



Centrecare Marriage and Family Service 1994 Annual Report

Chairperson's Report

As in previous years, 1994 has been a time of continuous growth and challenges for Centrecare. The need to adapt to a changing environment has been of major concern to the agency. Reviews of government funded programs and a shift towards tendering has created uncertainty in the social welfare sector. Despite these uncertainties, Centrecare has continued to provide a wide range of services to the community.

A strategic planning exercise provided Centrecare with the opportunity to examine its past and present experiences in order to develop a focus for the future. The agency's Statutes were reviewed and work began on revising a more coherent mission statement for the agency. These have been important steps for Centrecare as it seeks to deliver services which remain relevant to the needs of the Western Australian community.

A 1994 highlight was the opening of new purpose built facilities for Goldfields Centrecare. Rapid development of the centre, already functioning to full capacity, is testimony to the needs of the local community and the high quality of service provided by the small number of committed staff. Sincere thanks are extended to the Management Committee and staff of Goldfields Centrecare for their significant contribution to this success.

The members of the board - Dianne Biachini, Martin Gribbon, Brian McKenna, Kevin Wringe and Fred Chaney are also to be thanked for their on-going involvement and commitment to the work of Centrecare. A special thanks to the staff and supporters of Centrecare and to the Director, Tony Pietropiccolo, who continues to provide invaluable assistance to the Board both in his role as Director and as a link between members of the board and staff of Centrecare.

The pace of change is not slackening and we look forward to next year as one of continuing challenges.



Shauna Deane, Acting Chairperson

Director's

Report

Much of Centrecare's expectations were fulfilled throughout 1994.

One of the agency's major challenges was to continue providing high quality and caring services in an environment increasingly concerned with the minimisation of costs. Despite this, Centrecare expanded existing services, introduced new programs and up-graded facilities during a time in which a fundamental change in business philosophy was required.

Changes to government policy and community attitudes mean that not-for-profit organisations, like Centrecare, need to make significant adjustments. For example, issues relating to tendering for government services; the need to be competitive; a culture that increasingly expects non-profit organisations to act like for-profit corporate entities while still

providing services at little cost to consumers, are some issues the agency is faced with. The impact of such changes is likely to be felt by the agency's staff, clients and the community.

However, Centrecare is well placed to meet these challenges. The agency has, for a number of years, implemented initiatives and adopted practices which allow it to continue contributing to the well-being of the Western Australian people. This would not have been possible to achieve without the creative abilities and sheer hard work of Centrecare staff.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their support: Catholic Archdiocese of Perth, the Department for Community Development, the Office of Legal Aid and Family Services, Homeswest, Healthway, the Ministry of Justice, the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia and St John of God Hospital, Subiaco.

Finally, the support and assistance of the members of the Board of Management has been greatly valued. And while I have already mentioned the commitment of Centrecare's staff, I would like to thank them once again for their valuable contributions.



Tony Pietropiccolo, Director

Parent-Teen Link

Parent-Teen Link continues to be very successful. Funded by the Department for Community Development (DCD), this program provides counselling to families where significant conflict between parent/s and a teenage child occurs.

Throughout 1994 around 380 referrals for counselling were made to the service with over 90 per cent of client families reporting positive outcomes as a result.

A continuing problem, however, is closure to referrals for up to 50 per cent of the time due to the small number of counsellors who can be employed with grant monies. Some extra funding in 1994 from the Department for Community Development enabled the employment of an extra counsellor until October.

This service is exclusively for use by families referred from the Department for Community Development.

Family Link

Family Link has completed a successful year.

This community-based program offers a range of services to low income families in the Mirrabooka, Balga, Koondoola and Girrawheen areas from the office at 2 Clabon Street, Girrawheen. The program has operated to capacity during all of 1994.

A range of innovative holiday programs have been offered, even when funding was not always accessible. In addition, free legal counsel is available one day a week. This program works in close liaison with the financial counselling service and with other community agencies in the locality.

Also during 1994, the DCD Young Mum's group was successfully piloted at Family Link and the Special Program for Youth has made use of the facilities on a weekly basis.

However, while the program has operated to capacity throughout 1994, demand shows that families would use a greater variety of programs if the necessary funds were available to implement them.

