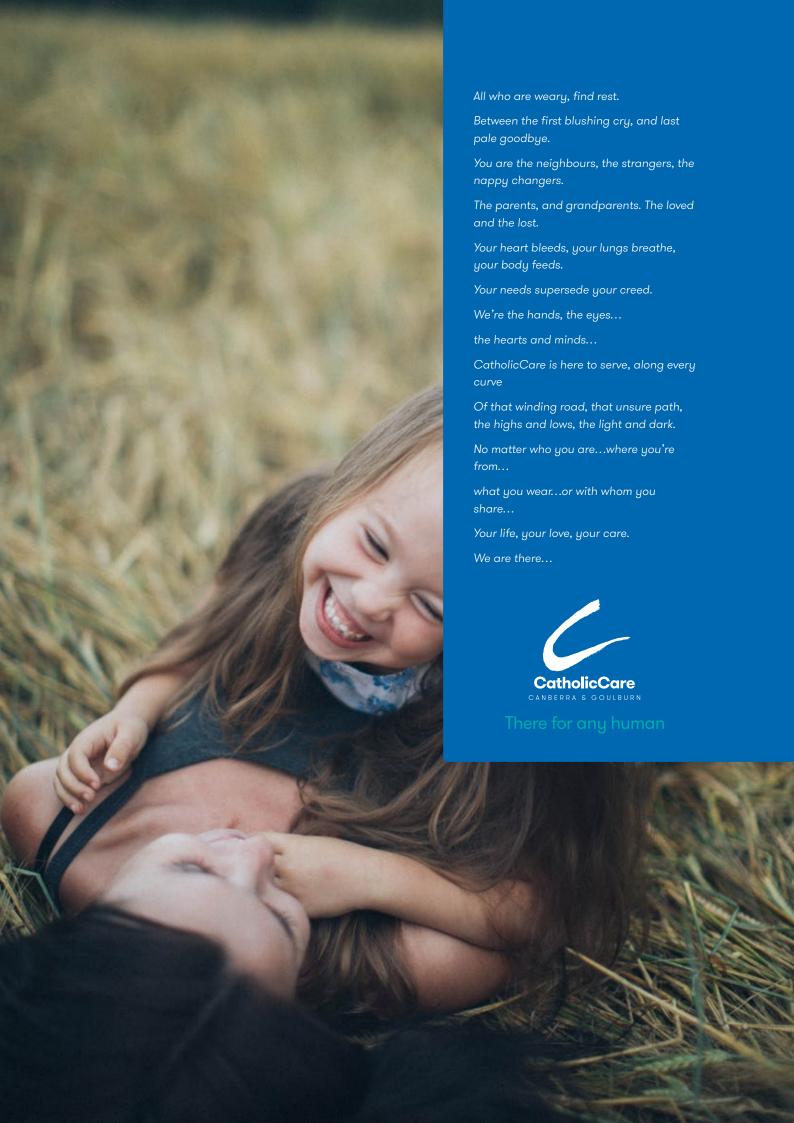


# ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Celebrating over 60 years of supporting our local community



### **Contents**

Who we are	4	Psychological and ATOD Services	32
Who we have helped	6	Better Access	32
who we have helped		NDIS Counselling	32
Organisational Chart	8	Next Step Program	33
CEO Report	10	Stepping Stones	3r
•		Mindscope	31
Our Leadership Team	12	SUMMIT - Positive Behaviour	
CHOICES & Aged Care	14	Support	35
CHOICES	14	Counselling and Cognitive Assessment Services	35
Hands On Studio	15	Reaching Out	35
LINC	16	Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List	
Community Assistance and Support		(DASL)	36
Program	17	AOD Support Connections	36
Dorothy Sales Cottages	17	STEPS Program	37
ARAMAC House	18	Youth & Wellbeing Program	38
Seniors in Networked Communities	19	Haveing Dynamaty and Facilities	
Home Care Packages	21	Housing, Property and Facilities  Management	39
Shared Living	22		39
Youth, Mental Health, Homelessness	;	Community Housing	39
and Family Support Services	23	Affordable Housing	39
Sobering Up Shelter	23	Venues	40
ASSIST	23	Gardening and Home Maintenance	
Axial Housing (A Housing First		Services	40
Initiative)	23	CatholicCare Retirement Villages	40
MINOSA House	23	Richard's Art Classes in the Studio	4
MacKillop House	24	Corporate and Staff Services	42
Toolangi Affordable Housing Program	26	Corporate and Starr Services	72
Youth and Family Case	20	Staff Years of Service Awards	43
Management Service	27	Quality Improvement	44
Youth Housing Support Service	27		
Throughcare	27	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations	45
Justice Housing Program	27	Organisations	43
		Information Technology and	
Counselling and Therapy Services	28	Communications	46
Bushfire Support Counselling	28	Mission Engagement	47
Relationship Education	29		
0 1 0		Reconciliation Action Plan	48
Family Law	29	The Office of the Chief Financial	
Student and Family Counselling Program	30	Officer	49
Employee Assistance Program	30		
Parenting Groups	31		
Reconnect ACT	31		

31

Reconnect Central West

### WHO WE

**Our vision** 

Our vision is for an equitable society where the rights, dignity and worth of all individuals are recognised and promoted.

### **Our mission**

CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn are the welfare arm of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. In keeping with the Catholic Church's social teachings we uphold the dignity of each person by:

- providing high quality accessible services
- · empowering individuals, couples and families
- promoting healthy, inclusive communities through relationships and collaboration for the common good.



We use our gifts and resources in a responsible way that helps provide justice for all.

### Excellence

We aspire to the highest standards of service for the people we care for, in all that we do and for all in our community.

# CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn | Annual Report 2021–2022

### MHO WE HAVE HELPED



11,000

individuals and families supported



**378** 

staff and volunteers



23,4658

hours of care provided to people with a disability



**720** 

elderly people supported across the ACT & NSW



22,411

hours of support provided to the elderly



7,000

nights' accommodation provided through our men's homelessness service





**105** 

294

Students attending our art studios

people with a disability supported by CatholicCare



[55]

450+

330+

People homeless or at risk of becoming homeless supported by CatholicCare people supported by our specialist alcohol and other drug services



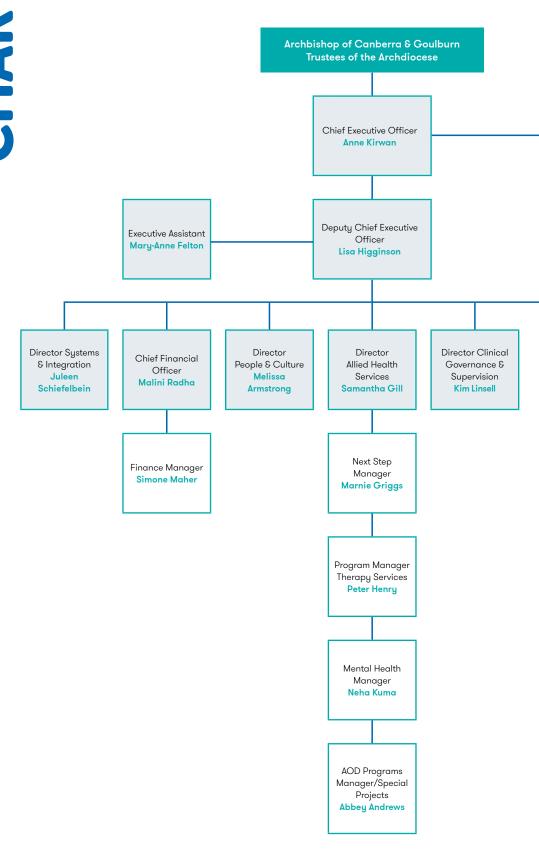


6,000+

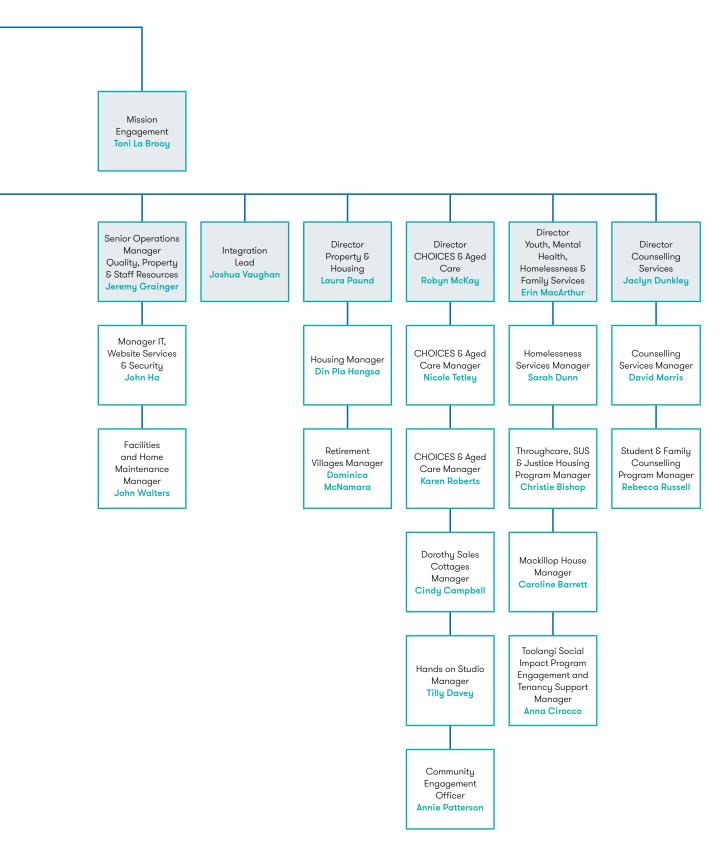
180

individuals and families attended counselling sessions individuals housed long term through community housing

## ORGANISATIONAL CHART







I am pleased to report upon the achievements of CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn over the 2021–2022 financial year. The last twelve months have seen momentous change for the organisation and our people, with the continuation of the daily disruptions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the announcement by the Catholic Archdiocese of our merger with Marymead Child & Family Services over the next two years, to become one new organisation Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn.

