



**Marymead  
CatholicCare**  
CANBERRA & GOULBURN



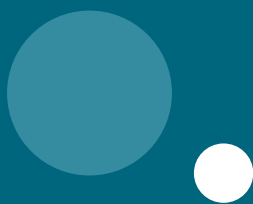
**ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**22**  

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**23**

**Supporting our community  
for over 60 years**



### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia, and we pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging. Our staff walk and work upon the lands of the Ngunnawal, Ngarigo, Wiradjuri, Gundungurra and Yuin people as we travel across the Archdiocese, and we acknowledge the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to our nation and in particular to our sector. This land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

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# Who we are

## Our mission

Through our services, we are there for people.



In times of need



To make a positive difference



Across the lifespan

## Our goals



### Client experience

Clients experience consistent, quality and person-centred services



### Our services

Our mix of services meet the current and emerging needs of our community



### Our operations

Our quality operations are integrated, agile, contemporary and client focused



### Our people

We have the right people. They are supported by a culture that aligns to our values and mission



### Our performance

We are financially sustainable and demonstrate performance against our mission



### Our sector

We collaborate with others to improve the social services system



## Our values

Our values are at the heart of who we are and what we do.  
They are demonstrated by our staff, everyday, with everyone.



Respect



Integrity



Excellence



Care & Compassion



Inclusivity

## Our Archdiocese





# Marymead CatholicCare launch

After two years of incredibly hard work and dedication, we celebrated the official launch of our one organisation – Marymead CatholicCare – on Friday 30 June 2023 at the Haydon Centre in Manuka.

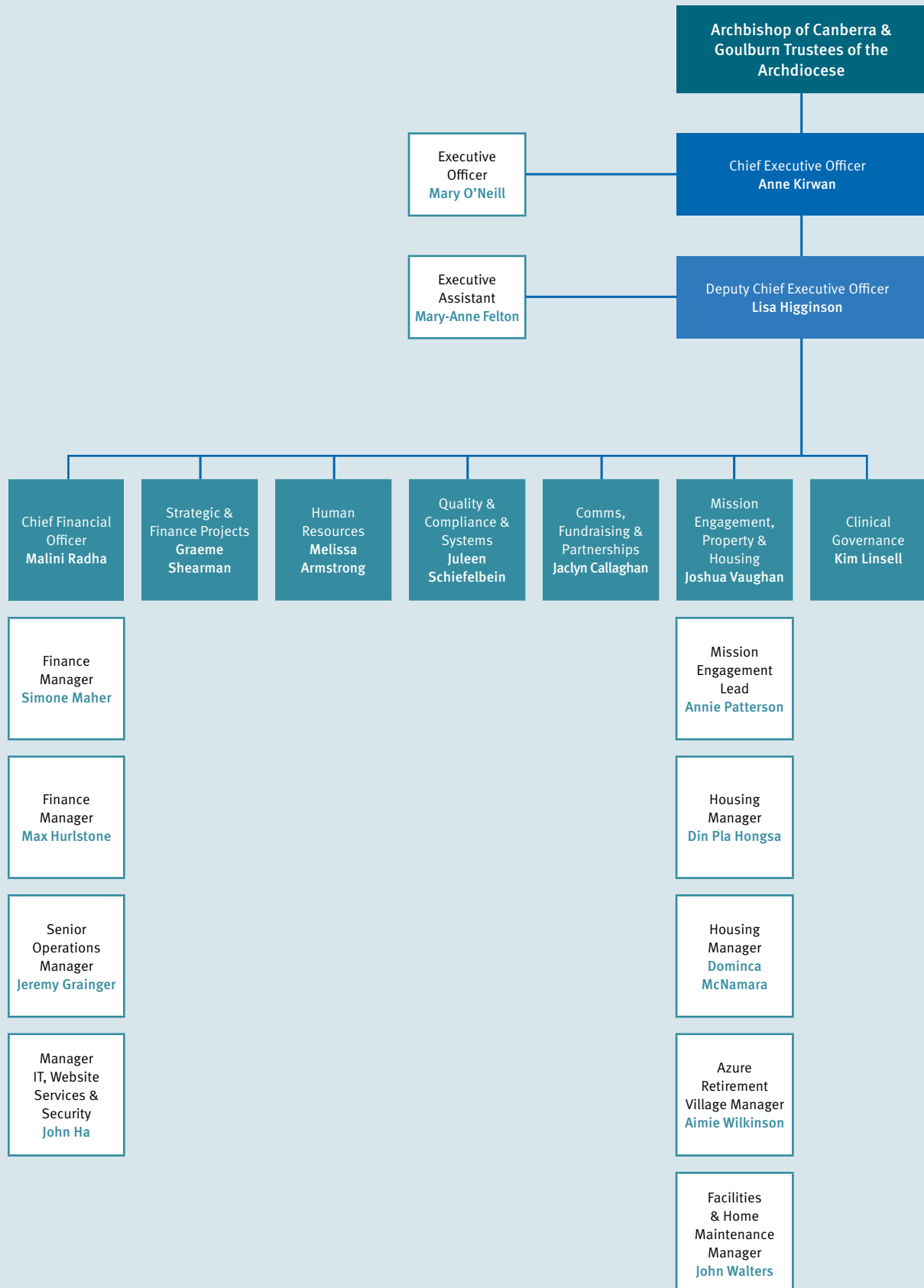
Some 200 staff and supporters gathered for the event which included a moving speech by CEO Anne Kirwan, along with Archbishop Christopher Prowse and Board Co-Chair Helen Delahunty.







# Organisational chart







# CEO Report

I am immensely proud to report upon the achievements of the 2022-2023 financial year. On 30 June 2023 we launched Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn, bringing together Marymead Child & Family Centre and CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn into one newly merged entity.

In doing so, we brought together two Archdiocesan Catholic Social Services organisations with rich histories, vibrant cultures and skilled, dedicated workforces. We have positioned ourselves to be an effective, resilient, and viable organisation that can do more within our community.

We successfully launched a mission-driven, for-purpose organisation of over 600 staff and volunteers, which exists to meet the needs of our community and to improve health and wellbeing outcomes. We deliver evidence-based, accessible services across the lifespan, and now offer over 70 different services across our ACT and surrounding NSW regions.

As we emerge from three years of living and operating within the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen the impacts of increased inflation, a national housing crisis and a cost-of-living crisis play out within our communities and negatively impact our sector.

The past 12 months have seen some sobering statistics and calls for increased support. Demand for housing, homelessness, mental health, drug and alcohol, counselling and therapies, child, youth, family and relationships, disability and aged care services have increased as community wellbeing declined, with little respite for our staff and services who operated continually throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Our leadership team have worked tirelessly to ensure we could respond to need, acknowledging this concerning societal trend.

2022-2023 was a year focused on planning, commissioning and tendering for our leadership team and Board. We launched our new 2023-2030 Strategic Plan, and participated in various reviews, evaluations and commissioning workshops.

We secured several existing contracts, and continued to tender for new services in areas where we believe we added expertise and value to the sector with our goal of making a difference.

We launched SEED, an early intervention eating disorder program, and worked with key partners to develop an education program to improve understanding and access to families impacted by domestic and family violence within the social services sector.

We progressed our partnership with Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation, building relationships and participating in training to increase our knowledge, understanding and capacity to deliver culturally safe and responsive services as a workforce and organisation, supporting Yerrabi's aim to empower generations of culturally strong and thriving Aboriginal children, families and communities.

While our launch on June 30 was a significant milestone for Marymead CatholicCare, this past year also celebrated other key events. Our Student and Family Counselling service celebrated 40 years of successful partnership with Catholic Education. Our Axial Housing Program launched its evaluation by Ernst & Young at the National Housing Conference (hosted by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute) confirming that Housing First models deliver value for money and long-term, sustainable housing outcomes for people who are homeless and sleeping rough with complex needs.

Marymead CatholicCare continued its partnership with Tresillian, the Perinatal Wellbeing Centre and the ACT Government to deliver the First 1,000 Days Conference in Canberra, with over 230 people attending.

The conference facilitated opportunities for open and constructive dialogue based on evidence and best practice, fostering a better understanding of perinatal mental healthcare and early parenting support.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank key partners within the ACT, NSW and Commonwealth Governments, who consistently support our mission and encourage 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 continue to enable us to deliver early intervention services across our ACT and NSW regional areas.