Hospital Social Work Service

1994 saw St John of God Hospital, Subiaco contract Centrecare to provide a social work service within the hospital. A senior social worker was appointed and has since expanded the hospital's patient care services. The worker's duties comprise caring for patients' families' social issues; providing information on community services, assistance with legal and Social Security matters; and advice on referrals for the accommodation of country patients. The service has been extremely successful and Centrecare hopes to extend its services in this area during 1995.



Robin Shine



Seve Edwards



Greg Chidlow



Lolita Skye-Lark and Prue Gargett

Financial Counselling

During 1994, Centrecare offered financial counselling services from the Hay Street and Girrawheen offices. Due to the successful application for funding through DCD's Poverty Program, this program has been available to families in the lower socio-economic group in the Mirrabooka, Balga, Girrawheen and Koondoola areas since March.

Family Skills

Funded by the Attorney General's Department, Canberra the Family Skills Training Program assists families in improving their general life skills and child rearing abilities. Families are assisted by helping them meet the needs of young children, cope with adolescent behaviour, budget effectively and better understand nutrition. Courses are run at a local hall in the northern suburb of Girrawheen. Holiday camps are organised for families, who otherwise would not have a holiday. The camps are also used to impart new skills in an enjoyable atmosphere. Approximately 150 new families were assisted during 1994.



Joe Goerke



Sara Mathews



Andrew Turnell

Centrecare Brief Therapy Service

Centrecare Brief Therapy Service (CBTS) is a research, training and clinical facility committed to fostering the highest standards of practice in 'brief therapy'. Brief therapy is a fairly pragmatic and focused approach to counselling people with a wide range of difficulties.

A team of therapists at Centrecare has been developing their expertise in brief therapy for the past seven years. CBTS, which was launched in 1993, has developed strong connections to leading practitioners of brief therapy around the world and is now making its own significant contribution to brief therapy practice. During 1994 CBTS provided training to more than 400 professionals in organisations around Australia.

CBTS staff have written several workbooks and articles presenting the latest developments in brief therapy. The program's staff are also working closely with the Department for Community Development in developing an innovative approach to the difficult area of child protection, called 'Signs of Safety'.

CBTS has also undertaken a major 'Year of the Family' research project called WA Families: Speaking for Themselves which presents the 'expert' views of 37 healthy families about how they make their relationships work.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP)

1994 saw the SAAP Program undergo a process of internal evaluation and transition. As a result, a greater clarity regarding the target group that the agency is best able to serve was achieved. The new intake procedures now ensure services are offered to those who meet the target criteria. This, in turn, has led to a greater rate of success with assisting clients to achieve their goals and a significant reduction in maintenance expenses.

A philosophical change has meant a focus on maintaining properties at a level more closely approximating standards encountered in the open rental market. Consequently, a number of rental properties have been returned to the owners and new properties are being sought. A recent development in the program has been the need for larger properties. Three, and especially four, bedroom houses to rent are very rare. Those properties currently unoccupied are two bedroomed and not appropriate for the current trend towards larger client families.

Counselling Programs

Many changes have happened within Counselling Programs over the last year.

A new program manager, several new counsellors and two Client Liason Officers were employed. The Client Liason Officers now take incoming telephone calls from clients wishing to make appointments. This has taken the pressure off switchboard operators and enables clients to be responded to sooner, thus reducing the need to place them on long waiting lists.

Relationship counselling continues to be the mainstay in counselling programs.

Pregnancy Counselling and Support Service

Due to the growing emphasis on counselling in this service area, a name change from Pregnancy Help to Centrecare Pregnancy Counselling and Support became necessary.

The demand for this service continues to grow. Throughout 1994 over 500 telephone (including crisis calls) and 150 office counselling sessions were recorded. It is expected that requests for assistance will increase as the service becomes increasingly known for its professionalism and genuine care.

Of major concern to the agency is how to secure sufficient on-going funding to meet the growing demand for the service. Available funds permitted the employment of one half-time counsellor and, with Healthway support, another part-time counsellor was employed to run a pilot group program for pregnant young women.

CY Mediation

CY seeks to help families where there are problems between parents and a young person. Its ultimate aim is to prevent youth homelessness and this is done through the use of mediation and counselling.

Families may be formally referred to this program or can seek assistance directly by telephoning Centrecare.

