



**Marymead
CatholicCare**
CANBERRA & GOULBURN

ANNUAL REPORT

23

24

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 and present. 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 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

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn is the social services agency of the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. For over 60 years we have been there for our communities within the ACT and surrounding regions.

Our mission

Through our services, we are there for people.



In times of need



To make a positive difference



Across the lifespan

Our values



We have **Respect** for all people, recognising every person has inherent dignity and worth



We will act at all times with **Integrity**



We strive for **Excellence** and aspire to the highest standards of service



We will act with **Care & Compassion** in all that we do



We value diversity and actively foster **Inclusivity** and meaningful participation within community

Our services

We provide diverse, person-centred services.

- › Children & Young people's services
- › Family & Relationship supports
- › Counselling & Therapeutic supports
- › Out of home & foster care
- › Mental health support
- › Disability services
- › Tenancy & property management
- › Accommodation & support services
- › Alcohol & other drug supports
- › Homelessness services
- › Retirement living
- › Aged care



Archbishop's Report

We discerned together that the future of our two social service agencies would better help our community in the Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn as one organisation. The vast work needed to do so was taken on with verve and vigour by both organisations.

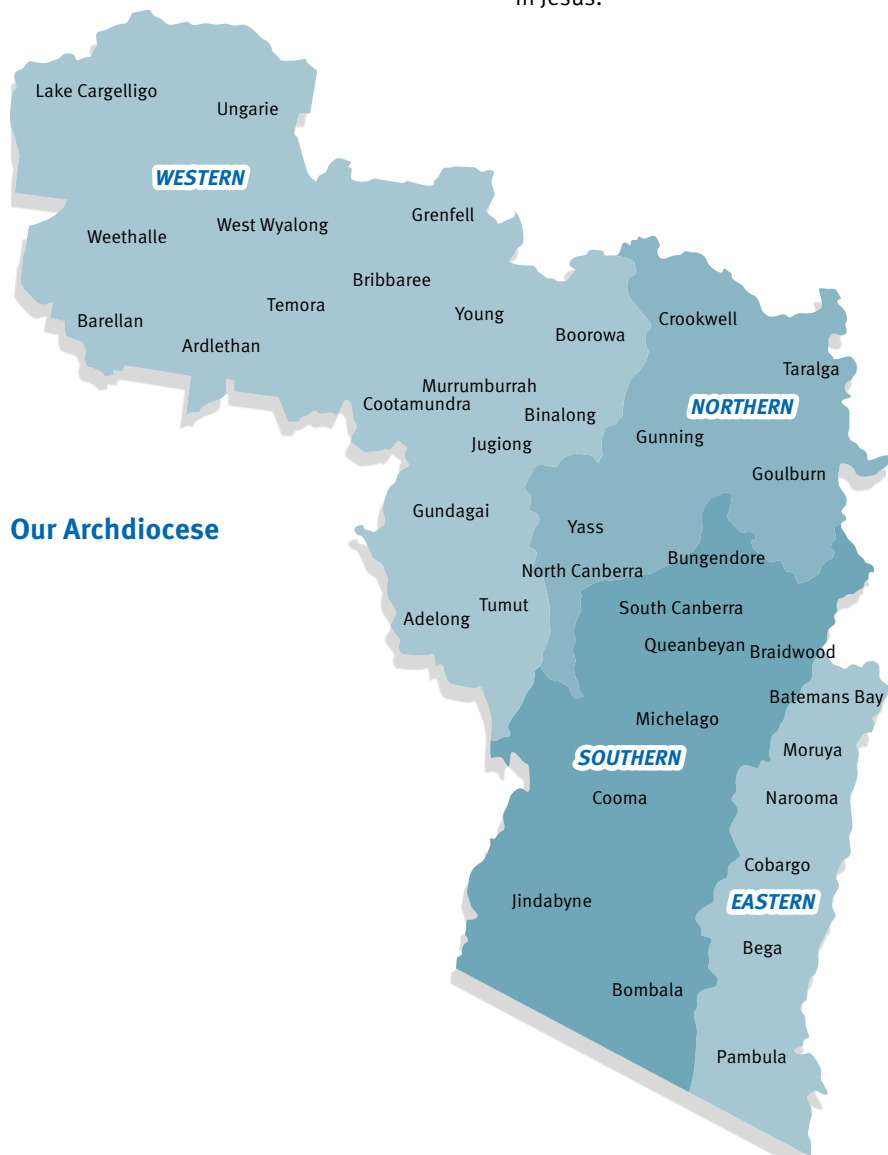


I am thrilled to see a wonderful organisation in Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn has emerged to continue to support the most vulnerable in our community.

My gratefulness to all the staff. Especially thanks to our CEO, Anne Kirwan, and her wonderful leadership team. They forged their way ahead in making sure those who need our services are continually supported.

The Marymead CatholicCare Advisory Board is a committed and dedicated Board. They support Anne and her team. I am very thankful to them for their many hours of service.

My prayers are with all who have to deal with challenges in their lives. My hope is, with the help of our dedicated team, that we can serve the light of God, our Bethlehem King, to shine through deeply in Jesus.



Our Archdiocese

Chair Report

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn strives to make a positive difference every day, in everything we do. In the past 12 months, we have achieved just that. Through our many services, we have helped people, and we have sought to make the time we spend together the best it can be.

The work we do can be challenging and requires commitment. In the most highly regulated and complex environment, we have continued to make people the core focus of our daily work and mission.

On 1st July 2023, we officially became Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn. This joining of the Archdiocese's two social welfare agencies (Marymead and CatholicCare) was possible after almost two years of work to bring together these agencies to ensure we continued to support the most vulnerable in our Archdiocese for many years to come.

This report comes at the end of our first year. A year of bringing together over 550 staff and many services with a solid commitment to be the very best we can. It has not been a completely easy journey, but with the leadership of our wonderful CEO Anne Kirwan and our leadership team, the ship has been steered into calmer waters. Anne has the innate ability to bear witness to the dignity and respect of each and every person she encounters. Together with her leadership team and staff, we are in good hands.

Although we are traversing the most difficult times in trying to navigate a cost of living crisis, tough challenges in ensuring cost containment and trying to ensure our staff and clients are catered for in a just manner, the year has been very successful and we happily ended in a surplus result for the year. A profit for purpose is so very vital in ensuring we continue to support many more people every year.



Our wonderful Board members give much of their time and talent:

- › Monsignor John Woods
- › Susan Sullivan
- › Sister Mary Ellen O'Donoghue
- › Des Clear
- › Helen Pappas
- › Rosa Grahame
- › Michael Franco

To all of them I thank you for all the expertise you bring to the Board table, and the grace and humour you carry into all meetings.

I also want to thank the Archbishop for his steady and committed leadership, and his guidance throughout the year.

Helen Delahunty

Board Chair

Marymead CatholicCare
Canberra & Goulburn

“ Although we are traversing the most difficult times in trying to navigate a cost of living crisis, tough challenges in ensuring cost containment and trying to ensure our staff and clients are catered for in a just manner, the year has been very successful and we happily ended in a surplus result for the year. ”

CEO Report

On the 1st July 2023 we launched the newly merged entity Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn. This milestone commenced a new era for our social services agency and marked the end of CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn and Marymead Child & Family Services as individual organisations.



We approached the coming year with enthusiasm, continuing to deliver over seventy different services to children, young people, families and individuals across our ACT & NSW regions, while progressing key strategic initiatives and post-merger activities.

However 2023–2024 has not been an easy year. Marymead CatholicCare delivered care services amidst a national housing crisis and a cost-of-living crisis that saw more people experience hardship than ever before. We witnessed the impact of these pressures through a surge in demand for our services that outstripped our ability to respond. Workloads increased and waiting lists grew, meaning we had less time to spend with people in need.

As a registered provider we continued to struggle to deliver our NDIS Disability and Aged Care services within the inadequate pricing envelope offered by the Commonwealth Government, feeling both the financial and operational pressure as a result of the NDIA's failure to regulate in this market and support legitimate providers.

Our Australian social services sector was also fighting its own battle of survival amidst the Starvation Cycle that has impacted the Charities and NFP sector across the world. Agencies have closed programs and let staff go, fighting to remain solvent and viable because of years of underfunding, the failure of government indexation to match wage growth, and increased operational and compliance obligations. This has been the most challenging fiscal environment we have experienced within our sector.

Amidst these challenges, Marymead CatholicCare has endeavoured to focus on the people we are called to support. We have responded to need, participating in commissioning and tendering to secure contracts in our homelessness, domestic and family violence, housing, children and young people, and drug and alcohol services.

We commenced a new pilot in response to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the ACT, working in partnership with the Community Services Directorate and ACT Policing to support children, young people and their families with an early intervention and a diversionary approach.