Merging Marymead and CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn was an ambitious task, and while we successfully launched our new organisation on 30 June 2023, many projects remain to be completed in the coming years. These will require strategic investment and continued change as we seek to improve our systems and respond to an ever-changing operating environment.

The success of the last 12 months and the delivery of the merger would not have been possible without the support of our amazing Board members (past and present), who volunteered their skills, time and passion to build, guide and deliver a responsive, resilient and impactful new organisation. Particular thanks go to Helen Delahunty our Board Chair who has walked alongside Marymead CatholicCare every step of the way since the announcement of the merger, and our Most Reverend Archbishop Christopher Prowse, for his continued support and never ending faithful encouragement.

We could not have made our merger launch date without the support of various consultants and key personnel, who stepped up and provided much needed resources to deliver key projects on time.

We have also been blessed with the support of volunteers who have freely given their time to build our capacity and meet community need – in particular, thanks to our incredible Auxiliary team and to Sr Noelene who have worked tirelessly to raise funds to support our services and families.



*“ We have positioned ourselves to be an effective, resilient, and viable organisation that can do more within our community. ”*

Finally, thanks go to our amazing leadership team and incredible staff, who kept their focus on caring for people while we changed their systems, structures, processes, ways of working and entire organisation around them. We are a greater organisation because of their continued dedication.

Regards

**Anne Kirwan**

**Chief Executive Officer**

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn



# Youth, Mental Health, Homelessness and Family Support Services



### ARAMAC House

ARAMAC House provides 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 2022-2023 reporting period we have supported 15 men to live independently in their units. We have had one person exit ARAMAC into their own home and two people into a shared living arrangements with reduced support. We have received several referrals and are currently supporting a person to transition from their family home into ARAMAC.

The ARAMAC team facilitate a range of group activities for residents including cooking sessions twice a week, an art program, weekly lunches out, a cruise down the river on the South Coast and a trip to the circus.

“ I would like to thank you for my time at ARAMAC, coming here after a long hospital admission was quite difficult, but with the support of the staff and allowing myself to become more involved, I am more confident and have found an enjoyment in life that I am grateful for. ”

# Case Study

Julie (not her real name), a 56-year-old woman, was referred to MacKillop House, our residential service for women, in February 2023. Julie had been forced to flee her property with Housing ACT due to targeted violence perpetrated by a neighbour. This had a detrimental effect on Julie's mental health resulting in a short hospital stay and an inability to return to her property. Julie described significant stress over a two-year period, feeling unsupported and helpless. Julie stated that over this period she was not able to show emotion for fear of this being construed as weakness. Julie shared her diagnosis with Autism, her history of problematic alcohol use and involvement in the Alcoholics Anonymous' 12-step program.

Julie has engaged positively in case management at MacKillop House and planned her goals and supports, including:

- › securing alternate, safe, long-term housing;
- › building confidence in social settings; and
- › connecting with primary care providers.

The MacKillop House Case Manager has worked closely with Julie and her care team to work collaboratively to coordinate her support needs. This has included assistance with her transfer application, engaging a new GP, maintaining support with her current clinical psychiatrist, counsellor, and representation at various appointments and meetings.

In the short amount of time Julie has resided at MacKillop House, she had made significant progress to achieving her goals. Julie officially vacated her current HACT property and has relocated her belongings to a safe storage unit. Julie engages with other residents and activities run at MacKillop House including yoga, cooking, gardening, craft groups, and evenings watching movies and building relationships with other residents.

Julie has expressed her gratitude to MacKillop House, stating she feels safe and comfortable, which she has not felt in quite some time.

The MacKillop House Case Manager and support staff continue to support Julie to increase her capacity to; access her community, build social connections, and learn living skills to assist her in independent living. Julie remains at MacKillop House while she awaits her housing transfer or secures other alternative accommodation.

## MacKillop House

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.

The program provides person-centred and trauma-informed case management for 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 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.

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



## Axial Housing

Axial Housing – a Housing First Initiative, 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.

In partnership with the Community Service Directorate, Marymead CatholicCare have introduced the role of Community Mental Health Clinician as an extension of supports being provided to those experiencing long-term homelessness and presenting with complex needs. The clinician, in collaboration with clients and other specialist homelessness services, offers individually tailored treatment plans which address the individual's unique needs, and supports them to recover and live well within their community and, ultimately, improving their ability to gain access to and sustain a tenancy.

Since its beginning in 2019, the Axial team have supported 44 people off the streets and into long-term housing.

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

## ASSIST

Case Managers in the ASSIST (Aiding in Secure, Safe, Independent and Stable Tenancies) 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 information, advocacy and referrals to individuals, couples and families to support them to gain and transition into and/or sustain tenancies in public, community or private housing.

In the 2022–2023 period, 86 people were supported in the ASSIST program.

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



## 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 2022–2023, with an occupancy rate of 90 percent.

“ I just wanted to thank you and the whole of Marymead CatholicCare for the amazing support and entire program. I was lost and broken and after working 40 odd years did not expect to be where I was and I'm so thankful for reaching out to you guys. It's been a very long time since things have gone well for me and I could never have got here without the wonderful support and work that you all do. ”

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

## Youth Housing Support Service

The Youth Housing Support Service (YHSS) team provide outreach support for 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 2022–2023 period YHSS supported 14 young people, with 88% of young people in safe and secure accommodation at the end of the support period.

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

## Safe and Connected Youth

The Safe and Connected Youth program (SACY) is delivered in partnership between the Conflict Resolution Service (CRS), and Marymead CatholicCare. The program works therapeutically with young people aged 8 to 15 years and their families to resolve conflict and improve family functioning. Marymead CatholicCare manage Ruby's House, the accommodation component of the program where young people who are on the cusp of becoming homeless can stay in a safe and home-like environment while being supported to work through family conflict and be reunified with their family. Young people and families involved in the program receive support from a multidisciplinary team of therapeutic case managers, mediators, therapeutic youth workers and family counsellors who work together to provide holistic, wrap around support.

In December 2022, the SACY Program won the YOGIE award for Outstanding Achievement in Youth Participation by involving young people in the design and furnishing of the program's therapeutic accommodation.

*Funded by ACT Government Community Services Directorate, Hands Across Canberra and donations*

## 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 Marymead 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 supported them to develop friendships and take part in meaningful community engagements. Marymead CatholicCare 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.

The Social Impact Program worker staffs the Community Hub which is available for residents Monday to Friday during business hours, and after hours during planned activities/events.

Activities that have been coordinated in 2022–2023 have included the Toolangi Harvest Community Garden, a Drumbeat workshop for residents, book club, afternoon teas and an art project with Kaleen High School students and Toolangi residents.





## Sobering Up Shelter

The Sobering Up Shelter (SUS) provides 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 when there is a 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. Our team of skilled Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) workers 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 has been a big wake up call for me to change my drinking habits. ”

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate

## Youth and Family Case Management Service

The 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's 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.

In 2022-2023, the program supported 79 families.

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



# Case Study

Jorge (not his real name), a 33-year-old male, was referred to our Reaching Out Program in Allied Health by the Detox Unit at the Canberra Hospital. Jorge had a diagnosis of generalised anxiety disorder and social anxiety which significantly impacted his attempts in reducing use of alcohol. In addition, Jorge had medical issues associated with long-term substance use disorder, including hospitalisations for pancreas and liver issues. Jorge had some social supports but was in retreat with shame from binge drinking episodes.

Jorge was residing in shared private accommodation and had stable employment as a manager in an organisation with significant responsibility. One aspect of his role was to entertain clients for business lunches which included alcohol consumption. At the time of commencement, Jorge was appreciated for his strengths in the workplace, but daily alcohol use was integrated to mitigate effects of anxiety, as well as prevent withdrawal. As a result, his self-perception of work performance was at risk. The perception of colleagues was also a motivating factor to change his use.

Jorge had resumed drinking a month after detox which promoted his engagement in counselling. Jorge identified his long-term goal was to “create a sustainable and healthy relationship with alcohol” and in the short-term cut back in his overall alcohol consumption.

Therapeutic interventions were strengths-based and included existential themes of navigating life’s uncertainty while exercising freedom with responsibility. Jorge worked well with the counsellor to experiment and explore harm reduction measures like drinking with other people instead of alone at home, slower-paced drinking, hydration while drinking, and non-drinking days. He was also able to implement other aspects of improving life such as regular gym routine, mountain biking with a friend, and moving from shared accommodation into his own place.