Balancing lockdowns and daily health updates with delivering services and progressing strategic initiatives proved to be a daily challenge, and I have nothing but praise for the leadership team and our staff across the organisation, who led with compassion and dedication despite the distractions, to keep delivering care services - noting the pressures the year placed upon each staff member and their families during this time.

Many have found this last year to be difficult, bringing additional complexities to both the workplace and home life without relief. However, the organisation could not sit still and wait for the pandemic to be over, needing to press on with key strategic and quality activities focused on improving what was delivered within CatholicCare, as well as formulating plans to merge with Marymead.

CatholicCare commenced several new services during the year to meet need within our communities, including launching Summit, the Positive Behaviour Support Program, in response to the demand and long waiting times for quality behaviour support plans for children and adults, and expanding access to Psychological Testing services to low income families and their children.

CatholicCare also received funding to embed a mental health community worker role within the Axial Housing program and homelessness sector, to provide clinical mental health support to people sleeping rough on the streets of Canberra. This role continues to build the capacity of our homeless services to respond to the complex needs of people experiencing housing crisis.

In addition to opening new services, the Leadership team continued to progress several large projects related to CatholicCare's five year Strategic Plan. These included maintaining quality accreditation, continuing to invest in Salesforce as our CRM of choice across the organisation, and implementing and integrating key systems (finance, payroll, quality, IT&C) to improve data accuracy and create efficiencies to deliver a better service and product to our clients and families.

These achievements over the last 12 months would not have been possible without the efforts of our skilled and committed leadership team, both Directors and Managers, who rose to the COVID-19 challenge and worked to find solutions and keep everyone safe during the year.





"Balancing lockdowns and daily health updates with delivering services and progressing strategic initiatives proved to be a daily challenge, and I have nothing but praise for the leadership team and our staff across the organisation."

I would like to thank key partners within the ACT, NSW and Commonwealth governments, who have consistently supported our mission and encouraged us to take risks to do more to help those most in need. In addition, long standing partnerships with Catholic Education and the Primary and Capital Health Networks enabled us to deliver early intervention services to meet the growing demand for clinical supports.

CatholicCare are blessed to be guided by our Archbishop, the Most Reverend Christopher Prowse, who provides constant encouragement to be mission driven and to care for all people across the Archdiocese. In addition, Vicar General Fr Tony Percy and Archdiocesan Financial Administrator Helen Delahunty have generously made themselves available and gifted their time and intellect during a year of continual change.

This year we established several new committees and established an Advisory Board to support the planned merger of CatholicCare with Marymead and help guide the integration. I want to thank all members (past and present) for giving their time and skills to help deliver upon this ambitious project and build an effective, resilient, and viable organisation.

Finally, I must acknowledge the incredible efforts of our team of over 400 staff and volunteers, who worked in challenging conditions to deliver care and supports and embraced the opportunity to join with Marymead so we can share our resources and do more within our communities.

I look forward to the next year with hope, knowing that we enter the next 12 months as a strong and resilient organisation, committed to delivering more within our communities during changing times.

Regards

Anne Kirwan

Chief Executive Officer
CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn

### OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Anne Kirwan
Chief Executive
Officer



**Lisa Higginson**Deputy Chief
Executive Officer



Malini Radha Chief Financial Officer



Kim Linsell
Director Supervision
& Clinical
Governance



Robyn McKay Director CHOICES & Aged Care



**Joshua Vaughan**Director Integration
Lead



Melissa Armstrong
Director People &
Culture



Juleen Schiefelbein Director Systems Implementation & Quality



Erin MacArthur

Director Youth,
Mental Health,
Homelessness,
Justice Programs &
Family Services



Laura Pound
Director Property &
Housing



Jaclyn Dunkley
Director Counselling
Services



Samantha Gill Director Allied Healh Services



# CHOICES & AGED CARE





### **CHOICES**

CatholicCare's CHOICES program launched the year with a new team coming from various roles and vast experiences. In the midst of COVID-19, the CHOICES team provided continuity of services to 294 individuals across various programs.

The CHOICES team continue to engage with participants and assist them to be autonomous in implementing their NDIS goals. With individually tailored services, CHOICES provides a solid foundation for promoting opportunities for participants to work towards their goals and increase their independence and social interactions within their homes and their communities.

These services, focused on supporting participants to achieve their goals include, but are not limited to:

- Coordination of Supports
- Assistance with Daily Life Personal Care and Domestic Assistance
- Transport
- Assistance with Social and Community Participation (including one on one and group activities)
- Gardening and Home Maintenance

CHOICES continued to offer group programs from Tenison Woods House (TWH) aimed at promoting skill development, social participation and establishing meaningful connections. Games afternoons are held at TWH on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The cooking groups are proving to be popular with four sessions held every week. Watch this space for the inclusion of additional cooking groups as interest continues to grow. The participants have been excited to incorporate the nutritious recipes into their meal planning and continue to develop their cooking skills in their daily life. With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, we are excited to work with our current participants to plan and expand our social calendar.

CHOICES has continued to recruit staff to meet the ongoing demand for support. It is a privilege to witness the difference our programs make in our participants lives as we endeavour to explore new ways to "be there for any human".





### **Hands On Studio**

Founded in 1996, this year marks the 26th year of operation for Hands On Studio. Over time, Hands On Studio has become a leader in the field of arts and disabilities in the Canberra region. The program has developed a model for a creative community guided by the principle that art is fundamental to human expression and that all people are entitled to its tools of communication. Over the years, the artists who attend the program on a weekly basis have collaborated with their peers as well as local and interstate artists to extend their practice, develop an individual style and foster a sense of community. The ages of the artists who attend the program range from 17-92, a very broad cohort with different life experiences and varying wants, needs, and desires which are supported at Hands On Studio.



### "Hands On Studio is joyful, happy and fun."

### Ian Scott Andrea

Over the year, the program supplied 6533 services to the community. Along with service delivery growth, the program has welcomed three new staff members to the team and four new volunteers. Each week the program forms new relationships with the broader arts and culture sector in the region and ensures everyone who attends the program is able to comfortably access arts opportunities.

Living with the COVID-19 pandemic over the past 12 months has brought challenges, uncertainty, and distribution hurdles to the world at large. Hands On Studio responded to the pandemic quickly and professionally in a way that ensured the COVID-19 safety requirements of all clients (artists) and staff were immediately met. One of the ways the program achieved this was by implementing regular online art classes,



discos, virtual trips to The National Gallery of Australia, along with other forms of interaction. This approach enabled the vital connections between the artists and staff to be preserved and the community's connection to their individual art practices to stay alive.



### "I enjoy coming to Hands On, I do drawing and talk to everyone."

### Rhonda Atkinson

2021 marked the 25th year of operation for Hands On Studio. To celebrate the milestone the program launched two major exhibitions in two of the region's leading galleries, M16 ARTSPACE and The Drill Hall Gallery. At M16 ARTSPACE the program showcased works produced from 1996–2021.

The exhibition was launched by the Minister for the Arts, Tanya Cheyne. During the exhibition, nine public workshops were offered, three floor talks were delivered and one music performance was held. Overall, the exhibition was a great success, with many of the artists selling their artwork and strong media coverage on ABC radio and in numerous positive publications.



"Hands On Studio makes me feel valued and a part of the Canberra arts community."

Karen Bondietti

The second major exhibition was held at The Drill Hall Gallery where the artists built a 'Town'. Using abstract thought processes, The Town acted as a model for a desirable and accessible society. Working as a collective, the artists used found materials to create utopian spaces unified into a vibrant architectural metropolis. The Town provoked critical thought about the ways in which we can improve society and build strong and vibrant communities that are accessible to all. While The Town was being exhibited, 35 of the Hands On Studio artists led a creative workshop with Dr Naomi Zouwer for 106 Ainslie Primary School students, exploring the meaning of 'community' and what makes an 'equitable society'. The Town also provided the artists with the opportunity to deliver a floor talk with Australian artist and Honorary Associate Professor Alison Alder, which provoked discussion on the valuable role art plays in building strong and meaningful communities.

Hands On Studio is excited about what the future holds as the program continues to grow, meeting the creative wants and needs of the Canberra community and beyond.



### LINC

The Living In Networked Communities (LINC) program offers a sustainable and supportive housing option for people with a disability to live independent and active lives.

In 2021–2022, LINC provided support to 29 members living within three LINC networks throughout Canberra located in Belconnen, Weston Creek and Casey.

LINC properties are dispersed throughout the area to encourage the forming of new relationships within the wider community, while also close enough to other LINC members to promote connectedness within the network.

LINC supports members to maintain their tenancy as well as develop and maintain relationships with their neighbours and local community. Support provided by the LINC program is funded through individuals' NDIS packages which includes one-on-one support to assist with connection to their local community, as well as group activities within each network.





### Community Assistance and Support Program

The Community Assistance Support Program (CASP) is an ACT Government funded program, aimed at enhancing health and wellbeing and facilitating independence and participation in the community.

To access services through the CatholicCare CASP, participants must live in the ACT, be under 65 years and require home and community support for daily living activities due to a health issue. Unpaid carers and family members may be eligible to access support through CASP.

During the 2021–2022 reporting year, CASP supported 36 individuals and their carers with a range of different and flexible supports. These services, focused on supporting participants to achieve their goals include, but are not limited to:

- Domestic assistance
- · Personal care
- · Social support
- · Counselling support
- Case coordination
- Gardening

The CASP Coordinator works closely with individuals and their families, often liaising with Occupational Therapists, GP's, Social Workers at the ACT Hospitals, ADACAS and other professionals and organisations for reporting purposes, referrals as well as NDIS required documentation.



"The staff have been helping me get back on track with my daily living and being able to attend appointments."



"I feel supported, due to my complex care needs. With my Support Worker, I am now able to attend medical appointments, do my grocery shopping and prepare my meals. My health has had some slight improvements which has given me purpose to life."

Over the past year, The CASP Coordinator has supported eight individuals to submit applications to the NDIA for assessment, and three successful applications enabled individuals to transition to the NDIS.

### **Dorothy Sales Cottages**

Dorothy Sales Cottages (DSC) has been providing support for 23 years to people living with an acquired brain injury and/or complex physical needs. In the 2021–2022 reporting period, DSC was home to eight individuals.