We have been very active in seeking solutions within the housing space and have continued to work with motivated parishes and the Archdiocese to open doors to use underutilised Church land to respond to the national housing crisis and shortfall in homes for people and families in need.

We have progressed key initiatives within our 2023-2030 Strategic Plan, including embedding the trauma informed CARE Model within our Child and Family programs and teams, investing in our ICT Digital Roadmap and One Platform vision, and preparing for our audit against the National Child Safe Standards.

In bringing together CatholicCare and Marymead, our commitment was that the new entity would be an organisation whose culture was built on the foundation of our mission and values, while celebrating our incredibly rich histories.

This year Marymead CatholicCare was certified as a Great Place to Work by a global authority on workplace culture. This was a fantastic outcome and reflected the energy and efforts put in place by our Board, staff and leadership team to lead through a merger of this size and maintain a positive, healthy, inclusive workplace culture.

Over the last year our partnership with Yerrabi Yurwang Child & Family Aboriginal Corporation has continued to grow, building capacity to deliver culturally safe and responsive services. We have continued to collaborate in support of Yerrabi's goal of empowering generations of culturally strong and thriving Aboriginal children, families and communities.

None of these efforts over the last twelve months would have occurred without key partners and supporters. We must acknowledge the partnerships we hold with the ACT, NSW and Commonwealth Governments, who consistently encourage us to do more and fund our services to help those in need.

Long standing partnerships with Catholic Education and the Primary and Capital Health Networks across our ACT and NSW regions continue to enable us to deliver early intervention services and mental health supports to children, young people and families.

Marymead CatholicCare and the Executive receive incredible support from the MCCG Board, who volunteer their time, expertise and energy to make a difference. Over the last year we have recruited five new Board members, and we want to thank them for their unwavering commitment as we continue to navigate the challenges of the social services sector while we strive to deliver the Strategic Plan.

Special thanks go to Helen Delahunty our Board Chair who has chaired the MCCG Board throughout the merger and into business as usual. Helen has led with positivity and consistency during times of extreme pressure, supporting the Executive throughout the challenges of the last year.

“ In bringing together CatholicCare and Marymead, our commitment was that the new entity would be an organisation whose culture was built on the foundation of our mission and values, while celebrating our incredibly rich histories. ”

We also acknowledge and thank our Most Reverend Archbishop Christopher Prowse who listens and encourages Marymead CatholicCare to walk alongside those in need as we reach out across the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

Our organisation and services are blessed to be supported by an incredible team of volunteers, who give of their time, skills and resources to support our work. We cannot sign off the year without thanking our wonderful Auxiliary members, and team of volunteers across our organisation who continue to support our services and families and raise funds for specific initiatives.

Finally we must acknowledge the wonderful efforts of our staff, who give of their time, energy, enthusiasm and skills to make a difference in the lives of those we encounter every day. Without this commitment and dedication, none of the achievements of the last twelve months would be possible. Thank you for living our values in all you do every day.

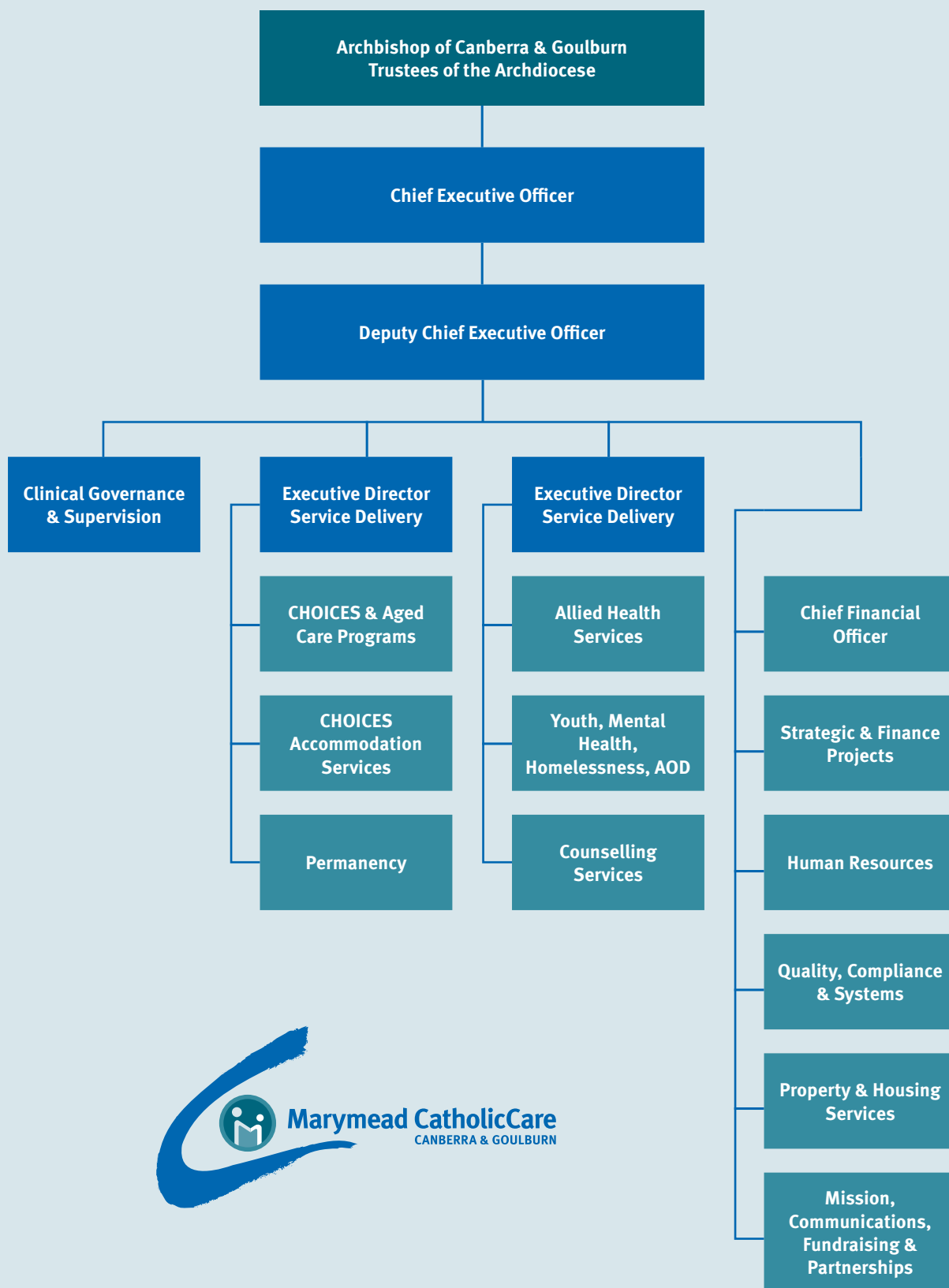


Anne Kirwan

Chief Executive Officer

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn

Organisational chart







Youth, Mental Health, Homelessness and Family Support Services



Alcohol and Other Drugs Support Connections

Alcohol and Other Drugs Support Connections (AODSC) provides comprehensive support to clients who recognise issues with alcohol and other drug use. This support includes collaborative case planning aimed at empowering clients to make positive changes in their substance use habits. Clients are connected with MCCG AOD counsellors, housing and homelessness services, allied health providers and externally with both physical and mental health services, along with legal, financial, and 'other' housing supports, as well as being assisted with safety planning for domestic and family violence situations and other informal support networks.

Furthermore, AODSC has fostered strong partnerships with recovery services in and around the Canberra region to enhance support for clients seeking to overcome substance use challenges

In 2023-2024, AOD Support Connections provided case management support with 64 individuals.

"I was grateful for the support by my case manager. My case manager was supportive and reassured me when things were difficult and I wanted to give up."

"My case manager went above and beyond. He explained things in a way that I could understand. My case manager was there whenever I needed him and was able to achieve my goals."

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 which 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 2023-2024, Marymead CatholicCare received nine referrals, with three successful graduations from the program.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate.