A major outcome was Jorge experiencing efficacy with a more balanced view towards himself through a compassionate lens instead of harsh inner critic. An excellent measure of his progress was his liver reading reduced from 814 to 140. In addition, he said he was given a substantial work bonus and was able to say, “I am still valued.”

Jorge was able to have confidence in participating in life. He said, “I am here, I am alive and well.” This was a stark contrast to debilitating anxiety and physical illness prior to detox when hospitalisation was needed to restore health. The client completed treatment, “happy, comfortable and in control.”

## Reaching Out

The 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 and can support anyone aged 13 years or over. The Reaching Out program provides outreach counselling support services to individuals in a variety of locations including their choice of our office locations across Canberra, in their client’s home, school, residential programs and other community settings. 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 2022-2023, Reaching Out supported 234 individuals, with 58 percent of clients reporting a significant reduction in their alcohol or other drug use.

“My counsellor was amazing and really helped me achieve my goals and gave me the confidence I needed to keep pushing forward and setting new goals to aim for.”

“Nothing other than a strong recommendation and thanks to my counsellor – she helped change my life.”

“Approachable, very helpful and friendly. Inspires confidence in me so I can talk about my problems easily. Made me think a lot more deeply about what I really want and gave me strategies to do this.”

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

## Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List

Marymead CatholicCare provides Drug and Alcohol counselling as part of the Government's Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List (DASL) program which provides a prescribed treatment order to individuals as an alternative to a custodial sentence.

Our DASL Counsellor provides a specialist approach to AOD counselling delivered through an outreach model, focusing on recovery from substance use and reconnecting with the community. DASL is delivered within a person-centred and strengths-based framework to ensure maximum engagement. This program is a long-term counselling program, that supports clients to look at their past or present substance use and behaviours. 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 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Solution Focussed Therapy, motivational interviewing and enhancement, stages of change, trauma-informed care and harm minimisation.

In 2022-2023, Marymead CatholicCare received 15 referrals, with four successful graduations from the program.

*“ This way of life I can have a sense of pride...I am living my whole life not a double life. ”*



## AOD Support Connections

Marymead 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 2022-2023, AOD Support Connections provided case management support to 61 individuals.

*“ I was grateful for the support by my case manager. I knew I had to go into rehab but he made it a smooth transition for me. My case manager supported me through the whole process. ”*

*“ I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for your support over the past year. (My daughter) has reached a number of important milestones during that time, all of which would not have been possible without your assistance. ”*

*“ As I write this, I reflect on how far (my daughter) has come. From a life of dysfunction, chronic drug use, criminality and incarceration to having a permanent job is beyond my wildest dreams. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. ”*

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

# CHOICES Accommodation Services



## CHOICES Overview

Marymead CatholicCare's CHOICES team continues to engage with participants and assist them in being 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 communities.

In the lead-up to the merger of Marymead and CatholicCare, a significant leadership change occurred within the CHOICES (and its connected Aged Care) Team. The total portfolio expanded to encompass programs across both Marymead and CatholicCare and in recognition of the new size and scope of the services within the team, the programs were split into two smaller portfolios: Accommodation Services in one portfolio and Community Programs and Support in the other. Each portfolio is overseen by a separate Director but functions as one team, sharing staff across the programs and with management in strong collaboration.

CHOICES continues 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. The Narrabundah office offers social groups such as Dungeons & Dragons, The Lab and Kids Companions, while the *mulch* team continues at Stirling.

The range of NDIS services, focused on supporting participants to achieve their goals include, but are not limited to:

- › Assistance with Daily Life – Personal Care and Domestic Assistance,
- › Assistance with Social and Community Participation (including one-on-one and group activities),
- › Coordination of Supports,
- › Gardening and Home Maintenance,
- › Short Term Accommodation,
- › Supported Independent Living, and
- › Transport.

## Day Program and Short-Term Accommodation

Marymead CatholicCare's Accommodation and Support Services provide short-term accommodation for children aged 5 to 12 years at Ricky Stuart House in Chifley and teenagers and young adults at Coral's Cottage in Narrabundah, as well Day Program group activities for participants who have left school.

The program's achievements in this period included the enhancement of specialised care plans tailored to individual needs, providing a supportive environment for participants to develop life skills, fostering social inclusion. Marymead CatholicCare also initiated partnerships with local organisations to offer a broader range of engaging activities and outings. This holistic approach aims to empower participants and enhance their overall well-being, making a positive difference in their lives.

*Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants, fee for service through ACT Government, NSW Department of Communities and Justice and Safe and Connected*

## In Home Care Agency – ACT

The objective of In-Home Care is to provide high quality, flexible early childhood education and care options to families for whom other approved childcare options are not available or appropriate due to their unique circumstances.

During 2022–2023, the In-Home Care Agency in the ACT continued to fulfill its mission in supporting families. The agency focused on enhancing its networking and researching opportunities for training programs for educators, promoting inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. In doing this, we reaffirmed our commitment to providing access to exceptional early childhood education and care solutions for families in need.

*Funded by Australian Government Department of Education*

## Supported Independent Living Homes

Supported Independent Living is one of the services provided by the CHOICES program of Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn. It supports people with physical and intellectual disabilities as well as complex health care needs. We provide up to 24/7 support depending on the person's care plan and circumstances. Our mission is to empower our clients to achieve their goals, enhance their independence and to live a quality life.

Supported Independent Living Homes are situated in 8 different locations across Canberra.

This helps people with disabilities or special needs to enjoy more freedom and autonomy in their lives. The program offers Supported Independent Living (SIL) services, which means we assist our clients to live in shared houses with other people who have similar needs.

This way, the clients can have a sense of community and independence while receiving the support they need.

This past year has seen new leadership at both the Manager and Director levels overseeing the SIL programs. In early 2023 the SIL in Wanniasa closed at the end of a private lease, and the two residents moved to vacancies in other SILs in the southside area. The existing vacancies allowed the team to consolidate services without losing any of the current residents.

*Funded by each resident's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Plan*



## Dorothy Sales Cottages

Dorothy Sales Cottages (DSC) is a specialised SIL within the CHOICES program which has been providing support for 24 years to people living with an acquired brain injury and/ or complex physical needs. 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.

A significant focus for this year has been reviewing the status of beds, hoists and other equipment to ensure that they are up to date with repairs and replacements. Another key focus has been on making better use of the residents' community funding to maximise opportunities for social outings.

*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)*





# CHOICES Community Programs and Support





## Hands On Studio

Founded in 1996, Hands On Studio has provided a safe environment for artists with a disability to create and develop friendships. Hands On Studio has become a leader in the field of arts and disabilities in the Canberra region by exhibiting regularly and developing authentic relationships with creative institutions and the broader community sector. The collective of artists who practice from Hands On Studio have developed a model for a creative society, guided by the principle that art is fundamental to human expression and that all people are entitled to its tools of communication.

The artists have used their practices to gain equal access, communicate with their peers and develop a keen sense of self and community. From 1996-2023 the artists have exhibited works in a selection of Canberra's leading galleries including The Drill Hall Gallery, Parliament House, The Legislative Assembly, Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG), Megalo Print Studio and many more. As well as exhibiting their works broadly, the artists have delivered disability inclusion workshops to school age students, the Australian Public Service, and the private sector with the aim to provoke equality and a supported future.

In July 2022 renowned political poster maker and artist Alison Alder collaborated with a group of artists from Hands On Studio to develop a series of text-based banners, culminating in HIT PRINT! This collaboration provided the artists with an opportunity to reflect upon the ways the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their lives. The collaborative exploration prompted the artists to generate a series of prints based on their individual experiences with a collective overall outcome. The works created were digitally enlarged and printed onto four banners and hung from sites in the parliamentary triangle. The banners were launched by Minister Tara Cheyne. Members of the public were invited to the launch where they heard stories from the artists and a powerful speech from local author Chris Wallace, who stated 'such collaborations are a critical part of community and cultural growth and are recognised not just at a local level but at a national level too.'

“ I like that we all come together to make and enjoy art... the atmosphere is very nice, and we all look after each other. ”



## *mulch*

*mulch* is a social enterprise where young adults with disability can develop skills and build connections. Participants are engaged in the seed-to-sale process in the *mulch* permaculture garden.