DSC provides intensive 24-hour support to residents and strives to deliver individualised and person-centred services. The supports are delivered by a dedicated team who ensure the service is personalised to meet individual needs and identified life goals.

The staff at DSC continue to work closely with families, other providers and specialists such as speech pathologists, community nursing, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and GPs to ensure residents receive holistic care.

The team at DSC worked closely with Social Workers at the hospital, the Integrated Service Response team, and the NDIS to support two people to transition to DSC. Both people had been living in hospital longterm due to being unable to return to their home after a change in their needs.

Residents continue to be active within their community and are using their NDIS Plans to regularly attend weekly social outings, group activities and visits with family members. Some of the residents attend weekly hydrotherapy sessions at the pool on site. The warm water assists with relaxation, reduction in pain and freedom of movement.

DSC is partially funded by the Commonwealth Government, Department of Health, Disability Support for Older Australians (DSOA) and individual packages under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

### **ARAMAC House**

ARAMAC was established in May 2019 and has continued to provide shared living opportunities for adult males who are living with co-occurring mental health and drug and alcohol conditions. The Homes are eight two-bedroom units in a complex within the ACT.

With funding provided through individual NDIS plans and with support services from the CHOICES program, individuals are supported to meet their goals of increased capacity for independent living and greater community participation. Individuals also have the experience of being in an environment that supports and encourages both mental health and alcohol and other drug recovery.

In the 2021–2022 reporting period,
ARAMAC supported 14 men to live
independently in their homes. The team at
ARAMAC work closely with the Belconnen
Mental Health Team and the Assertive
Community Outreach Service (ACOS)
to provide an added layer of support to
the men, helping to reduce the need for
entry into hospital. Support has been
provided to assist some of the men to
attend specialised group sessions at
the University of Canberra Hospital Day
Services.

We have seen an increased interest in the group activities this year and we continue to provide board games and movie sessions. In response to resident feedback, we have recently commenced a weekly bowling session, a PlayStation group, and a visual arts group.

ARAMAC utilises the community space to run a weekly cooking group which is a popular choice. The men who attend the group take the skills they are learning back to their own homes to develop and increase their living skills with one-to-one support.

ARAMAC has been fortunate to receive donations enabling the purchase of new equipment for the cooking group, garden beds to plant herbs, and to purchase a TV and PlayStation for the residents. The funds were also used to purchase tickets to the Zoo and Aquarium and to attend the Canberra show.



^ Good times bowling

The ARAMAC groups have been wonderful for facilitating connection and a sense of community for the residents living at ARAMAC. They assist with reducing isolation and creating a sense of belonging for all that participate.

We have seen increased capacity and growth in the men's involvement in their day to day lives. The men can take greater control over preparing meals and maintaining their personal spaces, which has contributed positively to their mental health and wellbeing.



^ Cooking up a storm

### Gary's Story

Gary is a 62-year-old man living with a diagnosis of Schizophrenia. Gary has lived in Australia for over 20 years and has no family living here in Australia. English is his second language.

Gary has been engaged with CatholicCare since 1995 and received drop-in style support in his own unit.

There were concerns regarding Gary's ability to remain living independently and he then transitioned to the Lodge in Ainslie Village, a large, shared living setting that was specifically for men who have a mental health diagnosis with or without alcohol and other drug issues.

The Lodge had shared facilities and the shopping, cleaning and meals were prepared by staff.

While living at the Lodge, Gary would spend every day in his room and would only come out for meals. Gary would not participate in any group activities or attend medical appointments. He was very isolated and reported being scared at times.

With the introduction of NDIS in the ACT, CatholicCare supported Gary to apply for NDIS funding and in 2017 Gary become a participant of the NDIS.

In 2019, Gary moved from the Lodge to ARAMAC, and into a shared two-bedroom unit. He initially had reservations about the move and leaving his previous long term housing option. It was a big change for Gary after 22 years of stability in his home.

The move to ARAMAC has been very positive for Gary. He has a team of familiar support workers who provide individualised support to him, assisting to manage his medication, meal planning and preparation, assistance with grocery shopping, cleaning and support to access the community.

Gary says he feels safe in his new home. He has continued to build on his skills and is now actively attending regular group activities like bowling, lunch outings and the cooking group. Gary has built his confidence and is also now doing his grocery shopping and attending appointments with support.

The team at ARAMAC continue to support Gary to build on his capacity and independence in all areas of his life.

### Seniors in Networked Communities

CatholicCare's Seniors In Networked Communities program (SINC) is a government funded program providing aged care services through The Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). CHSP services help senior Australians to live independently and safely at home.

Access to CHSP is via the My Aged Care system. My Aged Care is a starting point for accessing Australian Government-funded aged care services. Its focus is people who have the need for one or two services, respite services to give carers a break, and short-term services such as post-hospital supports.

Within the My Aged Care system, and in collaboration with Regional Assessment Services (RAS), SINC aims to support clientele aged 65 years and over, or 55 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, enabling them to regain or develop skills, build independence and engage in the community while remaining home in a safe environment. SINC thrives in supporting clients to achieve their goals within a person-centered and strengthsbased approach, embedded in a wellness and reablement framework.



Working across both ACT and NSW Southern Highlands, CatholicCare continues its support of 560 clients with an increasing number of services for personal care, domestic assistance, social support, flexible respite, transport, and home maintenance services (HM is an ACT service type only). The SINC program also continues to expand with the provision of Social Work services across NSW, including our coastal areas in the Eurobodalla and Sapphire coast regions.

While this reporting period offered many challenges in providing services, CatholicCare supplied 22411 hours of support to our community. Our services are in high demand and remain at capacity in Domestic Assistance (ACT & NSW), Home Maintenance (ACT), and Personal Care. However, we are open for referrals across our other services, with growth funds allowing us to support more of our senior Australians.

### Irene's Story

Irene is an 89-year-old lady living with her son and his family in Canberra. Irene's goals are to remain active in her community and stay safe within her home. Her journey with CatholicCare is a great example of how our various programs support people as their needs and goals change.

Irene lives with Alzheimer's disease and due to this diagnosis, she now requires support with her daily living activities

In 2019, Irene was initially linked with CatholicCare's SINC program after an assessment conducted by the Regional Assessment Service (RAS). The RAS assessment had identified it would be beneficial for Irene to engage aged care support type domestic assistance and social support groups. Irene continued to receive support within the SINC Program while waiting for her Home Care Package to be allocated.

In 2020, Irene was assessed by the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) as having high care needs with a recommendation for a Level 4 Home Care Package (HCP). Irene and her family researched Home Care providers and decided to continue her supports with CatholicCare.

One factor supporting this decision was the quality of care provided by the support workers and our understanding of Irene's goal to continue accessing community and social outings.

Having been allocated a level 4 package, Irene transferred her support from the SINC program to the Home Care Package Team. Now a part of the HCP program, Irene benefits from flexible respite supports which cover her various needs.

Irene's Home Care Package Coordinator works in collaboration with Irene and her family to make the most of her package. This includes accessing services within CatholicCare as well as other external health providers to improve Irene's quality of life. Coming together to build a personalised package for Irene, contributes to Irene achieving her goal of remaining at home and enjoying her social activities as much and for as long as possible.

During the intake process for the HCP program, Irene expressed a desire to join the Hands On Studio Program to rekindle her creativity and art making skills. Irene attends Hands On Studio weekly and has developed meaningful friendships with fellow participants and teachers.

Irene will continue to receive assistance to attend social outings and activities and be supported in various ways as her needs change and/or increase.



### **Home Care Packages**

CatholicCare's Home Care Package Program (HCP) provides the next level of Aged Care support offered through the My Aged Care system. HCP may be considered an option, if an individual's care needs are more complex and needing further support than the Commonwealth Support Program can offer. Access to Home Care Package funding is determined via the outcome of a comprehensive assessment conducted by the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT). Eligible seniors will be given an allocation of a package from Level 1 for basic care needs to Level 4 for high care needs.

A homecare package is assigned to people – not providers. This means a person can choose a provider in their area that best meets their needs.

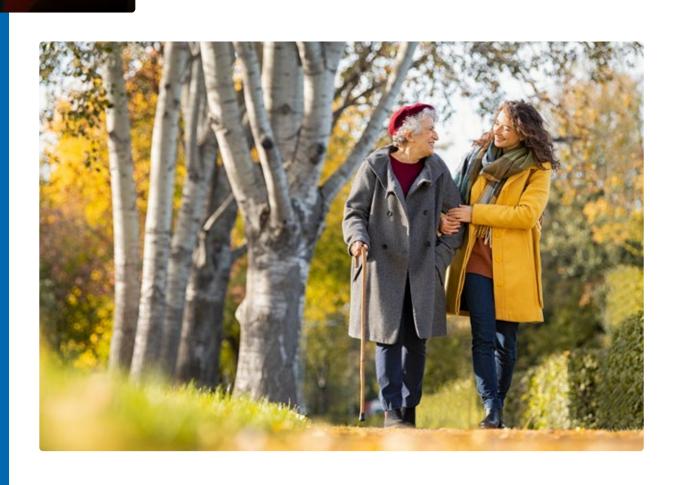
CatholicCare HCP Program has supported 130 individuals in this reporting period. Our dedicated staff consist of five homecare coordinators, one based in the Coastal regions and another specialising in regional NSW.

The HCP team has been in a fortunate position, being able to assist our current clients with a continuum of care as they progress through their My Aged Care journey.

The HCP team of staff provide direct care to individuals working towards wellness and reablement objectives, while incorporating tailored packages to meet client's goals.

In addition, HCP offers a suite of in-house services including case management, personal care, assistance with domestic tasks, social support, home maintenance and gardening assistance.

The Home Care Package Program continues to build relationships with stakeholders within the sector such as providers, nursing agencies and allied health professionals. HCP continues to coordinate and provide support to meet the needs of those who have chosen us as their support provider.



### **Shared Living**

From the 1 July 2021, the Choices and Aged Care team welcomed the residents and employees from L'Arche Genesaret, an intentional community which has provided supported accommodation in the Canberra region since 1978.

At the time of transfer, L'Arche Genesaret was providing supported independent living with 20 adults with the experience of intellectual disability, in seven homes in Woden and Tuggeranong, with a team of about 50 employees. This move saw shared living in CatholicCare move to being provided throughout 10 homes in the Canberra Community.