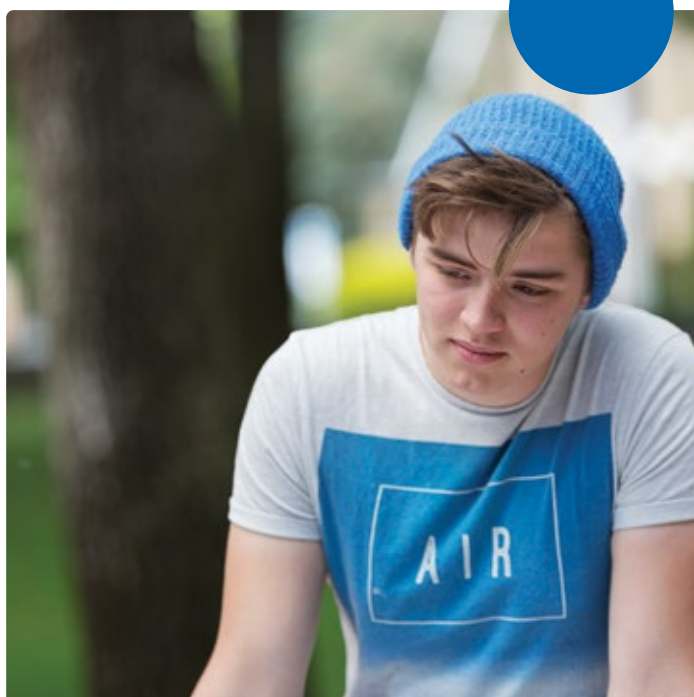
Reaching Out

The Reaching Out program provides specialist alcohol and other drug counselling through an assertive outreach approach. The Reaching Out program is staffed by 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 offices across Canberra, in their home or school, at residential programs and other community settings. This model has helped to lessen the stigma surrounding seeking help and provides a warm, supportive and non-judgemental approach. The flexibility and the availability of service times and locations 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 2023-2024, Reaching Out supported 244 individuals, with 59 percent of clients reporting a significant reduction in their alcohol or other drug use.

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



Case Study

Kate* (de-identified) initially sought help through the Support Connections program and was later referred to Reaching Out. At the outset of treatment, Kate was presented with challenges including high alcohol consumption, strained family relationships, low self-esteem, social isolation and mental health symptoms such as psychosis. Kate migrated to Australia from Africa at the age of 10 but spent most of her teenage years in Africa. Initially, Kate was reluctant to engage in face-to-face sessions and was supported through counselling sessions via FaceTime. During this time, Kate attempted rehab in Canberra but left after one week due to mental health symptoms exacerbating her condition. Achieving abstinence from alcohol was a primary goal for Kate.

Gradually, a therapeutic relationship developed, leading to the client participating in face-to-face counselling sessions. Kate expressed trust and commitment to the counselling process. Narrative therapy facilitated exploration of childhood trauma, the client's role as a primary caregiver in her family, and the impact of migration and cultural adjustment during her childhood and teenage years. Grief counselling was conducted to address Kate's feelings of loss following the death of her father, a significant trigger for relapse. Support was provided to help Kate navigate feelings of guilt and shame, and strategies were explored to establish boundaries and practice assertive communication with family members.

As treatment progressed, Kate reported improved self-esteem and healthier relationships with family members. Kate indicated developing the ability to manage triggers through consequential thinking and self-questioning. Towards the conclusion of treatment, Kate demonstrated a noticeable sense of empowerment. Kate's alcohol use decreased, and she had-maintained abstinence for six months up to the last contact. Continued therapeutic support and encouragement to apply counselling skills were crucial for Kate's progress. Building trust gradually played a significant role in achieving a positive treatment outcome.





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 consist of 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 which supports and encourages both mental health and alcohol and other drug recovery.

In the 2023-2024 reporting period, we supported 11 men to live independently in their units. We have had one person exit ARAMAC and two new people move in.

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

Funded by individual NDIS packages

ASSIST

The ASSIST program (Aiding in Secure, Safe, Independent and Stable Tenancies) provides specialist outreach homelessness support with people over 18, experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Case Managers work from a trauma-informed lens with a focus on person-centred support. 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 2023-2024 period, 63 people were supported in the ASSIST program.

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

Axial Housing

Axial Housing is a Housing First Initiative 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, and significant barriers navigating the housing system. The team provides wrap-around support, helping people to move from the streets into a permanent home, and supporting the ongoing stability of the tenancy.

In partnership with the Community Service Directorate, Marymead CatholicCare 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 which address the individual's unique needs, and supports them to recover and live well within their community and, ultimately, improve their ability to access and sustain a tenancy.

For the 2023-2024 period, AXIAL supported 32 people to access and maintain stable housing, support structures, and ongoing intensive wrap-around services.

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

MINOSA House and Transition House

MINOSA House (Men In Need Of Support Accommodation) 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. MINOSA provides 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 2143 bed nights' accommodation during 2023–2024, with an occupancy rate of 97 percent.

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

Case Study

Sue* (de-identified) a 40-year-old woman, began residing at MacKillop House in August 2021. Referred by Onelink, Sue had left a 12-year relationship marked by extreme domestic and family violence. She also reported years of substance use and was briefly accommodated in the Adult Mental Health Unit at The Canberra Hospital.

Upon entry to MacKillop House, Sue was very anxious, shy, and scared; she rarely left her room and avoided interactions with fellow residents and staff. She was unable to use public transport or enter a shop on her own, spending her days colouring and watching shows on her iPad. Slowly, Sue gained confidence and began engaging in more group activities around the house, such as art and cooking groups, working in the vegetable garden and going for walks.

Sue consistently engaged in case management, setting goals and seeking appropriate internal and external support. She was referred to the Towards Recovery (Trek) Program, trauma counselling and financial counselling. With increasing confidence and independence, Sue participated in various volunteer roles in the community, such as Land Care Inc and wildlife conservation and attended weekly trauma-informed yoga sessions at MacKillop House.

MacKillop House assisted Sue with an application to Housing ACT and a further Priority Needs Application. Sue worked exceptionally hard to ensure her recovery was successful and to rebuild the fractured relationships with her children and family. She enrolled in a Certificate III in Community Services and is now halfway through completing it, intending to continue to the diploma level. Sue aspires to become an Alcohol and Other Drugs support worker to help others on their path to recovery.

After nearly three years at MacKillop House, Sue was offered a property in her chosen area of the ACT, close to her family. She was overjoyed and quickly created the safe, secure home she had been longing for and working towards. MacKillop House supported Sue's transition by reaching out to local charities to help her with items such as a fridge, washing machine and dining furniture.

During Sue's substantial stay at MacKillop House, she became a valued member of the household; her smile and laugh were infectious, and her journey of recovery and resilience was an inspiration to all. MacKillop House will continue to support Sue in her new home, living independently for as long as required.

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, as well as women 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 otherwise may 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 for 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 main focus of support is to secure long-term and suitable housing.

In 2023-2024, 40 new residents entered the program and 42 exited into accommodation.

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

Safer Youth Response Service

Safer Youth Response Service (SYRS) is the first of its kind in the ACT, designed to meet an existing service gap now that the Raising of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility (MACR) has been introduced.

SYRS implements a strengths-based approach and holds the safety of the young people as paramount. This includes physical, emotional and cultural safety. The young peoples' best interests are at the centre of all decisions made by staff. The aim of the service is to provide a safe and responsive service for young people aged 10-14 years, diverting them from the youth justice system and interactions with law enforcement.

The SYRS team work in partnership with ACT Policing and ACT Government. Referrals for this program are managed by ACT Policing.

Funded by ACT Government Community Services Directorate.

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.

SUS 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.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate.





Toolangi Social and Affordable Housing Program

Toolangi social and affordable housing community is an initiative that makes a real difference in people's lives, offering an on-site Social Impact Programs and tenancy management through Marymead CatholicCare's Community Engagement and 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.

During the past 12-months, Toolangi has linked people with shared interests and supported them to develop friendships and take part in meaningful community engagements.

Activities that have been coordinated in 2023–2024 include the Toolangi Harvest Community Garden, a partnership with CIT Community Development and Landscaping students to co-design and build a nature playground with Toolangi residents, a book club, afternoon teas, and other events.

Funded by The Commissioner for Social Housing.



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 2023-2024, the program supported 76 families.

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



Youth Housing Support Service

The Youth Housing Support Service (YHSS) team provide outreach support 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 2023–2024 period YHSS supported 78 young people, with 87 percent of young people achieving safe and secure accommodation at the end of the reporting period.

“I am proud of what I have achieved with the help of my case manager. They reassured me it is okay to seek help, striking a balance between encouraging me where possible to take my own steps and grow while I accept guidance.”

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



CHOICES

Accommodation Services



Dorothy Sales Cottages

Dorothy Sales Cottages is a specialised residential setting within the CHOICES program which has been providing support for 26 years for people living with an acquired brain injury and/or complex physical needs. DSC provides intensive, 24-hour support for 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.

Funded by Individual NDIS Packages and Disability Support for Older Australians.

In Home Care Agency – ACT

The In-Home Care (IHC) Support Agency assesses a family's suitability and assists them to access high-quality, flexible early childhood education and care options for families who cannot access traditional childcare services. Our objective is to ensure that every family, regardless of their unique circumstances, has access to tailored childcare that meets their needs. Throughout 2023-2024, we supported families by matching them with qualified educators through service providers, advocating on their behalf, and ensuring the care delivered aligns with the highest educational and safety standards.