During 2022–2023, the *mulch* infrastructure has grown with support from the community. A successful fundraising effort helped to fund another polyhouse tunnel which is now under construction. This was partly funded by individual donations and the ACT Miniature and Dollhouse Fair, who are regular donors. The Rotary Club of Hall also supported *mulch* once again by donating funds to build a new compost system. The *mulch* team continues to grow great produce resulting in increased sales and award recognition. The *mulch* team entered the open produce competition at the Canberra Show and won an amazing three 1st places, three 2nd places and six 3rd places.

*mulch is funded by individual NDIS plans, produce sales and donations*





## Autism Centre

The Autism Centre celebrates diversity, promotes awareness and inclusion, and supports people on the autism spectrum and their families. During 2022–2023, the Autism Centre continued to provide services such as Autism Connect (the national autism helpline), social groups (Dungeons & Dragons, The Lab and the Lego Group), workshops to promote inclusivity in the community and the Active Inclusion program.

The Active Inclusion program was extended and during 2022–2023, there were two Come & Try Days that were well attended and provided very positive feedback from the participants. One young participant stated,

“ *It was the best day of my life!* ”

The School Leaver’s Employment Support (SLES) program in partnership with Employ for Ability also continued throughout the twelve months before ending in June 2023.

*Funded by the Department of Social Services (Active Inclusion), Amaze (Autism Connect), individual NDIS plans, fee for service and donations*

## NDIS Support Coordination

NDIS Support Coordination connects participants with an NDIS plan to supports and services in the community.

Our team values choice and control and a person-centered approach by developing capacity building skills with the long-term goal of increasing independence. Our team ensures continuity of support and where required assist with referring to another provider that will best meet the needs of the Participant. The Support Coordination team assists the participant with scheduled and unscheduled review meetings with NDIS, gathering support documents and assisting to lodge a review if any change of circumstances, should their current plan not meet their needs and goals.

“ *The support my son and I are receiving has helped greatly. I have found the whole process extremely confusing, but Marymead CatholicCare has alleviated many of my concerns.* ”



## Arts Therapy

Arts Therapy is designed to celebrate and empower individuals in a way that affirms neurodiversity. Our arts therapy service, currently based at Red Hill, offers a unique and creative outlet for self-expression, allowing individuals to explore their experiences and bring about positive changes when words may be insufficient or unavailable.

Each person who participates in arts therapy has a unique and personalised experience tailored to their goals. They may be drawn to specific themes, art materials, or techniques that enable them to express, explore, and transform their emotions and follow their interests.

Our registered arts therapist, Su Hanfling (photographed), is a master’s qualified allied health professional. Arts therapists collaborate with NDIS participants, community members of all ages and backgrounds, as well as parents, carers, coordinators, teachers, doctors, and other health professionals to provide integrated support.

## Seniors in Networked Communities

The Seniors In Networked Communities program (SINC) is a government funded program providing aged care services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). This service helps 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 on 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 support. Within the My Aged Care system, and in collaboration with Regional Assessment Services (RAS), SINC aims to support clients 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-centred and strengths-based approach, embedded in a wellness and re-ablement framework.

Servicing over 661 clients across Canberra and NSW areas, SINC continues to receive a high number of referrals, providing support for clients across a variety of service types including personal care, social support individual and group, flexible respite, transport, and domestic assistance. As part of the program, we support clients with changing needs to adjust their services and support them through the process of acquiring further assessments to move into the Home Care Package program to enable them to remain at home in a safe environment.

“ I am very happy with the service and the care I receive to enable me to lead a safe and happy life at home. ”

## Home Care Packages

The Home Care Package (HCP) program 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 need 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). This means a person can choose a provider in their area that best meets their needs. Our dedicated team consists of five HCP 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 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.

The Home Care Package team has continued to grow and has assisted 61 SINC clients transition into their Home Care Packages. Working within a person-centred approach, currently the program is supporting more than 158 individuals to achieve their goals both independently and within the community to enhance continued wellbeing within their homes.

“ MCCG always put my needs first. They consult me, help me sort out any problems and always, always get things done for me. Despite the shortages in a regional town and difficulties. ”



## Kids' Companions

The Kids' Companions program (Kids into Community) supports children and young people (aged 7-17) who are socially isolated because of the experience of mental health issues and/or disability within their family.

Kids' Companions provides opportunities for children to participate in regular activities beyond the home, to develop social skills and friendships in a supported group setting and to experience recreational activities that may be new to them. Activities included Friday evening social groups, Saturday morning social groups and school holiday activity days.

The Kids' Companions program was supported by volunteers from the community and local schools including St. Edmunds College and Canberra Grammar School.

*Funded by ACT Health Directorate's Community Assistance Support Program (CASP) and donations*



## Boundless Buddies

Boundless Buddies hosts an all-abilities playgroup each Monday morning at the Boundless Playground in Kings Park with the support of ACT Playgroups staff.

Boundless Buddies has had a steady increase in return families attending over the last financial year. We have also continued to have guest organisations coming to speak with the families about supports available in the ACT community, EACH who provide early childhood approach services.



## Living in Networked Communities (LINC)

LINC communities allow residents to live independent, active lives while building new relationships in your community. LINC properties are within proximity to each other, but sufficiently dispersed to promote independence. LINC aims to provide a long-term housing option that promotes friendships, peer support, and the development of new networks.

## 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 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.

The CASP service provides a person-centred model of support to assist participants to meet their goals. In 2022–2023 reporting period, CASP supported 31 individuals with domestic assistance, personal care, social support, gardening counselling and case coordination. These individuals have successfully transitioned to the NDIS. CASP will cease services on 30 November 2023, with eligible participants being transitioned to the new program, CATS (Community Assistance Temporary Supports).

“ The CASP Program has reduced a lot of my anxiety around clutter and not being able to get on top of it. Helping me has helped calm me. Getting good advice on how to do things is helpful. ”







# Allied Health Services





## Stepping Stones

Marymead CatholicCare's Stepping Stone's 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 incorporate 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.

The Stepping Stones team have experienced and observed positive outcomes as a result of their creativity and dedication to their clients.

Actively held clients while awaiting service were offered OT sensory modulation and Tuning into Kids Groups to cater to families and caregivers.

The MDT initiated group formats during the previous six months have targeted family work, psychological intervention and OT sensory work.

The group format has been a success and has received many accolades from participating families. The group approach will expand in a more targeted manner toward client needs and attendance to wait times.

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

# Case Study

Stacy (not her real name) is a 13-year-old female who was referred to our Next Step Program by her General Practitioner. Next Step is a free, confidential psychological support service.

Stacy presented with recent experiences of anxiety, an upset stomach and intense worry about her social interactions and performance at school. Stacy related this to experiences with a difficult teacher the previous year, as well as being bullied by her peers due to her struggling in this teacher's classroom. Her symptoms were characterised by feeling anxious, nervous, intense butterflies in her stomach, feeling hot and going red, accompanied by racing thoughts and worries about gossip, teasing and what others thought of her.

Stacy's symptoms were interfering with her engagement in classes and leading her to withdraw from peer relationships and new activities. Stacy was worrying about judgement daily and this interfered with her volunteering in classes or doing enjoyable activities. This withdrawal was damaging Stacy's confidence and contributing to a negative impression of herself as useless and hopeless. Stacy reported some days criticising herself intensely.

Stacy was assessed as a suitable candidate for Next Step High Intensity Services and expressed a willingness to engage in treatment. Stacy completed 11 treatment sessions of cognitive behavioural therapy. She engaged well with treatment, attended sessions weekly and regularly completed agreed tasks between sessions.

Stacy's goals for treatment were focused around more easily speaking to people she did not know and making friends, and more readily speaking up in classes and engaging with activities like sport or other extracurricular tasks. Sessions with Stacy initially focused on her developing awareness of other's responses in social situations. This was then the basis for Stacy engaging in interventions that tested her anxious beliefs about interactions with others. Additionally, Stacy was assisted to reduce habits of over-apologising to others and over-criticising her efforts when she was trying to do tasks around others, especially in school.

Stacy's outcome measures at the start of treatment were in the severe range in clinical assessment for generalised anxiety and in the moderate range for patient health. When Stacy was exited from the service both of these measures were in the healthy range, indicating recovery and reliable improvement.

At Stacy's last appointment she reported improvement in her anxious symptoms and much greater confidence at school. Stacy also reported a greater sense of self-worth and more trust in her connections with friends.

## Next Step Program

Marymead 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 its core 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 its sixth year, is based on the successful Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) program delivered by the National Health Service in the United Kingdom. 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 offering short-term intensive CBT.
- › 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.
- › Cool Kids and Cool Little Kids Anxiety Programs – these groups use CBT to assist children and their carers to develop strategies to manage anxiety.

