main areas of training for staff,

including cross cultural practice development with an opportunity to gain an accredited unit of competency with a registered RTO; sharing knowledge on specific cultural and ethnic groups; and looking at special concerns and need areas such as suicide, family violence, gambling addiction and family dispute within CALD families.

In conclusion

While it is unrealistic to know the cultural practices of every ethnic and cultural group in our community, the key to overcoming this challenge is acknowledging the possible differences in our service delivery and practice, and attempting to seek clarification before taking action. In RAQ, multicultural and cross-cultural competence cannot be seen in isolation from the overall standards and procedures of the service. We aim to provide high quality, accessible, inclusive and responsive services to individuals and families, in all aspects of our work and service delivery.

Client Outcomes, Social Inclusion & Diversity (cont'd)

Rainbow Program: Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing for People of Diverse Bodies, Genders and Sexualities

The 2014/15 financial year saw the creation of a Program Leader position for the Rainbow Program, which has allowed for a more strategic approach to our support for lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people, their families and allies.

Program Leader, Chris Pye's first project in the new role was to bring to fruition the implementation of new questions relating to gender and sexuality in the registration process for our clients. This follows over a year of consultation with staff at all levels. The new data will help us better meet the needs of diverse clients as well as advocate for support of our work in this area.

The Rainbow Rep Network - Lifelines of Hope

This February saw the reinvigoration of RAQ's Rainbow Rep Network. The network, comprising about twenty practitioners from most of our venues, was formed in 2009, with practitioners self-selecting to be part of a pilot project to better support the mental health and wellbeing of people with diverse bodies, sexualities and genders. In 2015, a more formalised structure and allocated hours for Reps have helped to bolster their valuable work to foster greater access to our services for this marginalised client group.

People from LGBTI communities experience some of the highest rates of suicidality and mental illness in the state and a scarcity of specialised support

services means that many do not find the help they need. The RAQ Rainbow Reps are charged with not only helping local LGBTI to access appropriate support, but supporting their venue peers to build competence and confidence in working more effectively with LGBTI clients. The visible, proactive presence of a Rainbow Rep in a regional town can literally act as a lifeline for a vulnerable and isolated LGBTI person.

Rainbow Counselling

Whilst the Spring Hill venue has remained our central hub for Rainbow Counselling this year, the continuation of foundational LGBTI training for all our staff has contributed to increased levels of confidence and competence across the organisation, according to the results of our foundation training pre and post evaluation surveys in February of this year.

Rainbow Training

This year we have fine-tuned a modular package of training in a variety of areas relating to LGBTI service provision and this financial year the Rainbow Program has delivered this training to a number of human services staff teams. Early indications point to this becoming an ongoing income stream for RAQ, as well as a valuable contribution to professional development within the sector.

Transcendence

Spring Hill's social and emotional support group for transgender and gender-questioning folk turned one-year-old in December, 2015. The group continues to provide a safe, supportive and professionally facilitated space, within which participants can come together to give and receive support and share the stories that continue to shape their journeys. This year researcher, Dr. Delaney Skerrett, has come on board, through a post-graduate placement, to help us evaluate the group, as a commitment to our continuous improvement in this area.



Spring Hill Rainbow team members, Leanne, Sharray & Dallas

Client Outcomes, Social Inclusion & Diversity (cont'd)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program

Aligned to our Reconciliation Action Plan RAQ made a commitment in 2012 to offer a Diploma of Counselling Training to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander members of our workforce in response to the social and emotional wellbeing priorities expressed by Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community Elders and Leaders in our service regions

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community of Queensland identified transgenerational trauma and trauma from domestic violence as well as grief and loss from a range of historical and recent events as being at the heart of many social and economic challenges faced by their communities. Elders and Leaders discerned that whilst non-indigenous counselling staff were available through mainstream services the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community had very little experience or knowledge of the counselling process and were wary of approaching mainstream services. Elders asserted the need to see their own people working within the counselling profession believing this would have many positive outcomes for both the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community and the mainstream service. Inclusion of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander counsellors would influence their community to engage with counselling services.

Between 2011-2014 The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community in Queensland had experienced increased difficulty through a series of

natural disasters across the state within a short three year span. Youth suicide and incarceration rates and domestic and family violence rates were and still are rising and Child Safety intervention and child removal rates continue to increase.

RAQ had employed a number of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander staff with significant experience in paraprofessional roles within their community who carried the trust and respect of their respective communities. Whilst respectful of the work of their RAQ colleagues there quite often was minimal communication, limited 'trust' and a perceived lack of common ground. RAQ venues reported minimal numbers of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander clients attending or being referred to counselling.

Against this backdrop RAQ offered the Diploma of Counselling not only to better support clients but as a bridge to build a common language between non indigenous staff and Murri & Ailan staff and as a scaffold for cultural competency to grow within our workforce. The Diploma of Counselling would also be a significant career platform for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander staff who accepted the challenge.

The Diploma Course was offered in week-long, face to face and online modes. Students were supported by RAQ Diploma Team, Clinical Supervisors and Managers with guest Indigenous Lecturers Betty Connolly, Gerald Featherstone, Moderator Ian Henderson RASA. The Diploma staff and students

were hosted by the Traditional Owners of Magnetic Island and Eight Mile Plains Brisbane locations.