Funded by the Australian Government's Department of Education, our program has addressed the diverse needs of families, particularly those in rural, remote or challenging circumstances. The collaboration with key stakeholders has been instrumental in promoting inclusivity and ensuring every child receives the best care possible.

A significant achievement this year was the collaborative review of Quality and Safety standards, conducted alongside the Department of Education, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, In-home Care agencies, support providers and educators. This effort was aimed at ensuring inclusivity and suitability for all young people accessing care, keeping their well-being at the forefront of decision-making.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on maintaining high safety and care standards and enhancing collaboration with families and stakeholders to ensure that all children receive the support they need in their home environments.

Funded by the Australian Government's Department of Education.

Short-Term Accommodation for children and young people – Ricky Stuart House & Coral's Cottage

The Short-Term Accommodation (STA) provides essential support for children, teenagers, and young adults through tailored services at Ricky Stuart House (for children aged 5 to 12) and Coral's Cottage (for teenagers and young adults). Services included overnight stays, weekend respite, and school holiday programs, all focused on promoting independence, social skills, and personal development.

In the financial year 2023-2024, our Short-Term Accommodation services continued to deliver impactful support for children, teenagers, and young adults. With dedicated facilities like Ricky Stuart House and Coral's Cottage, we have created environments where participants feel safe, supported, and empowered. As we move forward, our focus remains on providing high-quality care, building independence, introduction of further diverse activities, and strengthening collaboration with families, NDIS stakeholders, and allied health professionals to ensure participants continue to thrive in both the STA and Day Program.

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.

Supported Independent Living Homes

Supported Independent Living supports people 24/7 with physical and intellectual disabilities as well as complex health care needs. 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 six different locations across Canberra.

This allows people with disabilities or special needs to enjoy more freedom and autonomy in their lives. The program assists clients to live in shared houses with other people who have similar needs. With this model, the clients can have a sense of community and independence while receiving the support they need.

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







CHOICES

Community Programs and Support



Art Therapy – Red Hill Studio

Art Therapy is designed to celebrate and empower individuals in a way that affirms neurodiversity. Our art 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 which enable them to express, explore and transform their emotions and follow their interests.

Art 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.

During 2023-2024, we supported 29 participants with art therapy services.

Funded by each client's National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Plan.

Autism Centre

The Autism Centre celebrates diversity, promotes awareness and inclusion, and supports people on the autism spectrum and their families. During 2023–2024, the Autism Centre continued to provide services such as Autism Connect (the national autism helpline), social groups (Dungeons & Dragons and The Lab) and workshops to promote inclusivity in the community.

The Active Inclusion program was extended for a further year and ended in June 2024. The Come & Try Days and the Sports Social Group were well attended. Educational resources were developed as part of the program and are still available to download from our website.

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

Boundless Buddies

Boundless Buddies is 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, including EACH, which provides early childhood approach services.

Funded by ACT Play Groups.

Community Assistance and Support Program

The Community Assistance and Support Program (CASP) program ended on 30 November 2023, with eligible participants transitioned to the new program, CATS (Community Assistance Temporary Supports).

CASP was an ACT Government program, aimed at enhancing health and wellbeing and facilitating independence and participation in the community. CASP services were for people under 65 years of age, living in the ACT, and requiring home and community support for daily living activities due to a health issue. Unpaid carers and family members were also eligible to access support through CASP.

The CASP service provided a person-centred model of support to assist participants to meet their goals. From July to November 2023, CASP supported 14 individuals with domestic assistance, personal care, social support, gardening, counselling, and case coordination. These individuals have successfully transitioned to the NDIS or to CATS.

Funded by ACT Health.

Hands On Studio

Founded in 1996, Hands On Studio, a cherished program within Marymead CatholicCare, has provided a nurturing and inclusive environment for artists with disabilities. Over the years, Hands On Studio has established itself as a pioneer in the field of Community Arts, particularly focusing on accessibility within the Canberra region.

In 2023-2024, Hands On Studio has experienced impressive growth and vibrancy. We proudly welcomed 13 new artists and four new staff members, expanding our community to support a total of 120 artists and 15 staff members. This dynamic team has been working together harmoniously to achieve both personal and program goals.

A major highlight of this period was the creation and design of our first book, *Plate to Plate* (published August 2024). This project was a testament to our collaborative spirit, involving partnerships with two other MCCG programs—*mulch* and the Cook On Club—as well as local artists Caren Florance, Robbie Karmel and the Megalo Print Studio team. *Plate to Plate* epitomizes our commitment to non-hierarchical, collaborative work, allowing participants to exchange skills and knowledge across different sectors. This initiative has not only broadened individual practices but has also fostered meaningful connections within the ACT community.

As we look ahead, Hands On Studio is brimming with anticipation for future endeavours. We are excited about the numerous projects planned in collaboration with both internal programs and external institutions in the coming year. Our ongoing efforts to bridge communities through collaborative relationships continue to drive our mission forward.

Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Home Care Packages

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn operates a Home Care package (HCP) program, supporting older individuals with high or more complex level of care need. Access to Home Care Package funding is determined via the outcome of a comprehensive assessment conducted by the Australian Government's, Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT).

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn has a dedicated team of co-ordinators working to support our Home Care package clients.

Our team walked alongside 200 clients to tailor packages relevant to their individual needs and goals while ensuring wellness and reablement. This was done by utilising a suite of in-house services including personal care, assistance with domestic tasks, social support, home maintenance, and gardening assistance. To ensure all goals were achievable and support individuals' choice and control, we have continued to maintain and build new relationships with stakeholders.

We supported 71 clients to transition from SINC (Seniors in Networked Communities) into their Home Care Package, allowing our clients to increase the services they receive while remaining supported by workers they have grown to know and trust.

Our Home Care Package program is currently supporting 161 individuals to achieve their goals both independently and within the community to enhance continued wellbeing within their homes.

Funded by Department of Health & Aged Care.



Kids' Companions

The Kids' Companions (Kids into Community) program finished in December 2023.

Kids Companions supported children and young people (aged 7-17) who were socially isolated because of the experience of mental health issues and/or disability within their family.

It provided 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.

Living in Networked Communities

Living in Networked Communities (LINC) allow residents to live independent, active lives while building new relationships in their 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.

Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

mulch

Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn's Urban Land Community Harvest – *mulch* - provides adults with disability an opportunity to develop skills and build connections. Participants are engaged in the seed-to-sale process in the *mulch* permaculture garden located in Stirling, ACT.

During 2023 to 2024, the *mulch* garden has continued to expand, increasing opportunities for individuals to build skills within the horticulture setting. A new 15-meter polyhouse has been erected, a duck enclosure has been built for our resident ducks, a new flock of hens have been purchased and the chook house updated, and we have installed Hoselink systems around the entire garden.

The new flock of chickens were funded by the ACT Miniature Enthusiasts in Canberra through their annual show held in Weston Creek. The Rotary Club of Hall have continued to support *mulch*, purchasing hose link systems for use around the garden.

Produce sales have continued to grow with regular sale days held at The Headley Beare Centre in Stirling. Additionally, we have regular sales to the local community and at Favier House in Braddon. The 2023 plant sale was a success, selling out of many of our seedling. With an increased focus on selling plants in 2024, we are anticipating a profitable October/November.

Funded by individual NDIS plans, produce sales and donations.



NDIS Community Supports and Support Coordination

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

Our team values choice and control and uses a person-centred approach by developing capacity building skills with the long-term goal of increasing independence. Our team ensures continuity of support, and where required, assistance with referring to another provider to best meet the needs of the participant. The Support Coordination team assists participants with:

- › scheduled and unscheduled and internal review meetings with NDIS;
- › regular monitoring of individuals NDIS plan / budgets;
- › gathering support documents for review meetings;
- › assisting to lodge a review of any change of circumstances should their current plan not meet their needs and goals;
- › walk with individuals through the process of actioning their NDIS plan; and
- › connecting individuals with NDIS supports.

The Support Coordination program supported 94 clients during the last financial year, delivering a total of 1,991 hours of support.

Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



Community Supports

CHOICES community-based services and activities assist individuals with disabilities participate more fully in their local communities.

Within the CHOICES Program, we offer a range of services and support for eligible individuals with a NDIS plan based on their individual goals. Our one-on-one supports include:

- › community and social activities;
- › assistance with self-care activities;
- › assistance with household activities, and house and yard maintenance;
- › individual skill development; and
- › transport.

CHOICES Program supported 172 clients during the last financial year.

Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



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 provides entry level care and supports to help senior Australians live independently and safely at home. In some instances, we also support those receiving a Home Care Package to provide additional supports. My Aged Care is a starting point for accessing Australian government funded aged care services.

Our SINC program provides domestic assistance, home maintenance, flexible respite, personal care, transport, and allied health, including social work, and social support for individuals and groups.

We actively supported 580 clients across the ACT and surrounding NSW with flexible and tailored supports to ensure their needs and goals are met, while allowing clients to live safely and independently at home.

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. As a result of this support, we have enabled 71 clients to exit our SINC program to transition to our Home Care Package program.

Funded by Department of Health & Aged Care.





Allied Health Services



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. An active holding protocol has been initiated to further support those on the waitlist to include recommendations to other programs within the Allied Health Hub.

Funded by Medicare scheme.

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, along with cognitive strengths and weaknesses.

The use of cognitive assessments helps 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 2023-2024 year with additional assessments tools available to meet the communities and school needs for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder 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.

Fee for service.

Early Life Matters

Early Life Matters (ELM) provides early therapeutic intervention focusing on infant and early childhood mental health outcomes, while working alongside parents/caregivers using the Circle of Security (COS) attachment-based intervention.

ELM exceeded expectations over the past 12 months, working with four participants in one COS parenting group, and 56 teachers and early childhood educators across six COS in the classroom groups. ELM worked with 18 participants in either COS-intensive individual or group format.

ELM collaborated with many stakeholders to provide services to the most vulnerable families in the community, including Perinatal & Infant Mental Health Consultation Service (PIMHCS), Healthy Attachment Australia New Zealand (HAANZ) network, Perinatal Mental Health Networking Group, Family Law Pathways Network (FLPN), and Winnunga Health Services.

Marymead CatholicCare strengthened relationships with the Perinatal Wellbeing Centre and Tresillian through the co-hosting the First 1000 Days Conference in November 2023. Staff facilitated a DRUMBEAT movement break during the conference with approximately 250 participants.

In this period, Marymead CatholicCare received an ACT Healthy Grant to run a Drumming for Connection program to reduce social isolation and build community connection with vulnerable parents during the reporting period. Two ELM staff were trained in DRUMBEAT and have been facilitating six-weekly drumming groups in collaboration with key partner organisations, including Perinatal Wellbeing Centre (PWC), Malkara school, and Woden Community Services.

Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS) and ACT Government Community Services Directorate (CSD).

Grandparents Support Group

Grandparents Support Group supports grandparents who are the primary carer for their grandchild/ren aged 0–18 years. The care arrangements can be formal; however, they are predominately informal.

The Grandparents Group provides social and emotional support for participants while helping to alleviate social isolation. The group creates a psychologically safe space to share experiences and learn from one another's lived experience associated with their kinship caring role.

Group meetings include a mix of workshops and social outings. During 2023-2024, workshops were arranged with presenting speakers based on specific requests for information, including: Kinship Alliance Australia, Services Australia, CREATE Foundation, SEED eating disorder clinic, and Catholic Education School Counsellors program. Social outings included school holiday bowling with 17 grandchildren, the Miniature Railway, Christmas Lunch, and a Mother's Day lunch at the Botanical Gardens.

In 2023-2024 the program supported 23 grandparents to attend monthly group meetings.

Funded by ACT Government, Community Services Directorate (CSD).





Horizons South Coast

Horizons in the Bega and Eurobodalla Shires provide confidential, early intervention, mental health counselling and outreach support services for families with children and young people aged 0-18 years. Horizons aims to increase capacity, coping strategies, strengthen relationships and improve wellbeing while exploring life choices and listening to what's important for the child or young person to thrive.

While Horizons focuses on the mental health needs of children and young people, we do this through a holistic, client-centred, family-focused approach. The predominate presenting needs of families included: emotional regulation and trauma (30 percent), anxiety and depression (18 percent), separation of parents and family stress (15 percent), and social connectedness and community participation (26 percent).

With 150 referrals in the past 12 months, Horizons has established itself as a trusted and effective program, leading the way in mental health clinical support for children and young people in the south coast region.

The team has built strong partnerships

with local schools providing weekly counselling, a psychoeducation group, and co-locating at schools such as Batemans Bay Primary, Batemans Bay High, Moruya Public, Sunshine Bay Public, Broulee Public, Narooma Public, Bermagui Public, Eden Public, and Eden Marine High.

In 2023-2024 the Horizons team has supported 78 children and young people, 162 parents and caregivers, and provided psychoeducation groups to 43 participants in seven groups. Twenty percent of clients identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, while 10 percent report having a disability.

Funded by Department of Regional NSW, Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF-5).



MindMap Youth Portal

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

MindMap Youth Portal is available 24/7 and is staffed from 11am – 10pm daily, and from 12pm-8pm on public holidays by a team consisting of a Clinical Lead, Clinical Youth Navigators, and Youth Navigators.

MindMap's Active Hold offers therapeutic interventions with families where a child/young person are currently on a wait list for mental health services. Active Hold reduces the risk of young people falling through the gaps by providing psychoeducation and brief-intervention counselling to establish safety, model positive therapeutic relationships, and support engagement in mental health intervention, while they are awaiting services within the ACT. Mindmap's Active Hold component has grown beyond expectation over the past 12 months, supporting 108 children and young people.

Mindmap provides sessions with a clinician to conduct a thorough needs assessment, make warm referrals, and provide strategies for immediate intervention.

Mindmap commenced providing weekly outreach support every Thursday afternoon at the Mura Lanyon Youth Centre in Condor to increase access to the southside community in Canberra.

Mindmap continues to promote and advocate for mental health awareness and access to support through attendance at school expos, networking meetings, and presentations to key stakeholders.

Funded by Office of Mental Health & Wellbeing, ACT Health.

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 psychiatric 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.

NDIS Counselling

Our NDIS Counselling program works 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 our CHOICES program, and external stakeholders to assist the client within the therapeutic space.

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 allows mental health clinicians to meet counselling needs across portfolios and assist clinicians to stay current in counselling modalities.

Funded by individual purchase-of-service agreements with National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



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 wellbeing of the child/adolescent, family and community.

The program provided more than 100 intake assessment and screening appointments and almost 100 clinical and administration telehealth consultations. The entire team continues to work tirelessly to reduce the programs waitlist which is finally under six months for the first time in several years.

Parents/caregivers engaged in Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P) psychoeducation program across four groups. Children and young people engaged in several group programs such as:

- › 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.

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

Next Step

Our 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, it 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 is in its seventh year and 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, all of whom receive ongoing clinical supervision. Next Step is offered to people of all ages and provides three types of support:

- › Mental Health Coaching –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 Group Programs - developed by Macquarie University, these groups use CBT to assist children and their carers to develop strategies to manage anxiety.

The Next Step program supported 1065 new referrals during 2023/24 financial year. This included 44 new children in the Cool Kids program and a total of 70 children attending the groups. A total of 1414 individuals were supported for the period.

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

The following paragraphs are statements from client feedback, providing insight into the impact of the Next Step program and our client relationships:

'The coach clearly explained things to me, even in my frazzled state. I appreciated her structured, firm and encouraging approach. She was extremely professional, knowledgeable and was also wise and kind with me when I needed it. I felt patronised by other agencies but not at all with Next Step.'

'I specifically enjoyed the structure of the program and that I was able to have the same therapist who I connected with very well. The therapist kept the sessions on track which was perfect for my needs. It's a proactive course and regardless of the complexity of my issues, it worked very well for me.'

'My therapist quickly realised what worked for me and tailored our sessions accordingly.'

'My clinician was the most incredible therapist. I have been to multiple sessions with other psychologists doing the same CBT treatments and none have made such an impact. I have decreased my overall anxiety by miles all thanks to her.'



Case Study

Jackie* (de-identified), a 30-year-old female, was referred to the Next Step program by her GP, to help her develop positive strategies around her self-esteem and negative thought patterns. She believed 90% of the time that she was not good enough.

Jackie reported feeling debilitating self-judgement and self-doubt. Jackie reported being told that she was not good enough and this extended into her relationships with partners that involved domestic violence. She found herself overcompensating to please others and often would not socialise or initiate any conversation as she believed others would reject her.

At the commencement of the assessment, Jackie and Low Intensity (LI) Coach were able to identify triggers, feelings and thoughts of her behaviours. Based on the problem statement, Jackie developed therapy goals to work towards during the program. The goals were centred around her beliefs that she was not good enough and that if she reached out to friends, they would reject her. Throughout treatment, the goal was to challenge Jackie's belief system through behaviour experiments. In addition to testing out her predictions and using ratings on her goals and problem statement, measuring tools were implemented to monitor improvement of Jackie's mood and anxiety levels. This measured personal health (PHQ9), while the (GAD7) questionnaire monitored generalised anxiety disorder. Each week these questionnaires were completed to show changes based on what she did that week and how she felt about it.