During the past year three new clinicians have successfully completed the specialised cognitive behavioural therapy training. Additional clinicians have completed the Cool Kids training through Macquarie University.

*“ I've searched for strategies to help my children manage anxiety and nothing has worked. Cool kids really taught me the fundamentals.”*

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





## SEED

SEED (Supporting Early Eating Disorders) is a rapid early intervention service offering innovative, evidence-based treatment for young people 16 years and older in the early stages of developing an eating disorder.

Early intervention is central to the program, as it improves the speed of recovery, provides better long-term health outcomes and decreases the need for more intense treatments.

SEED provides a holistic, proactive and optimistic approach. Using early access to the right treatment at the right time, SEED provides emerging adults and their families a pathway to recovery from an eating disorder. The SEED service model includes a rapid response to referrals, a holistic and non-stigmatising assessment, followed quickly by an evidence-based treatment plan tailored to the individual.

In partnership with ACT Health and the Clinical Hub, SEED was launched in February 2023 and supports referrals from the Clinical Hub, schools, GPs and individuals.

*Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate*

## Mindscope

In 2021–2022, Marymead CatholicCare formed a partnership with Bupa Health Insurance on behalf of the Mind Care Choices program, 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.

The Mindscope program continues a positive partnership with the private health fund, BUPA, in supporting patients discharged from psychiatrist inpatient care. Marymead CatholicCare psychologists have reported a reduction in anxiety and depression symptoms for many referred members.

*Funded in partnership with Bupa Health Insurance*

## Better Access

Marymead 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.

Better Access has successfully supported more than 100 clients and continues to be a sought-after service within the community. The Better Access program has been providing therapeutic support via face-to-face and telehealth sessions allowing a broader reach and flexibility to accommodate and support various client needs. An active holding protocol has been initiated to further support those on the waitlist.

*Funded by Medicare scheme*

## STEPS

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 and during business hours there are on-site managers and clinicians from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The STEPS program supports young people aged between 13–18 years who have recently experienced deterioration within their mental health. STEPS provides young people with 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 CAMHS.

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 and transporting themselves independently.



- › Improving family relationships – holding regular meetings with primary carers to review progress, develop communication skills, offering psychoeducation and strategies.

STEPS implements a tailored day program to support young people in working towards individualised goals, improve health and wellbeing, develop living skills, along with a consistent weekly schedule to improve routine and structure. During school holidays there are opportunities to participate in various external social and community events or holiday activities.

An example of an activity is the Oz Harvest's NEST cooking skills program, encouraging young people to further develop independent living skills, while maintaining a sense of responsibility and achievement.

“ 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. ”

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate



## Early Life Matters (Attachment Counselling)

Attachment Counselling provides early therapeutic intervention focusing on infant and early childhood mental health, while working alongside families/caregivers.

Offering Circle of Security (COS) and delivered by a multi-disciplinary team of experienced professionals, attachment counselling aims to focus on the relationships between parents / carers and their child/ren (aged 0–8) and supports those who are worried about:

- › the impact of difficult family circumstances such as family mental health issues, family violence, trauma, loss and grief of a baby or child,
- › babies and children adjusting to family change, separation and transitions;
- › family conflict centres on the baby or child;
- › mental health of the baby or child, and
- › parenting stress.

Supporting the healthy social and emotional development of infants and young children requires a holistic family approach. The relationship between a child and his or her parent/caregiver/s is crucial to the child's physical and psychological development.

ELM has conducted multiple COS-I (intensive) and COS-P (parenting) groups. Across 2023 ELM has expanded focus on COS in the Classroom, providing early childhood educators with professional development within the COS framework.

Marymead CatholicCare strengthened relationships with the Perinatal Wellbeing Centre and Tresillian as the result of co-hosting the First 1000 Days Conference in November 2022. Staff facilitated a DRUMBEAT movement break during the conference to approximately 250 participants.

*Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and ACT Health*

## New Horizons

New Horizons provides early intervention mental health support to children, young people and their families through information, referral, intensive outreach and targeted group work to strengthen and improve the well-being of the child, family and community.

New Horizons conducts a variety of groups within the school setting, including:

- › DRUMBEAT – a program designed to engage children and young people who may be resistant to therapeutic approaches and strategies;
- › Seasons for Growth – uses the imagery of the seasons to help a young person understand their experience of change and grief, and develop strategies to strengthen their emotional and mental wellbeing.
- › RAGE: Renavigating Anger & Guilty Emotions (RAGE) – assists young people to understand their anger and develop positive ways to communicate and express their emotions.

New Horizons worked with 115 individuals from 62 families.

The program has provided over 100 telehealth consultations and 30 initial screening assessments. We worked tirelessly to halve the programs waitlist from an approximate 18 month wait to 6–9 months wait for service.

Twenty four parents engaged in Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P) across three groups.

Fifty five children and young people engaged in six group programs such as Seasons for Growth, RAGE and DRUMBEAT.

*Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS)*



## Youth & Wellbeing Program

The Youth and Wellbeing Program (YWB) supports young people, between the ages of 10 and 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). 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 clients through a strengths-based, person-centred, 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.

Youth and Wellbeing was invited to be involved in the ACT rollout of MOST (Moderated Online Social Therapies) an Orygen Digital initiative, where youth can access mental health content, peer workers, a moderated online community to interact with other young people, and access to MOST Clinicians for clinical assistance, all within the convenience of their phone. Youth and Wellbeing is the first service to be selected nationwide where typically state-based services, i.e., CAMHS, and primary care services, i.e., Headspace, would be involved.

“It’s been helpful to learn a skill, actually do the skill and come back to sessions and reflect on it.”

“I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate you and how comfortable you make me feel talking to you, like you just get what I’m talking about and you just understand. Thank you for doing an amazing job as my worker.”

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate

## MindMap

MindMap ACT Youth Portal is a dedicated online youth navigation portal designed to support children and young people (up to 25 years of age) in the ACT seeking mental health related support.

MindMap is available 24/7 and is staffed from 11am – 10pm, daily by a team consisting of a Clinical Lead, Clinical Youth Navigators and Youth Navigators.

MindMap commenced providing an Active Hold and therapeutic intervention component to young people/parents & caregivers who are currently on a waiting list for services. This enables individuals to obtain support while they are awaiting services within the ACT.

MindMap has and is continuing to establish key partnerships with multiple services and has presented to more than 600 agency and service providers.

Funded by Office of Mental Health & Wellbeing, ACT Health

## Grandparents Support Group

Grandparents Support Group supports grandparents who are the primary carer for their grandchild/ren aged 0–18 years. The service offers support and education to people who are facing varied and demanding challenges in their role as grandparents.

The program has had 23 grandparents activity involved and attending monthly group meetings.

‘The Grand View’ newsletter was established to further connect and support group members outside of monthly meetings and has continued across this reporting period.

Participation stems from a strong referral base internally and through external agencies including Council of the Ageing (COTA), ACT Disability Aged Carer Advocacy Service (ADACAS), Council on the Ageing, Seniors in Networked Communities, Family and Family Connect and Support.

Funded by ACT Government, Community Services Directorate



## Regenerate

This program provides confidential early intervention mental health counselling and outreach support services for children aged 5–12 in the Eurobodalla area. Regenerate aims to increase capacity, coping strategies, strengthen relationships, and improve wellbeing while exploring life choices and listening to what's important for the child.

Regenerate was provided with the opportunity to engage with the University of Canberra and commence evaluation of the program. The evaluation contributes towards 'closing the gap' reform areas and socio-economic targets for therapeutic and transformative benefits. The Regenerate team worked tirelessly to engage clients and parents/caregivers to assist with the evaluation.

This program has gained respect within the local community through our attendance of community events and networking meetings such as; Eurobodalla Family Network meetings, Domestic Violence Colour Run and youth festivals.

The team has built strong partnerships with local schools providing weekly counselling and co-locating at schools such as Batemans Bay High, Moruya Public, Sunshine Bay and Broulee Public.

*Funded by Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund*

## Cognitive Assessments

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 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 clients.

The Cognitive Assessment program expanded within the 2022-2023 year with additional assessments tools available to meet the communities and school needs for ADHD and Autism assessment and diagnosis. The program upskilled two clinicians to provide reliable and evidenced-based cognitive assessments. Furthermore, the cognitive assessment portfolio is actively assisting Catholic Education's high service needs in completing assessments for students.