L'Arche Genesaret, a well-respected pioneer in providing supported accommodation through an intentional community model, made the difficult decision in November 2020 to withdraw from service provision under the National Disability Insurance Scheme and entered negotiations with CatholicCare Canberra Goulburn to achieve a smooth transition of funded supports.

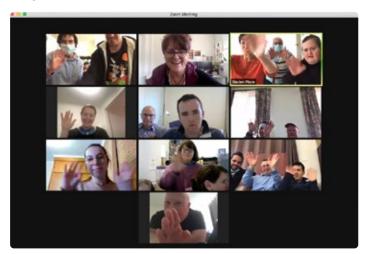
Thanks to the dedication and support of everyone involved, this transition has indeed been successful in providing high-quality continuity of care for the people at the heart of our services.

Within six weeks of this transition, the ACT went into a second lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our dedicated teams responded immediately with diligence and creativity to maintain the health and wellbeing of our residents, while adhering to rigorous infection control requirements. Like the rest of the Canberra community, we regularly went for walks in our suburbs, enjoyed daily 'social Zooms', extended our cooking skills and made art and craft at home.

While we were vigilant in keeping the virus out of our homes for months, many of our residents and staff unfortunately succumbed as infection rates surged in the Canberra community earlier this year. Sincere thanks to our incredible staff who have tolerated uncomfortable gowns, gloves, masks and face shields as part of their daily work to provide on-going



^ Bryan McGuiness is thrilled to move into his new home in Curtin.



^ Daily social Zooms helped residents in our homes keep in touch and share creative ideas during the second lockdown last year.

supports to households and individuals in home isolation.

This year one of our long-time residents Bryan McGuiness relocated from Cook to one of our southside homes in Curtin. Bryan has led the way in bringing together teams to create a fantastic new blended team. Despite his relocation to Woden, Bryan continues to sell the Big Issue as a well-known locality identity at the Jamison Shopping Centre in Macquarie.

Our supported independent living homes and cottages are now all managed together, to continue providing high-quality, person-centred supports.



### **Sobering Up Shelter**

The Sobering Up Shelter (SUS) has been in operation for 18 years and continues to provide a safe place for individuals over the age of 18 to recover from the effects of alcohol and other drugs. SUS operates on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights from 11pm to 11am and opens for special events where there is community celebration. SUS is a licensed facility operating in accordance with the Intoxicated People (Care and Protection) Act 1994 and the Intoxicated People (Care and Protection) Standard 2004. Team members are qualified Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) workers who provide close monitoring throughout the night and offer brief intervention, follow up, and referral to other services as required. The service supports safe alcohol and other drug use and promotes harm reduction strategies and increased pathways to relevant supports. Referrals are accepted from ACT Policing, ACT Ambulance, CBR Night Crew, health and community services and the general community. This year SUS experienced some interruption to service due to ongoing COVID-19 closures and enforced lockdowns, receiving 87 client referrals in 2021-2022.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate

### **ASSIST**

Case Managers in the ASSIST program provide specialist outreach homelessness support to people over 18, experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Case Managers work from a trauma informed lens with person centred support being the focus. ASSIST provides individuals, couples and families information, advocacy, and referrals to support them to gain and transition into and/or sustain tenancies in public, community or private housing.

In the 2021–2022 period, 137 people were supported in the ASSIST program.

### Axial Housing (A Housing First Initiative)

Axial Housing is in its second year of the pilot and provides a housing first model based on the Housing First Principles for Australia. Axial Housing works with specialist homelessness services who refer people sleeping rough on the streets of Canberra with high and complex support needs particularly in navigating the housing system. The team provides wraparound support to people to move from the streets into a permanent home, including supporting the ongoing stability of the tenancy. Through the demonstrated success of the program in 2021-2022, CatholicCare received additional funding from the ACT Government to employ a full-time Community Mental Health Specialist. This role provides individually tailored treatment plans to people experiencing homelessness and who would benefit from specialist mental health supports. The role will create pathways and linkages to mental health and health care providers and support people to recover and live well within their community.

Since its beginning in 2019, the Axial team have supported 39 people off the streets and into long term housing.

### **MINOSA House**

MINOSA House provides supported accommodation for six men aged 18 years and over who are experiencing homelessness. The program empowers residents to gain safe, secure, long term and sustainable tenancies in the ACT community. This is achieved through individualised and person-centred case management with an onsite support worker who provides practical assistance with the development of living skills, including cooking, cleaning, hygiene, budgeting and accessing community services.

MINOSA House also offers a 3-bedroom transitional share house, providing an additional level of independence for those who have achieved most of their desired goals and no longer require intensive supports. The MINOSA Transitional House was developed based on the need for semi-supported pathways into

independent living and has proven vital for the success of those working towards achieving their final goals of long-term and independent housing.

MINOSA House provided 1,841 bed nights accommodation during 2021–2022, with an occupancy rate of 84%.

Funded by Housing and Community Services, ACT Government Community Services Directorate

### **MacKillop House**

Since opening its doors two years ago (June 2020), MacKillop House continues to lead the response in safe, short term emergency accommodation for women and children experiencing homelessness and/or escaping domestic and family violence. The program provides temporary shared accommodation for up to 20 single women with private bedrooms and six separate townhouses for mothers and their children. MacKillop House works to support women and children who have experiences of trauma in their lives, those exposed to Domestic and Family Violence, or who are requiring support with financial instability, alcohol and other drug use and mental health concerns. MacKillop House has become a safe haven for women and children who would otherwise be forced to stay in unsafe living situations.

In the past 12 months of operation, MacKillop House has supported 55 women, 21 accompanying children and received 99 referrals for accommodation support. The women supported have ranged in ages from 22 to 82. The program provides person-centred and trauma-informed case management to all women and families who reside at MacKillop House. The team works collaboratively across the sector to meet the individualised support needs of the women and children. This support includes external and internal referrals to trauma counselling, alcohol and other drug supports, assistance with financial and legal issues, help to access childcare, employment and training opportunities and overall health and wellbeing. A focus of support is to secure long-term, and suitable housing. In 2021–2022, MacKillop House supported over 45% of occupants to exit to stable and sustainable housing.



MacKillop House itself creates an opportunity for social connection amongst occupants. Current and past residents have formed lasting friendships that have continued long after they have moved on to their own homes. In-house activities, such as a weekly art and craft group, baking evenings, BBQs and meditation groups, in addition to in-reach support, such as Canberra Community Law and Care Inc. Financial Counselling, foster and encourage social connections, identity and belonging, and can help to increase self-confidence and resilience.

MacKillop House recently celebrated it's second year anniversary, and welcomed a visit from Minister Berry, who has strongly supported the initiative and was instrumental in it's opening. CatholicCare looks forward to continuing to provide safe accommodation for vulnerable women and children in the ACT.

Funded by CatholicCare and Housing and Community Services, ACT Government Community Services Directorate



"When I first got there I felt welcomed and at home. I felt for the first time in a long time I had somewhere safe and all of the workers have helped me feel welcomed over the time I lived there."

### Suzie's Story

Suzie, a 65-year-old woman became homeless after leaving her husband due to a long history of verbal and emotional abuse. Seeking security in her retirement years, Suzie initially moved in with her son and his young family. Sadly, within a few months of Suzie's moving in she began to experience similar abuse from her son and was again forced to leave her accommodation to ensure her safety. After years of abuse Suzie had become isolated from friends. Facing homelessness, Suzie presented at the local police station in an effort to seek help. The constable immediately referred Suzie to crisis support through Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Suzie was placed in emergency hotel accommodation. Once in crisis accommodation Suzie connected with supports through Onelink and was referred to MacKillop House. Staying at MacKillop House was initially difficult for Suzie as she experienced a lot of personal shame and shared how she felt unworthy of support due to being a qualified Social Worker and having worked for years to keep children safe. Now Suzie was living in crisis accommodation and felt the world had flipped on her. Suzie soon began to build relationships with the staff at MacKillop House and unpack the trauma from her previous relationships. Most importantly, the staff at MacKillop responded in a compassionate and dignified way to Suzie's experiences, asssiting her to rebuild her confidence.

Suzie welcomed the supports offered through the case management teams at MacKillop House, who worked alongside Suzie to address her needs. Suzie's main goal was to secure housing of her own. However, due to her husband's coercive control and abuse she found herself in significant financial debt.



The team at MacKillop assisted Suzie to access the Aged Pension through Centrelink, engage with financial counselling support and seek legal advice around financial issues. The separation from previous debts motivated Suzie to continue in her independence and she quickly gained confidence to explore housing options. Having never lived independently Suzie's main concern was that the property be in a safe location and close to the newly established friends she had made at MacKillop House.

The team at MacKillop supported Suzie, in collaboration with other community sector partners, to successfully submit a housing application with Housing ACT and, based on her needs, Suzie was placed on the Priority housing list. Due to Suzie's past traumas and the need to feel secure in her new home, she welcomed MacKillop House's advocacy to ensure a suitable housing offer was received. Suzie was offered and accepted a 1-bedroom Aged Persons Unit through Housing ACT. Suzie's transition from MacKillop House was supported through outreach, to sustain the success of Suzie's tenancy and independent living.

Through her stay at MacKillop House Suzie was provided the foundation of security to re-establish a sense of belonging, has fostered many new friendships within her local community, and has built a new life for herself, free from violence. Suzie still regularly catches up with the friends she made at MacKillop House and has developed a coffee club which meets monthly in her local community.

### **Toolangi Affordable Housing Program**

Toolangi social and affordable housing community is an initiative that makes a real difference in people's lives, offering on-site Social Impact Programs and tenancy management through CatholicCare's Community Engagement & Tenancy Support Manager. Through the incorporation of occupancy and tenancy supports, residents are empowered to shape their community through improved tenancy management and varied social networks. Toolangi promotes inclusion through the design of various community activities that improve social wealth, increase community safety, and create a shared sense of belonging. Over the past 12-months, Toolangi has linked people with shared interests and support them to develop friendships and take part in meaningful community engagements. CCG prioritises consultations across the dynamic and diverse community membership to drive programming that empowers residents to express their identity while creating a safe environment for all to participate.