After assessment, five treatment sessions were completed and two follow up sessions. The LI Coach introduced a relapse strategy at the last treatment session to ensure that Jackie maintains her achievements. An important factor was for Jackie to recognise the early signs of a relapse and apply learnt strategies to prevent further relapse. After completion of the follow up sessions, Jackie's scores and measures had decreased. Jackie had learnt to manage the symptoms of anxiety and her thought patterns.

SUMMIT – Positive Behaviour Support

The Summit Program, providing 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.

During the 2023/24 period, the SUMMIT team have worked alongside clients – constructing and implementing positive behaviour support plans into the home and school environments.

Funded internally by Marymead CatholicCare or via NDIS plans.



SEED

SEED (Supporting Early Eating Disorders) is a rapid early intervention service offering innovative, evidence-based treatment for young people 13 years and older in the early stages of developing an eating disorder. A family-based treatment (FBT) intervention is offered to younger clients and their families to help understand and overcome difficulties resulting from disordered eating.

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.

Seed has flourished over the 2023/24 financial year having assisted 66 clients and experiencing a 50% increase in Family Based Therapy.

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate.

Supporting Young People Through Early Intervention and Prevention

Supporting Young People Through Early Intervention and Prevention (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.

STEPS also works to improve family relationships by holding regular meetings with primary carers to review progress, develop communication skills, and offer psychoeducation and support strategies.

During the previous 12-months, STEPS has supported 28 young people within the residential program work towards mental health recovery.

"I am grateful and appreciate the support in which the STEPS program has offered my child. I have seen a beautiful change in my child as they now are future planning. STEPS has made a meaningful and positive impact on my young person's life, and we are truly thankful for your dedication and guidance."

"While in the program, I was able to identify goals in which I wanted to work towards. This helped me gain the confidence to try new things while at STEPS."

Funded by ACT Government Health Directorate.





Stepping Stones

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

The Stepping Stones team incorporate a multidisciplinary team (MDT) with 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), while 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.

Actively held clients while awaiting service were offered OT sensory functioning modulation Groups, Tuning into Kids and Theraplay to cater to families and caregivers. These groups have helped reduce the waitlist by supporting clients and parents in learning and applying sensory skill strategies to manage child dysregulation. At the same time, they have highlighted the expanded availability of the MCCG program, which has provided clients on the waitlist with additional, appropriate onward pathways.

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.

During the 2023/24 financial year, Stepping Stones has supported 64 clients. The Stepping Stones team have experienced and observed positive outcomes as a result of their creativity and dedication to their clients.

Funded by ACT Health.

Youth and Wellbeing

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 including psychologists and social workers. 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.

In this period, YWB was invited to be involved in the ACT rollout of the Moderated Online Social Therapies (MOST) platform, 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. YWB has demonstrated success in using community partners to achieve interim support for young people.

During the previous 12-months, YWB has supported 168 young people, 36 percent of young people were actively addressing their identified tenancy needs. YWB provided critical support to young people facing tenancy issues, recognising that youth homelessness exacerbates risks such as mental health challenges, educational disruption and social isolation. Such instability undermines opportunities for both personal and professional development, perpetuating cycles of poverty and marginalisation.

“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.





Counselling and Family Services



Assisting Responsible Care for Kids

ARCK (Assisting Responsible Care of Kids) is a Parenting Order Program, designed to support separated parents who are experiencing high conflict regarding the on-going parenting of their children. ARCK aims to support parents in maintaining a positive relationship with their children and a working relationship with the other parent.

ARCK is a four-part program which includes an initial screening, psychoeducation, individual counselling and finally, a group session. In the 2023-24 period, 90 new clients engaged in the program. A total of 755 individual counselling sessions were delivered in-person and virtually, and four five-week group sessions were held. The combination of individual and group sessions provides an effective approach for clients to receive support navigating the complexities of separation and parenting arrangements.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services and Fee for Service.

Children's Contact and Changeover

The Children's Contact and Changeover program provides supervised visits and changeovers to assist families experiencing challenges in managing contact after separation. Facilitated in a neutral environment, the program prioritises the well-being and best interests of children and focuses on nurturing positive parent-child relationships by offering support to parents as they work towards independently managing contact arrangements.

This program is funded through two key streams: the Attorney-General Department (AGD) and Child, Youth and Family (CYF). The AGD funding stream continues to support the program as a block-funded initiative, providing consistent financial resources to continue support for children and their families. During the 2023-24 period, 97 new families accessed the program, resulting in 1,482 supervised visits and 1,162 changeovers delivered. The program continues to support families to move towards self-managed contact arrangements, where possible. Through a collaborative approach, families were referred to internal and external services to access further support which included counselling, parenting groups, and mental health support services.

In parallel, CYF continues to pay a fee for service to support the delivery of these essential services. In the 2023-24 period, 19 CYF families access the services with MCCG supporting 844 supervised visits in total. This fiscal year, CYF took steps to formalise its partnership by initiating a tendering process and establishing preferred providers in supporting our children and families. MCCG was successful in securing the tender and looks forward to supporting even more families in the next financial year under this new contracted agreement.

Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services, Attorney Generals Funding, ACT Child and Youth Protection Services, NSW Department of Communities and Justice and Fee for Service.

Case Study

A family of three (14-year-old young person, father and mother) attended counselling with the goal of gaining and strengthening co-parenting skills and strategies. The parents have been separated for four years and currently there are court proceedings pending.

The orders received by the counselling service indicated that family counselling with their daughter was required. The intake form completed by both parties indicated past history of verbal abuse between parents within their family home. Both parents were hoping to achieve open and respectful communication with one another especially with their daughter who has experienced adverse communication styles.

Both parents have shared custody of their teenage daughter and were willing to participate in counselling to enable a positive relationship with their daughter as co-parents. The parents reported different parenting styles that appeared to be in conflict with one another. At the father's place, the arrangements are more flexible in comparison to mother's structured daily routine. These differences have caused disagreements between the parents with the daughter finding it challenging with a preference to a more flexible home routine.

Each family member was offered an individual session to establish and understand their perspective to the matter and their needs. The family attended a total of eight family sessions. Family members attended the first session with their own set of goals that they wanted to achieve.

During the joint session, the counsellor summarised all of their goals and worked collaboratively with the family towards identifying common goals which were priority. The goals set were around routine and rules across both homes for their daughter.

The counsellors worked on the family's negotiation skills and encouraged the parents to discuss and establish reasonable and achievable routines and rules in both homes to allow their daughter to understand expectations in each home environment.

The expectations and consequences were openly discussed to allow their understanding of the need of the expectation in place. By doing this, the young person had a clear understanding and the parents were able to establish a shared decision making in raising their teenage daughter.

Although there have been times when the young person has felt that some rules are unreasonable (contacting parents when running late, keeping the phone on when out, completing household chores), the parents were able to demonstrate their newfound co-parenting style by backing each other and standing by what they feel is acceptable together.

The goals achieved were reviewed on a regular basis. The parents have a better understanding of what is acceptable when communicating with each other and see the benefits for the young person attending each of their houses on a 50/50 basis. All parties stated that there appears to be better harmony between all three of them and the young person is building good relationship with both parents.

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 your assistance recently, the session that (counsellor) held onsite was very well received by staff and appreciated"



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 looking at a range of areas within relationships where there have been issues such as conflict resolution, improving communication, coping with change, parenting challenges, or even building healthier relationships. Sessions support and assist participants 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.

During the 2023/2024 period, 1755 counselling sessions were delivered to a total of 655 clients. Sessions were conducted both in-person and online, and this flexible approach to service delivery has increased client engagement and accessibility.

The Counselling services continues to be delivered across a number of locations in ACT and regional NSW.

"The counsellor has made me reflect on myself, to stop reflecting on the past and live for the moment. It has also made me aware of what is best for my children and the impacts it has on them."

38 years of age, currently separated

"The counsellor was the most perfect counsellor ever. She listened to me and made me feel happy and respected. Everything the counsellor did worked perfectly, and she was a very nice person."

13 years of age, male

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Family Law Counselling

The Family Law Counselling Service supports couples and families to manage relationship issues that arise from relationship changes, separation and divorce.

Our qualified counsellors use a client-centred approach and assist individuals and their families to attain new skills and strategies to help deal with family dynamic changes, enhance communication, and manage conflict, grief and loss while prioritising the child's best interest at all times.