*Funded internally by Marymead CatholicCare*



## SUMMIT – Positive Behaviour Support

Marymead CatholicCare's 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.

Summit completed multiple PBS service agreements for Marymead CatholicCare's permanency program. The success of completion allowed the young people to source the funding from appropriate stakeholders. The Summit program's referrals have increased via marketing and promotion of the program within the last year establishing a sought-after service model.

*Funded internally by Marymead CatholicCare*



## NDIS Counselling

Marymead CatholicCare's NDIS Counselling program has the ability to work with clients using a variety of therapeutic orientations, including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, 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 Marymead CatholicCare's, CHOICES program and external stakeholders to assist the client within the therapeutic space.

NDIS Counselling has expanded to include assisting CASP clients referred via the Marymead CatholicCare's CHOICES program. The NDIS counselling program now has a variety of clinicians providing counselling to NDIS participants from various locations and program portfolios across Marymead CatholicCare. This direction provides mental health clinicians to meet counselling needs across portfolios and allows clinicians to stay current in counselling modalities.



## Rural Sports

Rural Sports provides a free after-school sports enrichment program for children, inclusive of a light meal and transport home after each session. This exercise and social connection program will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing, while providing children with increased opportunity for participation, being active and belonging to a team.

105 students participated across six rural sports programs including:

- › Four rugby programs
- › Two basketball programs

In total, there were 92 males and 13 females who participated within the program.

The rural sports program partnered with three local primary schools: Batemans Bay Public School, Sunshine Bay Public School and St Bernards Primary School and with two sporting affiliations: Batemans Bay Boars Rugby Union and Batemans Bay Basketball Association.

In term 1, 2023, 35 of these students were gifted with signed footballs, which were donated by ACT Brumbies.

*Funded by Foundation for Rural Regional Renewal Strengthening Communities Grant*

## Revival

Developed in partnership with The Family Place, Revival is a grassroots program that aims to strengthen communities of the Eurobodalla Shire impacted by the Black Summer bushfires (2019–2020), to improve their emotional health and mental wellbeing.

A total of 939 community members engaged with Revival across various events and group programs:

The continuation of Binin.gala workshops in schools, facilitated in partnership with Muladha Gamara, focused on understanding concepts of bravery, resilience and empathy through engaging in visual arts and drama.

Revival assisted with strengthening community connection, cultural knowledge and experience for key external service providers through a guided cultural walk up Mt Guluga.

*Funded by Coordinare – South Eastern NSW Primary Health Networks*



# Counselling and Family Services



### Family Skills

Family Skills is a short-term solution-focused program offering group and individual counselling services to strengthen family relationships and promote a better understanding for parents/carers in supporting children and young people.

In the 2022-23 period, 134 clients engaged in the program across both group and individual counselling. A total of 55 clients participated across eight groups, covering seven different topics which included a variety of parenting skills, personal development and relationship building groups. In individual counselling, 589 sessions were delivered in-person and virtually, to maintain accessibility as a continued response to COVID-19.

*Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and Fee for Service*

### Bushfire Support Counselling

The Bushfire Counselling Service continued to provide free counselling, psychological interventions and group programs to those impacted by natural disasters, including the 2019–2020 bushfires, floods and COVID-19.

In this reporting period, the service delivered four group sessions to community volunteers within the Bega Valley region. The groups allowed the community volunteers to gain a better understanding of trauma and how it affects people physically, emotionally and from a neurological perspective. The aim of the group is to equip the volunteers to better support the people impacted by the 'Black Summer' fires.

*Funded by COORDINARE – South Eastern NSW Primary Health Network through the Australian Governments' Primary Health Network program*



# Case Study

Sean (not his real name), an 11-year-old-boy from a LGBTIQ+ family, sought support from our KAYAKS post-separation counselling program due to ongoing conflict between his parents. KAYAKS (Kids And Youth Are Cool) is for children and young people, aged 4–18 years.

The conflict between Sean's parents persisted after their separation and affected their co-parenting relationship. Sean experienced heightened social anxiety and his parents reported compulsive behaviours and emotional dysregulation. A counsellor engaged with each parent individually to discuss household circumstances, separation, and co-parenting, and provided psycho-educational sessions on child-focused co-parenting. Both parents admitted struggling to avoid conflict in their limited text communication, often relying on their children to pass on messages. They blamed each other for collaborative breakdown, with one feeling criticised and attacked, and the other feeling ignored and dismissed.

Sean had 12 counselling sessions with the counsellor, focusing on emotional awareness, communication, relationships, and self-care. During an art-based activity, Sean created a dream world where one parent lived in a cloud mansion and the other in a deep-sea submarine, hoping to avoid having to see each other but where he could still see each of them. He recognised the changing and unpredictable emotions of his parents and adjusted his own behaviour and words to try to keep them happy. Changeovers were stressful as he feared more conflict between his parents.

Sean learned to express his emotions through psycho-education and drama-based games, where he could identify and seek support from caring adults through completing a star art activity where the child is asked to nominate which adults in his life believe he is unique and special, and practiced tying emotions to facial expressions through role play activities and games.

His parents were able to receive feedback from the counsellor to discover the impact of their conflict on Sean's anxiety and stress. They plan to complete the ARCK post-separation program (Assisting Responsible Care for Kids) to support their co-parenting journey and rebuild their communication and capacity to work together.

## Kids and Youth are Kool Post Separation (KAYAKS)

The KAYAKS program supports children and young people 4–18 years of age to manage and enhance their relationships during and after family separation.

In the 2022-23 period, 45 children and young people engaged in the program in which 311 individual counselling sessions were delivered. In addition, 133 parent appointments were held before and after the KAYAKS sessions as the program continues to take a holistic approach and work alongside parents/carers in supporting the children and young people in the context of their family arrangements.

*Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and Fee for Service*

## Assisting Responsible Care for Kids (ARCK)

The ARCK program supports and assists separated parents who are experiencing high conflict in post-separation parenting of their children

In the 2022-23 period, 116 clients engaged in the program. ARCK is a three-part program which includes an initial screening, individual counselling and a five-week group session. A total of 686 individual counselling and four group sessions were delivered. The combination of individual and group sessions provides an effective approach for clients to receive support navigating the complexities of separation and co-parenting.

*Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and Fee for Service*

## Relationship Education

This service employs 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. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported 56,244 divorces were granted in 2021 across the nation, the highest number of divorces recorded. The ability to work through these differences in an open and honest conversation helps couples maintain a long-term relationship and prevent separation in the future.

In 2022–2023, there was an increase in couples attending the FOCCUS pre-marriage program with 46 couples successfully completing the program.

## 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. In 2022–2023 reporting period, the program delivered 173 sessions with 43 families.

*Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services*

## Family and Relationship Counselling

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. The 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 742 sessions to 277 clients during 2022–2023.

*“ I would just like to say how wonderful it was to have a counsellor who understands me. The counsellor has made me more aware of what I am doing and how I can start to mend my relationship”.*

*Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services*

## Student and Family Counselling Program

The School Counselling Service provides counselling in 56 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. Our team of more than 40 clinicians are 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 high quality therapeutic service. The role of the school counsellor is varied with individual counselling, 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.

With the increasing rate of children and young people presenting with anxiety and limited support in regional areas, it was identified as an area where additional supports were required. In 2023, Marymead CatholicCare delivered the Cool Kids Anxiety Program online to allow accessibility for students and their families given its geographical locations and lack of services within the regions. The program has been able to support 24 students and their families.

The program received positive reviews from families expressing significant improvements in their child's anxiety and the ability to apply the skills learnt through the program. In addition to the online Cool Kids program, various groups were offered in the schools throughout the year such as Tuning into Kids, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy for high school students, social skills and communication groups.



2022 was a significant year for the school counselling service as it successfully completed 40 years of service. The school counselling service originally commenced providing services within the Catholic Education System with one full-time position in 1982 and has grown to more than 40 school counsellors at present expanding to include independent schools and universities. A celebration was held to commemorate its 40th anniversary with cake and speeches, taking a trip down memory lane. The event was attended by current and past staff member from the service and representatives from Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn, Catholic Education, Association of Independent Schools of the ACT, schools and other partners.