The mediation service was extended this year to include counselling. This was due to families having problems and issues not normally resolvable through mediation alone. The two mediators undertook an integrated training course in Solution Focused counselling.

In 1994 over 300 new families, involving more than 600 individuals, were seen. The funding body, the Federal Attorney General's Department, has since examined the operations of CY and assessed it as providing high quality and relevant help to families in need. CY is a free service.

ACCESS Programs

ACCESS Programs, which provides employee assistance counselling to company employees, is becoming more widely known. The agency's reciprocal Employee Assistance Program with Relationships Australia has also been well used and accepted by our staff in its inaugural year.

Domestic Violence Programs

As a result of increased State Government funding, the agency's Domestic Violence Program expanded in 1994. Over 80 people completed the four men's and women's groups conducted throughout the year. These programs, agency research and evaluation into the area of domestic violence are becoming widely recognised and respected.

Special Housing Assistance Program (SHAP)

Funded through Homeswest, SHAP provides support and advocacy to tenants in the South-Eastern, Perth metropolitan region whose tenancies are under threat.

This program has been evolving and developing over the last few years as the participating agencies come to grips with what can realistically be offered or achieved. During 1994, the program has had some significant success which has been acknowledged by the Executive Director of Homeswest.

The program is funded for two family support workers who have both consistently maintained full caseloads during the year. Due to the complexities of some client families, a full caseload is considered to be six families, at any one time.

At times during the year, referrals from Homeswest could not be accepted in order to maintain a manageable level of work for staff. The workers in SHAP provide a variety of support and advocacy services. Much of the SHAP work is done in the clients' homes. This entails a great deal of travel and working in environments which are potentially unsafe.



Bill Lawrie



Michelle Stickle



Neil Hamilton



Mary Radwell



Noelle Purvis

Goldfields Centrecare

1994 can well be described as a coming of age for Goldfields Centrecare. During this year the agency began to actualise many of the dreams and plans which had been formulated by the Management Committee and staff.

Of significance was the opening of the agency's purpose built office at 7 Dugan Street, Kalgoorlie in June which has already proved to be highly functional and appreciated.

Relationship Counselling

The central program for the agency has continued to be relationship counselling. During 1994 the agency conducted 1,509 interviews, attended by 395 new clients, with an average attendance of three visits per client. These figures reflect a 16 per cent growth in counselling from the previous year. This program is funded by the Federal Attorney General's Department.

Domestic Violence Group Programs

Goldfields Centrecare, with its strong commitment to family values, has continued to develop programs aimed at reducing the high proportion of domestic violence reported on the Goldfields. The agency estimates that 25 per cent of clients requesting counselling listed domestic violence as one of the primary reasons for seeking help. Consequently, educative programs aimed at informing people of alternatives to domestic violence were conducted across the Goldfields Region throughout 1994.

Marriage Education

Preparing for Marriage is another of Goldfields Centrecare's pro-active programs. The program aims at encouraging couples to maximise the potential of their relationship by enhancing communication and conflict resolution skills.

During 1994, 18 couples attended two group programs, with another four couples using individual sessions to deepen their understanding of themselves and their partnership before committing to marriage.

ACCESS Programs

During 1994 Goldfields Centrecare made a concerted effort to increase their regional profile as a quality supplier of Employee Assistance Programs (ACCESS). Currently, ACCESS Programs has contracts with three significant mining companies and a major state government organisation. This consolidation has been further enhanced by several fee for service contracts with other significant companies in the region. ACCESS Programs is also supplemented financially by sub-contracting to Indrad (EAP), Pace (Relationship Australia's EAP) and Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service clients in the region.

A new and innovative component of the ACCESS Programs has been to enhance Goldfields Centrecare's profile by training and supervising Critical Incident teams for both the mining industry and public sector.

Sex Offender Treatment Program

Another agency initiative has been the establishment and co-ordination of a Sex Offender Treatment Program operated under contract for the Ministry of Justice. Court mandated participants, either currently in prison or on community work orders, attended the agency each week for two hours on a 32 week group program.

The program, conducted at Goldfields Centrecare, has already received positive recognition as it is the first of its type, in Australia, to successfully integrate aboriginal and non-aboriginal participants.