During 2023/2024 period, 200 sessions were delivered to a total of 99 clients. Counsellors were trained in the recently accredited evidence-based group, SPARK (Separated Parents Are Raising Kids). The six-week group program focuses on communication, conflict management, emotional regulation, navigating the family law system, redefining the family, and attachment and development. The group supports clients at all stages of family changes. The service facilitates groups for men and women who would like to improve their skills in communication and conflict management for the best interest of the children.

The Counselling services continue to be delivered across several locations in ACT and regional NSW.

Funded by the Department of Attorney General's Office.

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 2023-24 period, 122 new clients engaged in the program across both group and individual counselling. A total of 39 clients participated across seven groups, covering seven different topics which included a variety of parenting skills, personal development, and relationship building groups. In individual counselling, 434 sessions were delivered in-person and virtually, and this flexible approach to service delivery has increased client engagement and accessibility.

Funded by Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Kids and Youth are Kool Post Separation

The KAYAKS (Kids and Youth are Kool) program supports children and young people aged between six to 18 years to manage and enhance their family relationships during and after family separation.

In the 2023-24 period, 47 new children and young people engaged in the program in which 324 individual counselling sessions were delivered. In addition, parents are an integral part of the KAYAKS process, and 175 parent sessions were held before, during and after the KAYAKS individual sessions. The program continues to take a holistic approach and work alongside parents and carers in supporting the children and young people in the context of their family arrangements.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services and Fee for Service.

School Counselling

The School Counselling Service is delivered in 53 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 and includes 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.

2023 has continued to be a busy year with the counsellors supporting more than 2,200 students and families throughout the year. High presentations of anxiety, family difficulties, behavioural issues and peer issues continue to be the trend. The service continues to run various groups within schools such as Cool Kids, Tuning into Kids, Seasons for Life, social skills groups, and Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) for high school students.



"Thank you so much for all your support and encouragement for our son this year. You really have made a difference, and we appreciate the time and effort you have given him".

"Students have reported to me satisfaction in the program, and improvements in their family relationships. The school has also seen evidence of improvement in behaviour and wellbeing at school, as evidenced by a decrease in number of negative incidents seen in students engaged in the program."

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 surrounding districts. 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.

In 2023-2024, 54 young people participated with over 300 client sessions completed within the Reconnect CW Program either via individual and family sessions or through group participation.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Service.



Pre-Marriage Education – FOCCUS

This pre-marriage education 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 FOCCUS program supports the pre-marriage component within the Catholic Church.

During the 2023-2024 reporting period, a total of 39 couples successfully completed the FOCCUS pre-marriage education program.

100 percent of the couples rated their experience as positive.

Reconnect ACT

Reconnect ACT is an early intervention service that supports young people and their families who are experiencing family communication breakdowns, conflict, disengagement from education or employment, and feeling isolated from social and community aspects. Reconnect aims to improve communication and support the young person to participate within day-to-day activities. The program is for young people ranging from 12 to 18 years of age and up to 21 years of age for newly migrated young people.

In 2023-2024, 61 young people participated within the Reconnect ACT Program either via individual and family sessions or through group participation.

“The youth and family workers from Reconnect at Marymead CatholicCare have been a great resource for myself and the young people I work with. The team at Reconnect were able to work alongside me, supporting a number of young people from our college, offering support externally where I couldn’t.”

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. We work to support approx 115 children who are subject to NSW Children's Court care orders with varying case plan goals, such as restoration support to parents and family or identifying when adoption or guardianship may be appropriate. The common goal lies in ensuring purposeful casework support occurs to establish permanency for the child or young person.

In September 2023, the Permanency Program attained a five-year accreditation which is a high achievement in regard to evidencing our standards of practice and support for children and families.

The Permanency Program has provided high-level support in getting children and families to where they need to be to achieve their case plan goals.

Since January 2023, the Permanency team has supported 13 children and young people to be restored to family, three children/young people have moved to guardianship and four children/young people have been adopted. As we move into the latter half of 2024, there are several children on similar trajectories, and we hope to have outcomes by the end of the year.

The Permanency team work to ensure cultural safety and to connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child and Young People to culturally appropriate services. We support the transition of Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander young people to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Funded by NSW Department of Communities and Justice.



Property and Tenancy Management

Affordable Housing

Marymead CatholicCare manages the Toolangi social and affordable housing community which is a mixed-housing model with ACT Government social housing tenancies. We provide whole-of-site management, property management of 32 affordable housing tenancies, and the on-site Social Impact Program and tenancy management services.

This holistic approach makes a real difference in people's lives. Toolangi provides affordable or social housing targeting diverse groups as well as participatory, inclusive and community-focused site management. It also provides support for people to sustain tenancies and works with community members to create opportunities for improved social connectedness, community safety and sense of belonging. A highlight over 2023-24 has been working with CIT community development, community services, and landscaping students to develop a nature playground in collaboration with residents, along with the support provided by the Country Women's Association Canberra Branch.

Marymead CatholicCare is also continuing to grow our affordable housing portfolio with two individual dwellings purchased through the Suburban Land Agency's Home Purchase Scheme, and securing funding to help build 54 affordable units in Curtin in collaboration with the Parish of the Transfiguration, North Woden.

Community Housing

Marymead CatholicCare currently manages 160 tenancies and 125 community housing properties (both privately owned and head-leased through the ACT Government). Over two-thirds of our tenancies are transitional occupancies, providing short-term accommodation to people who are accessing support and seeking more permanent and independent housing options through our programs, such as MacKillop House and MINOSA House for women and men experiencing homelessness. Other programs seek to provide a "home for life" including AXIAL Housing First, ARAMAC House, Living in Networked Communities, and Supported Independent Living for people with disabilities.

Gardening and Home Maintenance Services

Marymead CatholicCare provide services to clients and tenants across several programs to support people to maintain their homes and gardens for comfortable, secure and independent living. Our model links clients with a member of the gardening team to support long-term and relationship-based service delivery. This service is funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Commonwealth Home Support Program, and Home Care Packages.



Venues/Offices

Marymead CatholicCare delivers services to the community from 18 venues and offices across the Archdiocese. We work to ensure these spaces are welcoming, comfortable, secure and inclusive for all staff, clients and stakeholders and to make sure that they meet work health and safety and compliance requirements. The MacKillop House Conference Centre is available to hire, and caters for up to 60 people, and has the capacity to provide accommodation for organisers/facilitators in a one-bedroom unit attached to the Centre. The room itself is a beautiful hexagon shape with high wooden ceilings and includes new IT equipment.

Property and Tenancy Management

Marymead CatholicCare's Housing and Property Services prides itself on providing person-centred property and asset management across our programs in collaboration with our case management and support teams. The social landlord framework prioritises communication and relationship-building with tenants, as well as proactive approaches to any arising issues, for better outcomes for individuals in diverse circumstances. This work is supported by clear policies informed by legislative requirements and strong record management systems.

Retirement Villages

Our retirement villages-- Aloysius Morgan in Campbell, Azure Village in Narrabundah and St Vincent's in Aranda - provide beautifully maintained, safe and independent living for residents who can connect with in-home supports and join community activities as desired. Residents are invited to participate in understanding and making key decisions affecting their homes and are able to connect with local Parishes and school communities.

Mission Engagement

As the social services agency of the Catholic Church in the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese, we work alongside people at every age and stage of life, to live as well as possible, across six service delivery portfolios and more than 70 different programs.

Our mission and values not only focus our attention on what we do, but also on *how* we do it and *why*. Ultimately, our *why* is centred on the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Solidarity is at the heart of our mission, along with essential motivations such as social justice, accompaniment, empowerment, radical inclusivity, restoration and healing.

Founded on Catholic social teaching, our mission and values guide our efforts to respond to human need and our approach to service delivery. These principles include the central importance of human dignity, along with a commitment to the common good, practising solidarity, maintaining a preferential focus on those most disadvantaged or marginalised in society, and upholding subsidiarity by making sure those most impacted by decisions are involved in the decision-making process at a “grass-roots” level. For us, this is the basis of our first operating principle, which is to be truly “person-centred” in our service delivery.

All employees, regardless of our different beliefs or spiritual practices, are invited and challenged to understand and align ourselves with our mission and values, and demonstrate them, every day, with everyone we encounter. Much more than words on a page, we are committed to embedding our mission and values across the organisation, to “walk the talk” in action in specific, intentional ways within the different contexts of our service delivery. In supporting these objectives, our mission engagement work includes a presentation at each of our corporate orientations for new staff, providing reflective workshops within teams and programs, publishing relevant

articles in our monthly staff newsletters and hosting Christmas and Easter reflections, in-person and on-line. A range of documents regarding our mission and values are available to all staff through our new Policy Library. During the reporting period, we engaged with a total of 637 staff and external stakeholders, recording positive feedback along the way.