*“ ... is an outstanding counsellor and we would very much like to continue her services in 2023 and beyond! ”*

*“ ... is outstanding.... please keep her with us! She has run after hour parent meetings, run staff meetings and is a valued member of our school. ”*

*“ We've been so very happy with the service we've received. ”*



## Children's Contact and Changeover

Children's Contact and Changeover program is for families experiencing high conflict after separation, as referred from the family law courts by the Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS). This service provides supported contact to children who are living in foster care or with an extended family member (kinship care), where child protection orders exist.

In the 2022-23 period, 144 families engaged in the program in which 2491 supported contact and 1006 changeovers were delivered. The program continues to support families to move towards self-managed contact arrangements when it's safe to do so. Through a collaborative approach, families were referred to internal and external services to support their needs which included counselling, parenting groups, and financial assistance.

*Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), Attorney Generals Funding, ACT Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS), NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and Fee for Service*



## Case Study

A family started supervised visits through our Family Services Contact Team in 2022 as a result of a court order. The family consisted of the father (visiting parent), mother (live-with parent) and their daughter, who at the time of starting the program was one year old.

The mother had concerns for the child's well-being and requested that staff pay close attention to her behaviour and non-verbal signals of distress during the visits.

To reduce the stress on the child, it was agreed that her paternal grandfather would be present during the first few visits until the child became more comfortable with her father and the Contact Program environment. After about two months, the child appeared to become at ease with being with her father and program staff without her grandfather being present. Therefore, the grandfather stopped attending visitations to enable the child and her father to build their connection with each other.

After 11 months of supervised visits and due to new court orders, the family moved to the Changeover Program which provides a safe environment for children to move from parent to parent without being exposed to ongoing parental conflict. These orders indicated that the father is still required to be supervised when interacting with the child. This arrangement is still in place, and the child's confidence can be seen to have increased during these changeovers as she eagerly waits for the father and embraces him with affection each time. Further to this, the child has also grown more comfortable with the staff members and displays no hesitation during the changeover process.

## Employee Assistance Program

The 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. EAP was provided to several different community agencies and businesses and caters to interstate agencies via telehealth. The program provides an outreach service to several agencies requiring support after critical incidents.

“ Thank you for the support when I needed it the most. ”

## 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*







# Permanency



### Permanency Support Program

Marymead CatholicCare's Permanency Program includes supporting children and families who are involved in the statutory out of home care system. This includes children who are subject to long term care orders, restoration support to parents and family or identifying when adoption or guardianship may be appropriate. The common goal lies in creating permanency for the child or young person.

The permanency team has provided high level support in getting children and families to where they need to be to achieve their case plan goals. In the past 12 month, two children have been adopted, five children have guardianship orders made and we have also seen family restoration with three siblings again with their mother after being in care for several years. As we move into the later half of 2023 there are several children on similar trajectories and we hope to have outcomes by the end of the year. Our preservation team has also successfully ended the need for further intervention and supported the transfer of all active families to local agencies.

*Funded by NSW Department of Communities and Justice (NSW DCJ)*

### Family Connect and Support (FCS)

FCS assists people to build on their strengths and to make positive change. Staff provide information, support and link families, children and young people who require assistance with appropriate services and community support that is available in their local area.

Our FCS program is maintaining its high level of quality intervention with families in collaboration with our agency partners.

*Funded by NSW Department of Communities and Justice (NSW DCJ)*

### Family Referral Service in Schools

FRS in schools continues to be highly valued in our local communities. We have maintained strong community links and relationships and aim to ensure these local connections continue to remain established to support the families referred to, from our schools.

*Funded by Direct Funding from Schools*

# Property and Tenancy Management



## Venues/Offices

Marymead CatholicCare ensures that all 18 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. 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 which can be used for workshop facilitators.

## Property and Tenancy Management

Marymead 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 supporting colleagues to achieve strong outcomes for tenants, and being supported by organisation-wide systems which create more efficient and effective operations.

## Affordable Housing

Marymead CatholicCare are growing our affordable housing portfolio with two individual dwellings as well as our 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.

## Community Housing

As a registered Provider under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing, Marymead CatholicCare currently manages 137 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 167 tenancies. Of these, over two-thirds 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.

## Retirement Villages

Our retirement villages, Aloysius Morgan in Campbell, Azure Village in Narrabundah and St Vincent's in Aranda are close to local amenities and link to local parish and school communities where relevant. The properties provide safe and independent living accommodation with residents able to connect with in-home supports and join communities activities where desired.

## Gardening and Home Maintenance Services

We provide services across several programs to support people to maintain their homes and gardens for comfortable, secure and independent living.

*Funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages*

# Mission Engagement

After eight years in the Mission Engagement role, Toni La Brooy “retired” into new possibilities from the end of April, continuing a part-time role in supervision and her strong connection with MacKillop House for Homeless Women.

As the first lay person appointed to the Mission Engagement role in this organisation, Toni made an enormous contribution in shaping a positive work culture and embedding a strong focus on mission and values founded on Catholic Social Teaching.

In developing the role, Toni worked enthusiastically within the organisation to raise understanding around our mission and values, as well as reaching out to parishes around Canberra and the wider Archdiocese to spread the word about our expanding range of services and programs.

As I have transitioned into the role since February, after 15 years working in disability support and management, I am deeply grateful for Toni’s efforts in paving the way and her generous support and encouragement as I took up the reigns with Josh Vaughan as new Director of Mission and Integration.

During the ensuing months as we prepared for the launch of Marymead CatholicCare from 1 July, it has been an enormous pleasure and privilege to meet with directors, managers and teams to better understand the scope of our services, as well as meeting with new staff in Corporate Orientations to raise awareness of our mission and values.

We developed a series of reflective workshop activities, based on our new mission and values, in order to be ready from 1 July to engage with teams across our newly integrated organisation. Another exciting and fascinating project emerged, writing a series of “heritage walks” to tell the stories of our five work sites in Canberra: Tenison Woods House in O’Connor, Narrabundah, Red Hill, MacKillop House in Lyneham and Favier House in Braddon.

Each of these sites in Canberra hold the stories of courageous, passionate, hard-working, committed women and men who rolled up their sleeves to provide essential services and spiritual support during critical periods in the development of the national capital. Religious sisters were especially at the forefront - the Good Samaritan Sisters (Red Hill and Favier House), the Sisters of St Joseph (Tenison Woods House and MacKillop House) and the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (Narrabundah). They led the way in providing education and outreach to children, families and individuals in crisis, responding to emerging needs and adapting as these social needs and their own circumstances changed over time.

As employees, we continue these stories. We are inheritors of a rich, living legacy of social service and social justice action and carry the baton forward in our mission to support and empower others and work toward human flourishing, social justice and the common good.



**Toni La Brooy – retired April**  
*Mission Engagement Officer*



**Annie Patterson**  
*Mission Engagement Lead*

# Years of Service



## 5 Years

Ane Sitauti	Lerma Laygo
Asmita Hooper	Meleane Ahokava
Ayodele Ogunsowo	Melissa Bailey
Britt McDonald-Hall	Melissa Bennett
Caroline Titus	Michelle Kirkwood
Channy Chen	Raquel Venanci De Conto
Emma McRae	Rebecca Hanks
Gabriel Diing Diing	Rebecca Robinson
Graeme Shearman	Rebecca Thomas
Graham Bourne	Samantha Gill
Helen Maxted	Samantha Miller
Jaimee Morcombe	Savaira Staples
Jeanette Corkeron	Van Howell Lachica
Joshua Vaughan	Verinia Booy
Julie-Ann Rogers	Veronica Kardas



## 10 Years

Andrew McFarlane
Gai Higginson
Godfrey Deklin
Ingrid Nalken
Jessica Read
Jigyasa Joshi
John Walters
Maria McKinnon
Nishantha Dissanayake
Paul Wendt



## 15 Years

Antoinette La Brooy	Heather Claringbold
Danielle Hudson	Jaclyn Dunkley
Dianne Davis	Keiralee Carn



## 20 Years

Melinda Mihaljcic
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# Child Safeguarding

We are an organisation committed to safeguarding children, young people and people experiencing a range of vulnerabilities. Our aim is to be recognised as a child and vulnerable person safe organisation which creates a culture, utilises strategies and promotes safety and wellbeing, and most importantly, prevents harm to children and young people.

With the coming together of Marymead and CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn, we gave priority to establishing a new Safeguarding Committee made up of representatives with an understanding of the new organisation's needs and with experience from the different portfolios. Three working groups were then established to focus on key areas of participation, complaints and risk management.