In 2021–2022, residents have come together to drive the success of several projects and workshops, including getting busy recycling bottles and hosting a Trivia Night to fundraise for their community garden. They have been getting their hands (and gloves) dirty building and filling up garden beds and planter boxes with soil, herbs and flowers.

After a few trial-and-error attempts and a couple of expert sessions with The Veggie Lady, we now have three vibrant garden beds with lettuce, celery, carrots, parsley and bok choy, as well as a growing worm farm!

Our very first harvest gave us a few pumpkins and we held a baking day, making pumpkin muffins. One resident also made tomato relish from the green tomatoes of the garden. The second harvest gave us vibrant Asian green bok choy and we enjoyed learning how to cook this fresh delicious vegetable!



The garden continues to grow thanks to a dedicated team of our community residents, and we look forward to it growing further for a Spring 2022 harvest!

Partnerships with like-minded organisations continued to be fostered, including, CARE Financial, GIVIT, Country Women's Association, ACT Fire Brigade, ACT Policing and Neighbourhood Watch, UC Kaleen High School and Club House, and OzHarvest.

The resident satisfaction survey from December 2021 shows that:

- 80% of respondents are very satisfied or fairly satisfied that their life has improved since moving into a CatholicCare affordable housing property.
- 80% of respondents are very of fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

Funded by Housing and Community Services, ACT Government Community Services Directorate



### Youth and Family Case Management Service

CatholicCare's Youth and Family Case Management Services (YFCMS) is an outreach program supporting vulnerable children, young people, and families in the ACT. The program works within a Case Management framework and aims to assist families to increase their resilience and improve their connection to community, ensuring that they are supported to increase their skills to manage life circumstances. The service provides a holistic and flexible model of outreach support to each individual client. The teams listen to and support families to set and achieve goals, connect to relevant service providers and develop skills to assist and promote greater autonomy.

During 2021–2022, YFCMS program supported 57 families in the ACT. Of those supported, 86% reported that they felt their capacity to manage their home and families had improved, 75% reported an improvement to their social networks and 100% reported an improvement in their emotional wellbeing.

Funded by the Office for Children Youth and Family Support, ACT Government Community Services Directorate

### **Youth Housing Support Service**

The Youth Housing Support Service (YHSS) team provide outreach support to young people aged 15-25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in the ACT region. YHSS provides individualised and person-centred case management to young people, supporting them to gain appropriate safe and stable accommodation and/or sustain their tenancies. The service also provides information and referral to young people to assist them in staying connected or gaining the confidence to establish new support networks.

In the 2021–2022 period YHSS supported 91 young people.

Funded by Housing and Community Services, ACT Government Community Services Directorate

### **Throughcare**

The Throughcare program provides up to four weeks' intensive outreach support to individuals upon their release from the Alexander Maconochie Centre. Staff work closely with ACT Corrective Services to support clients to reintegrate into the community and reduce recidivism. Throughcare team members are passionate about supporting people to transition safely back into their community through providing increased pathways for safe and secure housing, social connections, and the achievement of individualised goals. The types of support provided include transport (including transport on day of release), support to engage with ACT Corrective Services and comply with conditions, access to Centrelink payments and housing, and linking in with other services to provide ongoing support. This includes GP's, alcohol and other drug services, counselling, case management, engagement in positive social activities, and access to training and employment opportunities.

Throughcare has supported 63 clients over the last year.

Funded by ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate

### **Justice Housing Program**

CatholicCare's Justice Housing Program is an initiative which seeks to address the lack of available and affordable housing for people released from custody at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC).

The program provides occupancy management and support services to the occupants, helping them to identify and secure permanent and stable accommodation. The Justice Housing Program works within a case management framework and coordinated care approach to help occupants identify specific needs and goals and develop strategies to assist them to achieve permanent housing and successful reintegration into the community.

Justice Housing Program has supported 86 clients over the last year.

Funded by ACT Justice and Community Safety Directorate

## COUNSELLING AND THERAPY SERVICES

### **Bushfire Support Counselling**

The Bushfire Counselling Service continued to provide free counselling, psychological interventions, and group programs to those impacted by recent natural disasters, including the 2019-2020 bushfires, floods, and COVID-19. In 2021-2022, the program supported 151 clients and completed 3552 sessions in several regions, including Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Monaro-Snowy, Queanbeyan-Palerang and Shoalhaven. In addition to providing counselling, the service offered additional supports for children in the regions, liaising with local schools and offering Play Therapy groups. The service continued to work collaboratively with other Bushfire recovery workers, providing psychoeducational presentations and bringing better outcomes for the various regions. The service will continue to provide counselling until the end of December 2022. In addition, it will run a series of trauma informed group sessions using different modalities, including yoga, art, and mindfulness as tools for managing trauma in the Eurobodalla and Bega Valley region.

This service is supported by funding from COORDINARE- South Eastern NSW PHN through the Australian Governments' PHN program.



### Roger's Story

Roger, a 55-year-old male, was referred for counselling from the regional hospital service, presenting with a high level of suicidal ideation and risk. Roger was directly impacted by the 2019–2020 bushfires and was living in his south-east coast property. He was evacuated several times before his property was completely burned down and he had to re-locate to another location.

After losing his property, Roger experienced severe depression and anxiety. He was placed on anti-depressant medication by his Doctor and commenced counselling with CatholicCare. Roger actively attended regular sessions for four months and reported feeling that these were a huge benefit to him.

Roger worked with the counsellor who supported him from a trauma informed approach using a CBT framework. With this support, Roger focused on himself with self-care activities, coping strategies, and guided meditation audios to help with sleep issues he was experiencing. With the counsellor and his GP supporting him, Roger worked through his goals and he was able to decrease his anti-depressant medication.

After four months of counselling, Roger self-reported that his anxiety had substantially decreased. Roger said, 'I'm starting to feel like my old self again' and that it felt great to come to a service where he was supported and listened to versus being treated like a number.





### **Relationship Education**

CatholicCare's relationship education services employ an early intervention approach through the Facilitating Open Couple Communication Understanding and Study (FOCCUS) inventory to assist couples to prepare for, consider and come to an agreement around managing different issues that may arise within a marriage. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported 49,116 divorces were granted in Australia in 2019. The aim of this service is for couples to gain improved awareness of differences in expectations, communication styles, and experiences to promote discussion. The ability to work through these differences in an open and honest conversation will help maintain a long-term relationship and prevent separation in the future. In 2021-2022, the service saw 29 couples participate and successfully complete the FOCCUS program.



"The session was a great chance to talk through things we hadn't previously discussed and exceeded our expectations."

### Family and Relationship Counselling

CatholicCare's Family and Relationship Counselling Service offers counselling to individuals, couples, and families in need of support to deal with a range of issues. This includes building relationships, conflict resolution, improving communication, coping with change, and parenting challenges. CatholicCare's team of skilled counsellors, social workers and psychologists have a vast knowledge of the issues and behaviours that can impact family relationships. They support and assist individuals, couples, and families to explore options for change, develop solutions to manage relationship issues and difficulties, implement changes to improve relationships, and help parents provide ongoing support for their children. The service operates out of our ACT offices in Red Hill, O'Connor and Braddon, and from Queanbeyan, Moruya and Bega in NSW. Services are available face to face and via telehealth. The service provided 1559 sessions to 502 clients in 2021-2022.

Funded by the Department of Social Services

### **Family Law**

Family Law counselling provides a service to assist clients to navigate through the challenging times of relationship difficulties, separation, divorce and postseparation parenting. A client-centred approach is applied to assist individuals and families to deal with change, build insight and develop new skills to manage conflict, grief and loss, family breakdown, parenting and care arrangements post separation, and prioritising the children's best interests. The service continues to operate out of our ACT offices in Red Hill and O'Connor and in NSW from Queanbeyan, Moruya and Bega. Services are available face to face and/or via telehealth.

Funded by the Department of Social Services

### Student and Family Counselling Program

Catholic Care's School Counselling
Service provides counselling in 58
Catholic and Independent schools across
Canberra and regional NSW. Delivering
this service in schools enables children,
young people and their families to access
mental health care at no cost within
a safe and familiar environment. The
contact with the school counsellor is often
a child or young person's first experience
of counselling and mental health support.
Early intervention and accessible mental
health care for children and young
people is crucial to supporting student
well-being.

It has been another year of growth, with the team now sitting at over 40 counsellors. Our team is made up of Social Workers, Psychologists and Counsellors who have expertise in working with children and a commitment to professional development to ensure that we continue to provide a highquality therapeutic service. The role of the school counsellor is varied. In addition to individual counselling, the service provides group therapy, educational sessions for parents and carers, and consultations and professional learning for schools to improve their pastoral care response. The service provides critical incident support and acts as an important resource for the broader community in times of crisis. The School Counselling service has supported over 2600 children and young people and its families in 2021-2022.

This year has seen significant challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. We saw an increase in the complexity of referrals because of children and young people struggling with the isolation and anxiety of lockdown with the added stress of transitioning back to face-to-face learning.

The service faced its own challenges of ensuring that continued care and support was available whilst managing school coverage due to staff absences attributed to the pandemic. Despite these challenges, the school counsellors worked tirelessly and provided over 5,000 clinical sessions in 2021–2022.



"The feedback from staff and parents has been exceptional. Working closely with the counsellor I too have learnt so much. I am very grateful to have such a high calibre counsellor working with us."

School principal



"We are absolutely thrilled with our counsellor. She is so personable, caring and very flexible. She has a great care and compassion for the students, families, and staff."

School principal



CatholicCare's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counselling service for employees and their families, funded by their employer. EAP assists in the prevention, early intervention and resolution of problems that may affect job performance, including personal, family and work issues. CatholicCare provides EAP to several different community agencies and businesses in the ACT and NSW, and caters to interstate agencies via telehealth. The program provides an outreach service to several agencies requiring support post critical incidents. In 2021-2022, the service continued to expand, with two more businesses accessing the EAP service at CatholicCare. In 2021-2022, the EAP program doubled its service from the previous year, providing 639 sessions to 213 clients.