Many staff comment on how fortunate we are to work for a values-based organisation. These guiding principles are ultimately universal, unifying and motivating. They help us to build a great workplace culture, work toward a common purpose and bring our best selves to work every day, in order to give the best service possible to our clients, colleagues, stakeholders and the wider community.

Annie Patterson

Mission Engagement Lead



“ Many staff comment on how fortunate we are to work for a values-based organisation. These guiding principles are ultimately universal, unifying and motivating. ”

Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation is vital to Marymead CatholicCare's work to be there for people, in times of need, to make a positive difference, across the lifespan and to our core responsibility of working in solidarity under Catholic Social Teaching.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan embeds practical, strategic actions towards building services that are culturally responsive for staff, clients and the whole community; building partnerships with First Nations organisations and peoples; and acknowledging the wrongs of the past while celebrating First Nations cultures and histories.

On our reconciliation journey in 2023-24, we have continued to embed partnerships with Aboriginal Controlled Organisations into all aspects of our work including staff training, client services, procurement processes and community engagement. This has involved collaboration with Yerabi Yurwang Child and Family Corporation; Marrawuy Journeys; Korrimunication;

and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC). We have also strengthened our Human Resource policies and processes to embed First Nations perspectives and support recruitment processes, and engaged in reflective and advocacy opportunities centred around key events in support of reconciliation.

We look forward to embedding ongoing change across the organisation into 2024-25 and starting to think about developing our next key focus areas in collaboration with our First Nations partnerships and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Laura Pound
RAP Chair



Artist: Sarah Richards – Marrawuy Journeys

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 Child and Family Services 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.

Kim Linsell

Director Clinical Governance & Supervision



CARE – Creating Conditions for Change

In exploring trauma-informed frameworks, Marymead CatholicCare identified CARE as an evidence-based framework for working with children, young people and families that would be a good fit for our organisation.

CARE (meaning Children and Residential Experiences) was developed in 2006 by Cornell University to enable professionals to organise and deliver congruent and quality care in the best interests of children and families according to six research and evidence-based principles. These principles guide practice and interactions with children to create the conditions for change in their lives, and support care and treatment that is developmentally focussed, family involved, relationship based, competency centred, trauma informed and ecologically oriented.

We have engaged Life Without Barriers (LWB), the Australian agent for CARE, to support our organisation with training, implementation and evaluation of this framework across several of our child and family programs.

We learnt that Marymead was the first Australian agency to implement CARE in their residential and Contact programs, working with Cornell between 2011 and 2014. Marymead was instrumental in adopting a creative approach to CARE by introducing the framework into its supervised contact program, a non-residential program. It achieved some successful outcomes and while the residential program ceased, the Contact Program has maintained the principles as part of its service model.

In February, LWB facilitated the CARE Leadership Retreat with 23 staff from across various corporate and service delivery programs. The team engaged well, participating in group discussions and considering the needs of the organisation

and how to effectively implement CARE. The next step was to establish an Implementation Team, which has been meeting regularly as well as liaising with LWB.

It was decided to adopt a dual approach of training staff in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) as well as in the CARE principles. TCI complements CARE as it is a crisis prevention and management system, designed to reduce the necessity for physical management of children. MCCG is implementing a plan to support staff to become trainers for both TCI and CARE.

We are currently working with LWB and Cornell to conduct a survey with staff which will provide baseline data for the ongoing evaluation on the impact of CARE. This is an exciting new project for Marymead CatholicCare and we look forward to our continuing work with LWB and Cornell.

Kim Linsell

Director Clinical Governance & Supervision



Marymead CatholicCare Auxiliary

Marymead CatholicCare is extremely lucky to have a committed volunteer arm in the Auxiliary. These wonderful volunteers continue to support our programs and services and raised an access of \$105,000 in 2023, through a multitude of fundraising activities.

Their creativity and dedication have not only brought in significant funds but also fostered a sense of community and connection among supporters. These events have become cherished traditions, eagerly anticipated by many. The Auxiliary's efforts have enabled Marymead CatholicCare to expand its reach and enhance the quality of its services, directly impacting the lives of countless individuals and families.

The Auxiliary hosted their regular Plant and Garage Sales, Government House Spring Morning Tea and introduced new events such as their Winter Luncheon and High Tea.

As we reflect on the past year's achievements, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to each member of the Auxiliary. Their unwavering support and hard work are essential to our mission, and we look forward to continuing this rewarding partnership in the years to come.



Financials

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer oversees the strategic planning, management, and reporting of all financial resources, ensuring effective governance throughout the organisation.

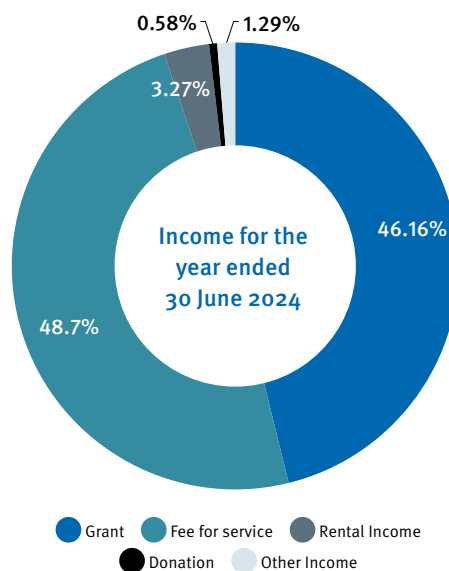
Key outcomes

In the 2024 financial year, Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn – like many community sector organisations – encountered a challenging funding landscape, especially within its NDIS programs.

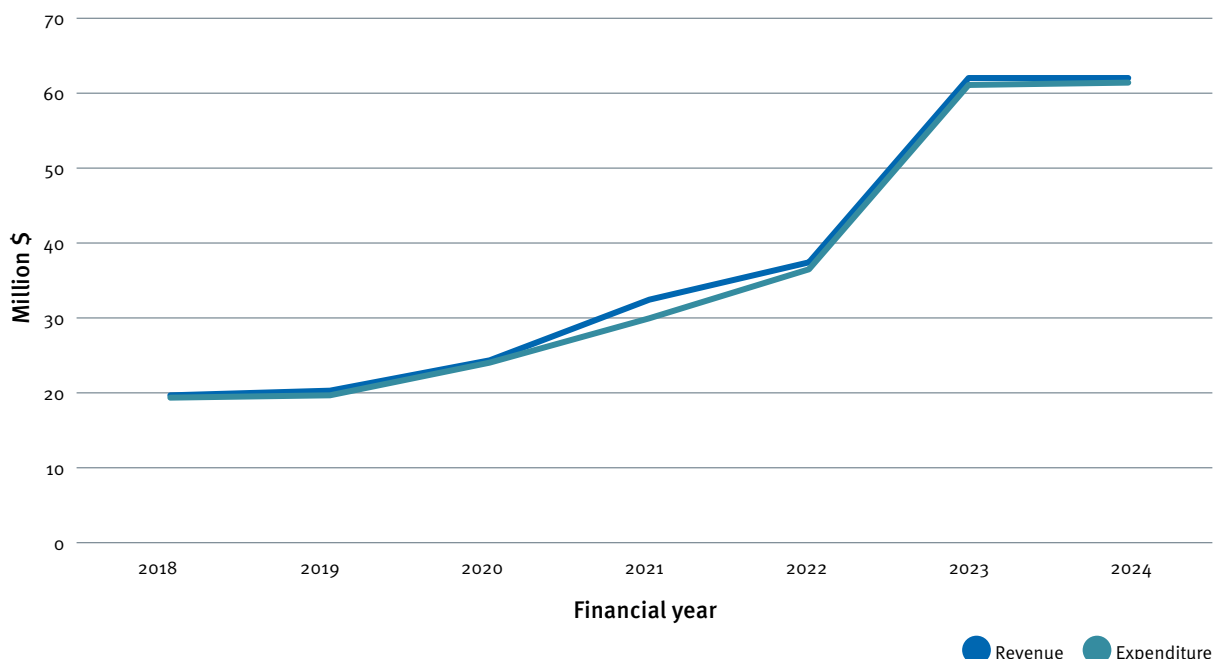
Despite limited indexation of government grants falling short of inflation and rising costs, prudent fiscal management enabled us to achieve a modest yet stable surplus, with total revenue slightly increasing to \$62 million.

Higher salary expenses, driven by the strategic priority of attracting and retaining skilled staff, ensured continuity of services to meet growing demand; employment costs remain our largest overall expenditure.

These results underscore our commitment to robust financial governance and responsible resource allocation, positioning us for continued growth and positive community impact in the year ahead.



Revenue and Expenditure Trend for the year ended 30 June 2024





Marymead CatholicCare Canberra & Goulburn

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