The Future

If 1994 can be understood as Goldfields Centrecare's coming of age, then 1995 already suggests it is well positioned to become a vital part of the Goldfields infrastructure, especially in the area of relationship enhancement. To date, the agency has established a contract with the Central Health Authority for a program to research and establish support services for people living in the region who have a family member suffering from a severe mental illness.

With the potential in the region, Goldfields Centrecare has made plans to secure an adjacent property for future development. So with wisdom, integrity and dedication, it is anticipated that the agency will continue to expand within the region as a significant provider of professional relationship services.

The Financial Statement

The following is an abridged summary of the Income and Expenditure Statement for the years ending 30 June 1993 and 30 June 1994.

	1993	1994
Income		
Archdiocese of Perth	418,000	315,607
State Government	611,339	721,786
Federal Government	289,130	455,863
Other Income	372,454	570,341
Lotteries Commission	57,656	116,150
Total	1,748,579	2,179,747
Expenditure		
Salaries and On-costs	1,080,673	1,325,806
Administration	213,537	280,207
Transport	41,667	60,664
Accommodation	168,620	141,357
Housing	96,705	111,795
Equipment & Property		232,330
Total	1,601,202	2,152,159

The Staff of Centrecare Marriage and Family Service 1994

Rob Andrew, DV/Marriage Counsellor
Gil Baggen, Honorary Accountant
Marion Bogue, Marriage Counsellor, Volunteer
Graeme Burton, Marriage Counsellor
Wendy Butler, Social Worker
Debra Callaghan, Recept/Secretary Goldfields
Baljit Carroll, Preg Help Counsellor
Keith Carton, Projects Officer
Greg Chidlow, Program Manager
Margaret Collopy, Marriage Counsellor, Volunteer
Kim Cox, Secretary
Sue Cox, Part-time Receptionist
Leigh Croxford, Client Liaison Officer
Elizabeth Denniss, Typist/Office Assistant
Annie Dunn, PTL Counsellor
Debbie Easther, Preg Help Counsellor
Steve Edwards, PTL Counsellor
Sheena Edwards, DV/Marriage Counsellor
David Everitt, Mercury House Volunteer
Leó Fernandez, Social Worker
Prue Gargett, Family Support Worker
Jacinta Goerke, Administration Officer
Joe Goerke, Program Manager
Sr Loreto Gray, Welfare
Kevin Grenfell, Marriage Counsellor, Volunteer
Karen Hall, Marriage Counsellor, Volunteer
Neil Hamilton, Manager Goldfields
Patsy Hammer, Marriage Counsellor
Aroha Hanley, Personal Couns/Clinical Psych
Suzie Herbert, Family Support Worker
Dawn Lamperd, Counsellor, Goldfields
Bill Lawrie, Mediator
Lyn Little, Office Administrator, Goldfields
Sara Matthews, Client Liaison Officer
John May, Lawyer (Volunteer)
Sr Maureen McCarthy, Counsellor, Goldfields

Kath McKiernan, Bookkeeper
Wendy Meynert, Psych/Marriage Counsellor
Sandra Morgan, Family Support Worker
Arnya Morris, Casual Admin Assistant
Bart Paino, Volunteer
Lutz Pamberger, Family Counsellor
Ian Percy, Counsellor
Tony Pietropiccolo, Director
Gaelle Platt, Marriage Counsellor
Andy Pringle, Casual Admin Assistant
Noelle Purves, Receptionist
Yesna Radic, Counsellor, Goldfields
Joanne Rees, Typist/Office Junior
Mary Rodwell, Preg Help Counsellor
Elio Rossaro, Family Support Worker
Karen Saayman, Marriage Counsellor
Robin Shine, Program Manager
Lolita Skye-Lark, Family Support Worker
Fr Reg Smith, Counsellor, Volunteer
John Standfort, Financial Counsellor
Michelle Stickle, Mediator
Leanne Strommen, Family Support Worker
Susan Thomas, Recept/Secretary, Goldfields
Steve Truscott, Chaplain
Andrew Turnell, CBTS' Co-ordinator, PTL Counsellor
Laurie Turner, Maintenance
Ken Uren, SHAP Worker
Mary Van Wees, Office Administrator
Margaret Wilkes, Counsellor
Michelle Wilson, PTL Counsellor



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Marriage and Family Service**

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