### **Parenting Groups**

CatholicCare's parenting groups aim to assist parents to strengthen their parenting skills to manage the variety of circumstances that can be thrown their way. Our parenting groups provide parents with the opportunity to share their skills, experiences, and tips for managing challenging situations and to recognise individual strengths and uniqueness within the family unit. Our group facilitators provide parents with psychology-based education to enable the strengthening of parenting skills, foster strong child-parent attachment and promote family harmony. In 2021-2022, CatholicCare provided two types of evidence informed parenting groups, including Tuning Into Kids, which helps parents foster the emotional connection between them and their children, and the Resourceful Adolescent Program (RAP-P), which helps boost the self-esteem of parents and their adolescents. For the seventh year, CatholicCare continued providing the RAP-P program to people residing in Karralika's Families Program. In 2021–2022, despite the impacts of COVID-19, CatholicCare delivered two groups to over 17 participants at Karralika and a local primary school.

### **Reconnect ACT**

Reconnect ACT is an early-intervention program for young people aged 12 to 18 years (or 12 to 21 years in the case of newly arrived youth) who are at risk of homelessness or are already homeless and living, working, or studying in Canberra. The program works with both the young person and their parents/ caregivers concurrently with individual workers where appropriate. The program works towards achieving family reconciliation or finding appropriate living arrangements and improving the young person's level of engagement with work, education, training, and the community. Reconnect provides counselling, group work, mediation, and practical support to the whole family, to help break the cycle of homelessness.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Service.

### **Reconnect Central West**

Reconnect Central West is a community based early intervention and prevention program for young people aged 12 to 18 years (or 12 to 21 years in the case of newly arrived youth), who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and their families. The Reconnect Central West office is in Young and provides outreach services to Boorowa, Harden, Grenfell, Molong, West Wyalong, Canowindra, and surrounds. The aim of Reconnect is to prevent homelessness by intervening early with families and young people to stabilise and improve their housing situation and improve their level of engagement with family, education, training, employment, and their local community.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Service.



# PSYCHOLOGICAL AN ATOD SERVICE



### **Better Access**

CatholicCare's Better Access service provides individuals access to mental health care, where due to a range of mental health complexities, they may not have otherwise been able to access an appropriate service. The Better Access service strives to meet the needs of individuals to improve psychological treatment and management of mental illness symptoms. Better Access is the primary bulk-billed psychological service in the ACT, geared towards individuals whose financial and social contexts would otherwise exclude them from accessing psychological services.

Our experienced team of psychologists assist clients presenting with a range of mental health concerns, such as depression, anxiety, trauma, sleep hygiene and managed personality disorders.

The Better Access team offers face to face and telehealth sessions which expands

our ability to meet community need, not just in the ACT but within our regional areas in NSW.

In 2021–2022 Better Access supported approximately 145 clients. The Better Access program has also found success with the inclusion of offering a telehealth forum.

### **NDIS Counselling**

CatholicCare's NDIS Counselling program has the ability to work with clients using a variety of therapeutic orientations, including CBT, Motivational Interviewing, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to effectively accommodate a client's specific needs.

The NDIS Counsellors work in collaboration with our Positive Behaviour Support, Better Access, and Cognitive Assessment clinical teams, along with CatholicCare's Choices program and external stakeholders to assist the client within the therapeutic space.









### **Next Step Program**

CatholicCare's Next Step service is an evidenced-based psychological support service offering free and confidential access to psychological treatment for people experiencing anxiety and/or depression. At the core of Next Step is a stepped care system of services comprising a hierarchy of interventions, from the least to most intensive, which is matched to the individual's needs. The program, in it's 5<sup>th</sup> year, is based on the successful Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) program delivered by the UK's National Health Service.

Next Step uses a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approach delivered by a specialist CBT trained workforce of mental health coaches and clinicians. Next Step is offered to people of all ages and provides three types of support:

- Mental Health Coaching is the low intensity service of Next Step offering short-term intensive CBT in the form of guided self-help and practical strategies over a six-session basis. This service is available for people 16 years and over with mild to moderate anxiety and/or depression.
- High Intensity Therapy this service builds off the low intensity service, providing a more intensive psychological therapy for people experiencing moderate to severe symptoms of depression and/or anxiety. The service is delivered by mental health professionals such as psychologists, mental health social workers and mental health nurses. High intensity support is available to people of any age.
- Cool Kids and Cool Little Kids
   Anxiety Programs these CBT based groups were developed by Macquarie University and use CBT to assist children and their carers to develop strategies to manage anxiety, with a focus on teaching practical skills.

During 2021–2022, we once again faced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have remained committed to uninterrupted delivery of services to the ACT community and used well established telehealth and online platforms during periods of restrictions and lock downs. Over the 12-month period, Next Step supported approximately 950 individuals, delivered more than 9,300 therapy and coaching sessions and ran eight Cool Kids Groups and three Cool Little Kids Groups.

The pilot program offering low and high intensity services in Residential Aged Care Facilities that commenced in the previous 12 months continued in this reporting period, with 80% of clients who completed treatment meeting the threshold for recovery.



"My therapist has been fantastic as I need someone that shows genuine care, and she did exactly that. She was very knowledgeable and helped me immensely."



"I've been through a lot of therapy, and this is by far the best experience I've had."

Funded by the Capital Health Network, on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health

### **Stepping Stones**

CatholicCare's Stepping Stones
Program was launched in 2020 as a free
therapeutic service aimed at children
12 and under and their families or carers
who are struggling with trauma-based
symptoms. Trauma may be experienced
from a single incident or repeated
traumatic incidents such as abuse,
neglect, or witnessing family violence.

The Stepping Stones team incorporates a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that consists of a family worker, occupational therapist, and psychologists working collaboratively to effectively support children and their families. The team aims to support recovery from the impacts of experiencing trauma by focusing on a child's mental health, wellbeing and development.

Our Stepping Stones team implements a variety of therapeutic modalities to fit the specificity of a child's and/or family's needs. The family worker is trained to implement the facets of Tuning into Kids, where the focus is emotional connection between the parents/carers and the children. The psychologists implement Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing Therapy (EMDR), whilst our Occupational Therapist uses a range of techniques to help the child and parents understand and manage emotional and behavioural challenges through sensory and tactile awareness.

Families/caregivers are supported to understand the impact of trauma on their child, assisting them to develop strategies to support the child's recovery and onward development.

We continue to experience overwhelming demand for the service demonstrating ongoing significant need in the ACT. Within the past 12 months, Stepping Stones has supported approximately 104 young people and families. Currently, 56 clients are being serviced through a combination of family work, occupational therapy, and/or psychological therapy.

Funded by the Capital Health Network, on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health



### Mindscope

During 2021–2022, CatholicCare formed a partnership with Bupa Health Insurance to deliver an innovative mental health program aimed at supporting health insurance customers in the ACT and surrounding region who have experienced an overnight admission to hospital for mental health treatment and support.

The Mindscope team of mental health professionals provide evidenced based, therapeutic care services to people experiencing mental health concerns through regular therapeutic and recovery-based supports.

In the short period of time the service has been operating, it has supported more than 20 people exiting hospital following a mental health admission. The service will look to expand further in 2022–2023 with additional private health funds joining the service, providing access to the Mindscope service to their members.







### SUMMIT – Positive Behaviour Support

CatholicCare's newest Summit Program, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), aims to help young people and their families/caregivers, better understand the context and functions of their young person's behaviour. The PBS clinicians work collaboratively with the client and family/caregiver to manage challenging behaviours and promote a manageable quality of life through implementation of evidence-based strategies. This includes a commitment to the reduction and if possible, elimination of restrictive practices.

SUMMIT is targeted towards individuals with an existing NDIS plan and funding specifically allocated for positive behaviour support. Clients can also seek positive behaviour support as privately funded referrals. The Positive Behavioural Support Service aims to close the gap on a necessary and needed service within the Canberra region. The PBS clinicians are supported and guided by clear functional behaviour assessments and behaviour support plans in collaboration with a PBS supervisor.



Cognitive Assessments are conducted by a team of appropriately qualified and experienced psychologists. Psychological assessments assist in the gathering and identification of various issues, including intelligence, academic capabilities, cognitive strengths, and weaknesses. The use of cognitive assessments help parents and school officials to best understand the impact of difficulties experienced by individuals, which can lead to the implementation of effective strategies to mitigate any negative impact.

Assessments with a CatholicCare clinician will involve an initial interview to gain as much relevant information as possible so that the clinician can offer assessment options best tailored to the concerns of the person(s).

### **Reaching Out**

CatholicCare's Reaching Out program provides specialist alcohol and other drug counselling through an assertive outreach approach. The Reaching Out program is staffed by several qualified and specialised Alcohol and Other Drug counsellors.

The Reaching Out program provides outreach counselling support services to individuals in a variety of locations. This model has helped to lessen the stigma surrounding an individual and provides a warm, supportive, and non-judgemental approach forward.

The flexibility and the availability of service times continues to be an advantage in supporting clients who may not follow up with other services due to transport and other barriers, or experiences of inadequate support in the past.

In the past six months, the Reaching Out program has seen 154 clients. Of the 45 surveys completed, 82% stated that they would positively endorse the program. Of the 80 closed client cases, 68% of clients reported a reduction in their substance use at the end of their treatment episode and 93% report the program is supporting them to achieve their identified goals.

Funded by the Capital Health Network, on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health



"I am coming up to a year without touching alcohol, I'm really glad for the program and my counsellor."



"I feel as though my life has been turned around. I felt supported, comfortable and didn't feel as though I was being judged."



### **Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List (DASL)**

DASL Counselling provides a specialist approach to AOD counselling delivered through an outreach model, focusing on recovery from substance dependence and reconnecting with the community. DASL is delivered within a person-centred and strengths-based framework to ensure maximum engagement.

The DASL program enables individuals with drug related chargers to remain in the community and follow a structured court order. CatholicCare provides counselling support to individuals currently deemed suitable for the program. This program is a long-term counselling program, that supports clients to look at their past or present substance use and behaviours. It looks closely at behaviours that may have brought a client into the program and supports them in building new behaviours so that there is a limited chance of further incarceration.

The DASL Counsellor implements an individual treatment plan in collaboration with the client, prioritising treatment around the client's identified goals while maintaining a focus on abstinence and safety. The DASL Counsellor employs a range of evidence-based therapeutic methodologies, including CBT, Solution Focussed Therapy, Motivational interviewing and enhancement, stages of change, trauma informed care, and harm minimisation.