The Committee works to develop and review policies and processes relevant to the organisation and consider any safeguarding risks associated with our services, while ensuring that we continue to meet the requirements of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the NSW Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. The Committee have developed a new Safeguarding Policy covering children, young people and vulnerable adults and the above Commitment Statement.

Another Core function of the Committee is to engage staff in understanding Safeguarding across Marymead CatholicCare. Staff continue to receive an introduction to safeguarding in their onboarding orientation. In addition, we have had Safeguarding and Reportable Conduct training and Cultural Safety training, both through external providers.

September is also Child Protection Month at Marymead CatholicCare, in line with NAPCAN's Child Protection Week. We focus on safeguarding in this month through promotion on the intranet, posters in waiting rooms and staff rooms, supporting staff to attend NAPCAN events and encouraging teams to review and discuss associated policies.

Marymead 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.

Other safeguarding strategies implemented include a CEO appointed Safeguarding Officer who will provide consultation on safeguarding matters and a Reportable Conduct Panel which reviews any concerns raised, seeing if they meet the threshold for reportable conduct, arranging investigations and making notifications as appropriate.

The poster features the Marymead CatholicCare logo at the top left, with the text 'Child Safe Statement of Commitment' in large blue letters. Below this, a paragraph states: 'Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn (MCCG) is inspired by its mission and values, and informed by the Principles of Catholic Social Teachings and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, to ensure that safeguarding is central to our culture, operation, and purpose. Marymead CatholicCare has zero tolerance for mistreatment and abuse of children and young people and is committed to upholding and promoting their safety and wellbeing. To ensure Marymead CatholicCare protects children and young people from risk of harm and fosters a culture of safeguarding, Marymead CatholicCare will develop and implement systems and practices based on the following Safeguarding Principles.' The poster then lists ten principles in circular icons: Inform, Respect, Safe and inclusive environment, Policies and procedures, Staff and volunteers, Cultural Safety, Give voice, Include children in decisions, Family and community, and Safety. Each icon contains a brief description of the principle. At the bottom left, contact information is provided: 'P: 02 6162 6100 E: enquiries@mccg.org.au'. At the bottom right, the MCCG logo and website 'mccg.org.au' are displayed.

**Child Safe Statement of Commitment**

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn (MCCG) is inspired by its mission and values, and informed by the Principles of Catholic Social Teachings and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, to ensure that safeguarding is central to our culture, operation, and purpose.

Marymead CatholicCare has zero tolerance for mistreatment and abuse of children and young people and is committed to upholding and promoting their safety and wellbeing. To ensure Marymead CatholicCare protects children and young people from risk of harm and fosters a culture of safeguarding, Marymead CatholicCare will develop and implement systems and practices based on the following Safeguarding Principles.

- Inform**  
We will ensure that children and young people are informed of their rights, including their right to feel safe and who they should approach if they feel unsafe.
- Respect**  
We will treat everyone equally, regardless of who they are or their age. We will ensure that children's rights are understood by everyone at Marymead CatholicCare, and that children and young people feel safe, welcome and respected.
- Safe and inclusive environment**  
We will ensure that our physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing. We will provide a safe and inclusive environment for all children and young people, including those from a diverse mix of cultures, backgrounds and life experiences.
- Policies and procedures**  
We will regularly review and improve our policies and procedures to promote and uphold child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff and volunteers**  
We will ensure that all workers whom we engage have been appropriately screened, and have the skills, knowledge and training to be child safe and work positively with children and young people.
- Cultural Safety**  
We will support the cultural safety of all children and young people, including First Nations children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Give voice**  
We will actively support children and young people to voice their opinions, concerns, and complaints, including complaints about MCCG. We will respectfully listen and take their views, concerns or complaints seriously.
- Include children in decisions**  
We will actively seek input and feedback from children and young people, and empower them to participate in decisions affecting their lives or care.
- Family and community**  
Where it is safe to do so, we will involve families and communities in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.
- Safety**  
We will ensure that children and young people feel safe in our care and feel able to report to any trusted adult if they are concerned. All persons will be supported to safely disclose or report risks of harm to children or young people. We will act immediately in relation to any reports of risk of harm, and ensure they are reported to appropriate authorities where necessary.

P: 02 6162 6100  
E: enquiries@mccg.org.au

mccg.org.au

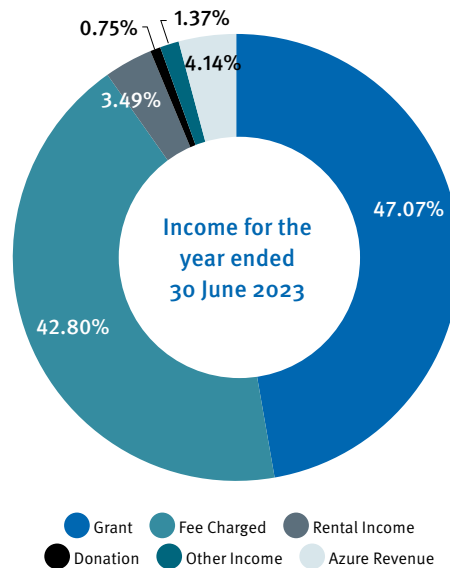
# Financials

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.

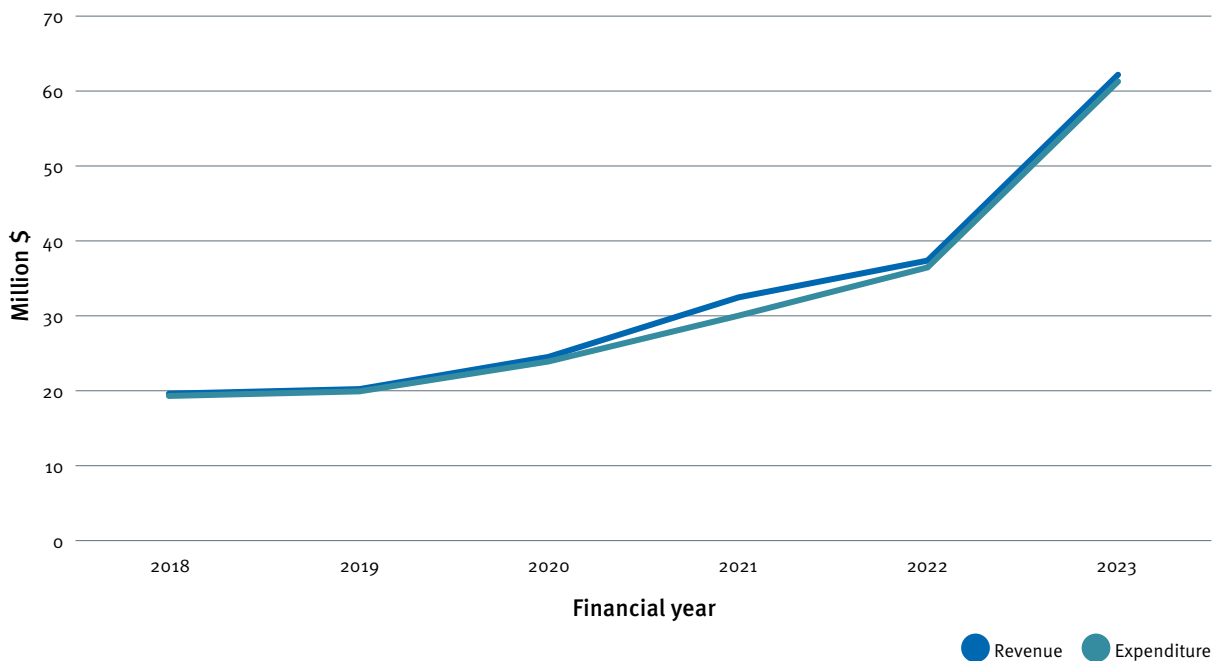
## Financial Management

The financial outcome for the organisation for the 2022-2023 financial year was satisfactory, reflecting the growth in both revenue and expenditure as the process of merger of Marymead and CatholicCare prepared for the launch date of 1 July 2023.

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



## Revenue and Expenditure Trend for the year ended 30 June 2023







**Marymead CatholicCare**  
CANBERRA & GOULBURN

**Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn**

ABN: 90 046 512 373

51 Cooyong St  
Braddon ACT

PO Box 3167  
Manuka ACT 2603

02 6162 6100  
[enquiries@mccg.org.au](mailto:enquiries@mccg.org.au)  
[mccg.org.au](http://mccg.org.au)