Diploma Course Success

Eleven students commenced the course in 2013. Three students chose to withdraw from the course due to personal and family reasons with referrals to further study at a future date. Eight students have successfully completed the course and will graduate at a special ceremony on October 22nd 2015 before Community Elders, Leaders, family and their RAQ colleagues, Executive and Board members.



Team members working on their Diploma of Counselling

Virtual counselling – Tully and Innisfail

Counselling services are in high demand throughout Far North Queensland, and wait lists of a few weeks are common.

Compounding this is that for many potential clients in need of service, the nearest RAQ venue may be 200 kilometres or more from where they live. Unfortunately, outreach services in which staff travel to these remote areas are neither cost effective nor practical given the high demand for services at our primary centres.

Several months ago, in an effort to address unmet community needs in the region, discussions were initiated between RAQ in Cairns and representatives

from the outlying communities of Innisfail (population 10,000) and Tully (population 2,500). Both communities are south of Cairns and travel time is up to two hours each way.

When the practicalities of providing outreach to these communities precluded staff travel RAQ extended virtual counselling services to ensure services remain accessible despite the distance issues.

We have partnered with the local Neighbourhood centres in each community to offer relationship counselling and have since added counselling for victims of crime.

We use a secure video platform (Adobe Connect Pro) to provide 'face to face' virtual service to clients who only have to travel to their local neighbourhood centre.

The centres provide private space for clients, and have hard copies of any documents that RAQ would typically provide clients.

Plans are underway to consider expansion in the suite of services available to include intake appointments for some of our post-separation services, including the Parenting Orders Program and Children's Contact Service.



Venue Contact Details

Bowen

54A Powell Street, Bowen
Fax: 07 4786 4420

Bundaberg

14 Tantitha Street, Bundaberg
Fax: 07 4153 2955

Chermside

Unit 1, 671 Gympie Road, Chermside
Fax: 07 3350 3280

Eight Mile Plains

Unit 13 Technology Office Park
107 Miles Platting Road,
Eight Mile Plains
Fax: 07 3841 1885

Far North Queensland

125 Grafton Street, Cairns
Fax: 07 4051 8742

Strathpine (incl FRC)

16 Mecklem Street, Strathpine
Fax: 07 3881 1858

FRC Upper Mt Gravatt

23 Sanders Street,
Upper Mount Gravatt
Fax: 07 3343 5531

Gladstone

10 Tank Street, Gladstone
Fax: 07 4972 9743

Gympie

Unit 3, 22 Barter Street, Gympie
Fax: 07 5481 2270

Head Office

Unit 6 Technology Office Park
107 Miles Platting Road,
Eight Mile Plains
Fax: 07 3841 1840

Ipswich (incl FRC)

14 Brisbane Street, Ipswich
Fax: 07 3812 0151

Longreach

Unit 4, 19 Duck Street, Longreach
Fax: 07 4926 9954

Mackay

2nd Floor, Worley Parson's Centre
45 Victoria Street, Mackay
Fax: 07 4957 7425

Maroochydore

Suite 22, Cnr Evans & Millwell Road,
Maroochydore
Fax: 07 5479 1572

Mermaid Beach

Lvl 2, 5 Markeri Street, Mermaid Beach
Fax: 07 5575 6133

Mount Morgan

63 Morgan St, Mt Morgan
Fax: 07 4938 2202

Rockhampton

Cnr Berserker & High Street,
Rockhampton
Fax: 07 4926 9954

Spring Hill

159 St Pauls Terrace, Spring Hill
Fax: 07 3839 4194

Thursday Island

Shop a & B 101 Douglas Street,
Thursday Island
Fax: 07 4069 1936

Toowoomba

3rd Floor, 158 Margaret St, Toowoomba
Fax: 07 4638 3660

Townsville (Greater Townsville Region)

745 Riverway Drive, Thuringowa Central
Fax: 07 4755 4217



Eight Mile Plains venue

Financials – Our Financial Performance

Summary statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015 (\$)	2014 (\$)
REVENUE		
Government funding	32,383,236	30,510,836
Client fees	948,589	900,970
Other income	472,316	553,727
Total Revenue	33,804,141	31,965,533
EXPENSES		
Employee costs	23,490,142	21,878,346
Property costs	2,510,991	2,844,834
Travel and motor vehicles costs	918,091	996,948
Operating administration costs	2,493,242	2,764,486
Finance Costs	8,818	262,856
Other Costs	63,390	108,084
Total Expenses	29,484,674	28,855,554
OPERATING SURPLUS	4,319,467	3,109,979
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		
Impairment loss on revaluation of non-current assets	862,620	0
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	3,456,847	3,109,979

Summary statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015

	2015 (\$)	2014 (\$)
ASSETS		
Current Assets	6,446,119	1,606,284
Non - Current Assets	15,682,761	17,159,007
Total Assets	22,128,880	18,765,291
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	4,725,936	4,205,393
Non - Current Liabilities	569,382	1,183,183
Total Liabilities	5,295,318	5,388,576
NET ASSETS	16,833,562	13,376,715

Financials - Sources of Income and Expenditure