"I was in a rough patch, but over time and with the support from my counsellor I have been able to regain some confidence and independence within my life, while being able to focus on my AOD issues and improving my wellbeing."

Funded by the ACT Government Health Directorate

### **AOD Support Connections**

CatholicCare's AOD Support
Connections program provides case
management support and assistance
to individuals engaging in alcohol and
other drug use. The program supports
individuals to identify, work towards and
reach their goals through collaborative
case planning, referral pathways,
problem-solving, and harm minimisation
psychoeducation.

Support Connections provides a holistic service which closely engages with internal and external supports based on individual needs. Case Managers work within a collaborative framework, adapting skills and knowledge to support the development of comprehensive case management plans for clients.

Support Connections is a flexible outreach service, able to meet clients in locations that support their needs, including in their home.

In 2021–2022, 90 clients participated in the program with approximately 340 outreach service deliveries completed. Within the last six months alone, 33% of clients have been supported in attaining stable accommodation, 48.7% began employment or study, and 23% entered a rehabilitation program focusing on alcohol and substance use.



"Without the consistency and care my case manager provided I believe I would have ended up either deceased, incarcerated or admitted to a psych ward. Very grateful, thank you."

Funded by the Capital Health Network, on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Health









## **STEPS Program**

STEPS is a voluntary mental health residential program providing support to young people for up to three months. The program is staffed on a 24/7 basis by Youth Mental Health Assistants, STEPS Program Manager and Youth Case Manager, and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Clinical Liaison during business hours.

The STEPS program supports young people aged between 13 & 18 years who have recently experienced deterioration within their Mental Health. STEPS provides young people a range of opportunities to participate in social and therapeutic activities through a combination of case management and clinical support to develop skills, implement resources, and improve community connections to help manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing in the future.

Referrals for this program are managed by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).



"I have seen a welcoming change within my young person. They are communicating more with me about what they need from me and their family. I'm very grateful for the staff and the STEPS program."



"While in the program, I have felt that I was heard, the staff at STEPS provided me with a safe and comfortable environment, in order for me to begin working on me."

The STEPS model and structure allow for a creative and holistic care path for the young person, mindful of their various individual psychosocial requirements. The case management model uses a strengths-based approach to build on the young person's existing strengths and supports them to implement strategies where needed during their recovery journey. The recovery-oriented approach enables young people to develop and build their personal resources and skills, thereby reducing the risk of hospital admissions.

Young people are supported in identifying and working towards their goals in various areas of life, such as:

- Establishing structure and routine –
  improving eating and sleeping patterns,
  resuming engagement with education,
  training or employment, improving
  mental health care by fostering
  consistent attendance to appointments
  and medication management
- Improving life skills empowering young people to build skills with personal care, cooking, cleaning, transporting themselves independently.
- Improving family relationships

   holding regular meetings with
   primary carers to review progression,
   develop communication skills, offering
   psychoeducation and strategies.

Over the last 12 months, STEPS has worked alongside 32 young people and completed 250 hours of outreach support to young people exiting the program after completion of their placement.

Through the previous 12 months, 64% of young people were stepping up into the program, while 36% were stepping down from hospital.

During this time, 36.5% of young people identified as LGBTQIA+, while 21.75% of young people identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate

## Youth & Wellbeing Program

The Youth & Wellbeing Program (YWB) supports young people, between the ages of 10 & 25 years, in the ACT who are living with a moderate to severe mental illness which impacts their functioning across multiple life domains (e.g. relationships, housing, school/employment, physical health, etc.).

The service is provided by a multidisciplinary team from the disciplines of psychology and social work. Young people supported by YWB commonly present with complex mental health conditions, often with multiple diagnoses and co-morbidities.

The YWB model supports clientele through a strengths-based, personcentred, recovery focussed case management approach and therapeutic interventions to empower young people to progress towards their identified goals, building a toolkit to independently manage their mental health and wellbeing in the community, developing resilience, and encouraging positive social connections.

During 2021, YWB received additional funding for an additional full-time position, increasing staffing to four FTE. As a result, the program was able to increase capacity to support more young people within the ACT community.

Over the last 12 months, YWB has supported 179 young people. 18% identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. 22% identified as LGBTIQA+.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate



"I appreciate the time, assistance and support in which my worker within YWB provides to me on a regular basis, being able to identify goals in which I want to work towards has helped my quality of life"





## **Property and Tenancy Management**

CatholicCare's Housing and Property Services portfolio offers best-practice tenancy and asset management through our social landlord approach which places people at the centre.

Our service has continued to oversee growth in the number of properties and tenancies we manage, and is able to meet this demand due to our proactive approach to communicating and relationship-building with tenants and maintenance partners; applying clear tenancy management frameworks which are informed by legislative and regulatory requirements; collaborating with case management and support colleagues to achieve strong outcomes for tenants, and being supported by organisation-wide systems which create more efficient and effective operations.

## **Community Housing**

As a registered Provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing, CatholicCare currently manages 106 community housing properties which are both privately owned and head-leased through the ACT Government.

As some of these properties are shared accommodation, we manage 180 tenancies. Of these, 101 are transitional occupancies, providing short-term accommodation to people on the path to seeking more permanent and independent housing options after life events such as domestic and family violence; incarceration; co-morbid alcohol and other drug or mental health issues; or other complexities leading to issues sustaining tenancies. Other programs seek to provide a 'home for life', including for people with disability and people experiencing homelessness.

## **Affordable Housing**

CatholicCare are growing our affordable housing portfolio with the addition of a new two-bedroom townhouse in Taylor, purchased as part of the ACT Government's Affordable Home Purchase scheme. This now sits alongside the 'Toolangi' complex – where we manage 33 properties for people with low to medium incomes as well as common areas in a mixed-housing model with ACT Government social housing tenancies; to provide much-needed affordable housing options for people impacted by the rental crisis.

## **Venues**

CatholicCare ensures that all 13 of its venues and offices across the Archdiocese are maintained beautifully and in line with security and safety compliance requirements. These buildings provide a welcoming space for our staff teams, clients and stakeholders to work and access services in.

This includes the MacKillop House Conference centre which is available for hire. The Conference Centre is a unique Hexagon shape with a beautiful wooden ceiling, new IT equipment including projector, sound system and Wi Fi. The MacKillop House Conference Centre caters for up to 60 guests comfortably and is used for Yoga classes, meetings, conferences, and seminars. There is also a one bedroom unit attached to the MacKillop House Conference Centre that can be used for workshop facilitators.

## Gardening and Home Maintenance Services

CatholicCare provides services across several of our programs including through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages to support people to maintain their homes and gardens for comfortable, secure, and independent living.

## CatholicCare Retirement Villages

CatholicCare's retirement villages,
Aloysius Morgan in Campbell and
St Vincent's in Aranda, are situated
within established garden settings,
close to local amenities and with
links to local Parish and school
communities. The 33 two and three
bedroom properties provide safe and
independent living accommodation
with residents able to connect with
in-home supports and join community
activities where desired.

## Steven's Story

Steven joined the AXIAL Housing First pilot in early 2020, having slept rough on the streets for some time after being impacted by financial barriers; relationship break-downs; interactions with the justice system, including incarceration; and physical and mental health issues including a serious chronic health issue and alcohol use.

When entering a CatholicCare property as part of the AXIAL program, Steven was provided with a fully furnished townhouse and the support of property and case managers to help maintain his tenancy, which continues to thrive today. Steven takes great care of his property, beautifully maintaining it and including furnishings to his taste. Having a stable home has supported him to continue not using alcohol, and to purchase a car which helps him engage with community activities and other new experiences, building his confidence and connections.



## Richard's Art Classes in the Studio

Richard Hall is former Military Officer, later school-teacher, and now a member of the Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint John (SMOM). Seven years ago, following the declining health of his wife and her entry to a Nursing Home, he relocated to the Alloysius Morgan Retirement Village in Campbell.

The Village is managed by CatholicCare and provides accommodation for 18 residents in semi-detached Villas in the grounds of the Church of St Thomas More.

Soon after his arrival, Richard, a parttime artist, was approached by a
couple of residents to see if he would be
prepared to conduct an art workshop
for the village population. As an active
member of SMOM, Richard saw this as
an opportunity to take responsibility
for an outreach activity for residents.
With a studio on the property, a single
term of an art workshop was launched.
Despite departures, admittance of some
to High Level Care and, more recently, the
COVID-19 crisis, we have continued with
a 'full house' every Monday during the
school terms.

The course addresses the basic techniques of perspective, pencil sketching, soft pastels, pen and ink, water colours, colourmarkers and charcoal. Richard demonstrates an example of the current weekly project and takes great delight in assisting each of the artists. But principally, the program gives members the opportunity to show and discuss their work and become a genuine art community. Without a doubt, everyone has benefited from the program and self-confidence has grown, together with great pride in the development of their artistic progress.





# CORPORATE AND STAFF SERVICES

## **Human Resources (HR)**

As we all continue to learn to live with COVID-19, the last 12 months has been very productive in the HR & Payroll teams.

With all of us entering lockdown in August 2021, our staff continued to navigate their way through supporting our clients during a challenging time. Our COVID-19 safety plans remained in place, ensuring both our clients and staff were safe. Most of our office based staff began working from home again and some of our services moved back to telehealth. We organised onsite COVID-19 vaccinations for staff, their families and clients as well as the annual flu shot for staff, and I am pleased to say we have a high vaccination rate amongst our staff for both the Flu and COVID-19.

With our staff numbers growing to over 400, we employed another HR Assistant in December 2021 to focus on Recruitment, Work Health and Safety, WorkCover and various other tasks within the HR team.

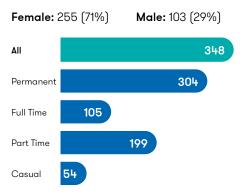
In December 2021 we rolled out the first stage of our new payroll system (Keypay). This system has automated our payroll and taken away the need for manual entry. It is very user friendly, with staff able to access information via an app on their phone.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of Keypay was rolled out to the rest of the organisation at the end of June 2022 and is now fully operational for all staff.

We also rolled out a new online training system called SALT, which new employees complete when they start. These online learning modules include Cyber Security, Driver Safety Awareness, Privacy, Safeguarding Essentials, WHS and Workplace Behaviours. Our current staff will complete refresher training in these areas every two years.

As always, our staff have continued to do an amazing job supporting our clients in challenging times.

## Staff Profile for 2021-2022



## STAFF YEARS OF SERVICE AWARDS



## 5 years

Deng Deng

Kanchan Arora

Dipali Patel

Nicole Tetley

Oluwaaseyi Majekodunmi

Vesna Stojanovska

**Brenton Connelly** 

**Andrew Forrest** 

Kristie Watts

Masood Saikal

Riddhi Blackley

Favour Bright

Anyieth Maker

Graham Upshall



## 10 years

Sanjeev Sharma

Sarbjeet Dhillon

Rachel Ayres



## 15 years

Sarah-Jane Foley

Indunil Athugalage

Tatiana Beljic

## CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn | Annual Report 2021–2022

## MPROVEMENT

Under the auspices of the CatholicCare Quality Working Group and the Risk and Audit Committee, the following quality initiatives were undertaken in 2021–2022.

- Quality Improvement Council (QIC) and National Mental Health Standards (NSMH) midterm review was completed successfully
- The NDIS practice standards midterm review was completed successfully
- An interim Business continuity plan (BCP) review was undertaken
- The Whistleblower support policy and procedure, that outlines a transparent and independent process to manage Whistleblower reports, was finalised
- An agency vaccination policy and procedure was finalised
- A contractor Safety Induction
   Handbook, to ensure that independent contractors meet their Work Health and Safety obligations etc. when on site, was finalised.
- A document review to ensure that policy documents are consistent with the agency Policy Management Framework, was commenced. The exercise will ensure that all policy documents are updated, aligned with relevant legislation and are accessible to all relevant staff

- Emergency evacuation plans for major buildings (Favier House, Redhill and Tenison Woods) that address procedures for fires, bomb threats and lockdowns etc were finalised
- Progress against QIC and NSMH Continuous Quality Improvements plans.

These plans are based on recommendations from the QIP external assessment undertaken in May 2020 and include best practice refinements for agency work force planning and mental health strategies. Progress against the plans is reviewed quarterly by the Quality working group and formed the basis for the QIC and NSMH mid term review.



## CatholicCare as a Child Safe Organisation

CatholicCare is committed to safeguarding children, young people and people at risk. Our aim is to be recognised as a child safe organisation which creates a culture, utilises strategies and promotes safety and wellbeing, and prevents harms to children and young people.

We have a working group made up of staff from CatholicCare's leadership team which meets regularly to review our policies and procedures, consider any safeguarding risks associated with our services and ensure that we continue to meet the requirements of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

This year, the group has worked on reviewing and updating key areas including the Child Safety & Wellbeing policy, informed consent, the outreach policy, and emergency and critical incident policy. In addition, the group has revised the format and content of the child friendly documents and will shortly be exploring options for obtaining feedback on them from the intended audience, namely children and young people. We also provided an update to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on our work in this area.

Ongoing training in the area of child protection and safeguarding is a priority, with new employees completing an online course on Safeguarding, as well as being introduced to this topic in the Agency Orientation. Current staff also receive updates on this topic with CatholicCare engaging Halloran Morrissey to facilitate a number of Child Safeguarding trainings this year.



These trainings were well attended and received by staff. Staff also have the opportunity to attend relevant professional development and have participated in various webinars, including those facilitated by the Daniel Morcombe Foundation and have also participated in their Changing Futures forums.

CatholicCare utilises NAPCAN's Child Protection Week in September to raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding within staff and our client group. We promote this awareness with NAPCAN posters in our waiting rooms and staff rooms, encourage the key policies to be reviewed and discussed in team meetings and publish information on our intranet.

CatholicCare keeps up to date with legislative changes and developments in the sector through attending training as well as through newsletters from key organisations such as Child Wise and Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited. We also access the annual updates from the Commonwealth and States on their progress against the National Principles.

## **Systems Implementation and Integration**

CatholicCare have been engaged in a digital transformational journey since 2019 when selecting Salesforce as our customer platform, using it not only for Customer Relationship Management (CRM) but to redesign our processes and services. Our mission for this transformation was for a a user-friendly CRM system providing us with a single source of truth, where client data and information is reliable and secure, and integrated service provision is supported. In late July 2021 we commenced our CHOICES and Aged Care Project which was a significant piece of work that went live on 01st July 2022. The integration and implementation of this complex portfolio into Salesforce has resulted in an efficient end to end flow from receiving referrals through to the scheduling of services, rostering of support staff, claiming and invoicing for services delivered and staff

Our focus for the next 12 months will be to co-create a standardised framework for our case management and counselling services. This project will be rolled out in a staggered approach with a commitment to achieve reduced administration cost and improve staff and client experience.

The CatholicCare IT network provides online IT access to around 400 staff at over 26 locations.

Throughout the year IT support staff worked in collaboration with technicians from IT Provider "Top Tier" to support the online system and equipment.



Jeremy Grainger Senior Operations Manager Quality, Property & Staff Resources



John Ha Manager IT, Website Services & Security

## MISSION ENGAGEMENT

## Both the external and internal worlds at CatholicCare have faced significant change and challenges throughout the last year.

The curve ball that is the international pandemic, along with Influenza and illness have continued to put pressure on staffing and the ability to provide the services that our Mission dictates. Staff have stepped up to continue to provide services while enacting our values of Respect, Excellence, Solidarity and Subsidiarity.

The focus of mission this year has been to Grow and Refresh our overall understanding of our values in action.
This has been done through Mission Engagement attending Program Planning Days and speaking at all new staff orientations throughout the year.

At the same time the merger between CatholicCare and Marymead has opened the door to change and opportunities for growth and reinvestment into Mission and a deeper understanding of the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

As we come together to build one new organisation, our Mission, Vision and Values will need to be reviewed and aligned so that all staff have ownership. This will provide staff with the chance to reassess "Why do I do what I do?".

A training package has been developed in order to understand our joint Mission, particularly in relation to Catholic Social Teaching. As the merger progresses, this training will be delivered to all staff of the new entity.

This is an exciting time for all concerned but can be a challenge. As Pope Francis stated in Evangelii Gaudium, "Sometimes we are tempted to find excuses and complain, acting as if we could only be happy if a thousand conditions were met... I also think of the real joy shown by others who, even amid pressing professional obligations, were able to preserve, in detachment and simplicity, a heart full of faith". Evangelii Gaudium 7.

Moving forward, 2023 is set to be a big year full of excitement for all that provides us with some wonderful opportunities as we work with those in the community that require our support.



Toni La Brooy

CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn's

Mission Engagement Officer

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

CatholicCare is privileged to work on the lands of the Ngunnawal, Ngambri, Gundungurra, Yuin and Wiradjuri peoples.

The CatholicCare Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Group continues to embed culturally safe practices into our organisation and our services in collaboration with colleagues, stakeholders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

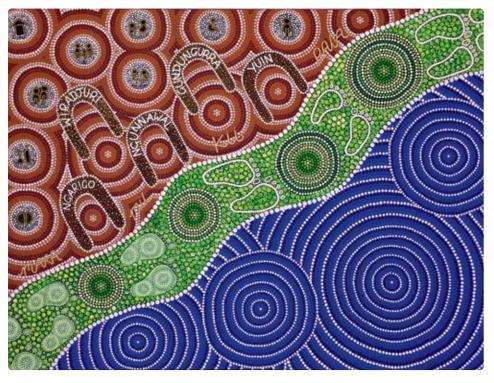
In 2021–2022 key initiatives include:

- Developing an identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer position in consultation with the ACTCOSS Gulanga Program and Indigenous Recruitment consultants, to provide cultural advice and support to CatholicCare.
- Growing the RAP Working Group to include increased representation from across the organisation and First Nations staff.
- Holding a screening of 'The Australian Dream' at Palace Cinemas for friends and colleagues to engage with the impacts of racism during National Reconciliation Week.

- Continued acknowledgement of and participation in (both organisation-wide and in program-specific ways):
  - events to mark dates of significance, truth telling and cultural immersion initiatives such as the Sisters in Spirit launch for NAIDOC week,
  - cultural awareness training for all staff,
  - using appropriate protocols in both internal and external stakeholder meetings and events, and
  - building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services for mutually supportive referrals and program activities.
- With Reconciliation Australia's advice and support, finalising our 'Innovate' RAP, which builds on CatholicCare's existing achievements and sets a plan for deliverables for the next two years.

CatholicCare looks forward to continuing our reconciliation journey as allies with First Nations communities in proactive and meaningful ways.





Artist: Sarah Richards - Marrawuy Journeys

## CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn | Annual Report 2021–2022

# TE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

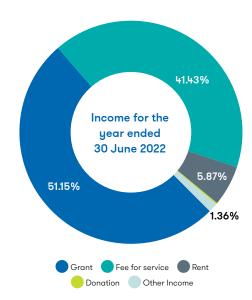
The office of the Chief Financial Officer provides leadership for the strategic planning, control and reporting of all fiscal resources to ensure strong financial governance for the organisation.

## **Financial Management**

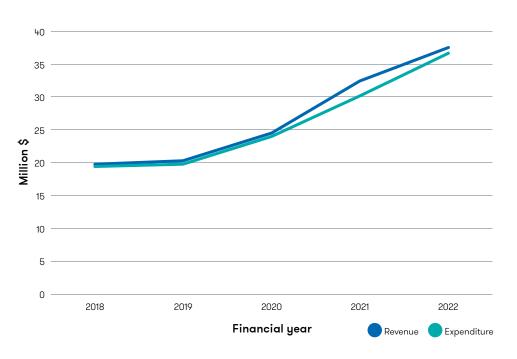
The financial outcome for CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn for the 2021–2022 financial year was satisfactory.

As a community service organisation, employee expenses were significant in our total expenditure as expected.

Furthermore, investments were made to improve our information technology, client management system and office spaces to provide clients with a better service experience.



## Revenue and Expenditure Trend for the year ended 30 June 2022





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