



Bankstown
women's
health centre



Annual Report 2018-2019

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Fairfield Women's Health Service officially launched on 12th June 2019 by The Honourable Bronwyn Taylor (MLC) Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women, Professor Josephine Chow Director of Strategy and Partnership SWLHD Clinical Innovation and Business Unit, Mr Guy Zangari Member for Fairfield, and Denele Crozier CEO of Women's Health NSW

12th June 2019





Approx. 170 guests attended the official launch of the Fairfield Women's Health Service on 12th June 2019



We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of this land, the Aboriginal elders past and present. As we foster health and wellbeing, may we also pay respect to the healing knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal custodianship of country



Guest speakers included: Honourable Bronwyn Taylor Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women, CEO WHNSW Denele Crozier, CEO of BWHC Mariam Mourad, and client journey Thao Pham

Vietnamese traditional costume and dancing was showcased

An Arabic live band played music

A guided tour of the Fairfield Women's Health Service was offered



About us

Our Vision:

An empowered community which values and supports the health and wellbeing of women and their families. Our goal is to deliver meaningful and targeted services for women and their families to achieve positive health outcomes and sustainable wellbeing.

We are an independent, non-profit organisation run by women, for women and their families. We provide free or discounted health and wellbeing services in a safe, welcoming environment. We are committed to building a stronger community in which all women and their families are able to realise their full potential without fear of prejudice, violence or abuse.

Our People:

We are governed by a dedicated and informed Volunteer Board consisting of local women who have expertise in relevant fields such as education, finance, law, housing and health.

CEO Mariam Mourad, has led the Organisation to deliver quality health and wellbeing services for women.

Services and activities are delivered by an interdisciplinary team of qualified and accredited trauma-informed staff. Our team is supplemented and contracted by specialist contractors who provide outreach clinical services, and health and wellbeing activities.



BWHC board members AGM 2018

Chair's Report



Left to right: Professor Josephine Chow and BWHC Chair, Rene Demos

2019 has been an exciting and busy year and I have enjoyed being part of a committed and dynamic Board and team at Bankstown Women's Health Centre (BWHC).

It has been a privilege to lead the Board for the last 4 years, as we continue to build BWHC which leads the way in responding to the needs of the local women in our community.

BWHC team and our CEO Mariam Mourad maintain an excellent reputation across both the SWSLHD and the local community. This puts us at the forefront of innovative programs and service delivery to support and empower the local women and their families.

I would like to thank each of my fellow Board Members for their contribution this year. Thanks to Amani Haydar for her diligent work in her position as Secretary and her outstanding contributions to policies and practices with her extensive legal knowledge. Our Treasurer Karen Staines for her meticulous attention and efforts in assisting us to work through our financials. Karen has been a valuable resource as we work to build a sustainable future for BWHC whilst operating with integrity and transparency. Karen has consistently worked alongside other Board

members and our CEO to ensure financial processes was in accordance within stringent requirements.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank all our Board members for their voluntary time given to attend numerous meetings, their loyalty, dedicated work practices and valuable contributions to the decision making process.

This year we farewelled Janis Denman. Sadly, Janis indicated her need to resign from the Board due to other commitments. Janis brought a great deal of knowledge, wisdom and expertise from her field of work and I thank her for her many contributions.

We wish her well in the future in all areas of her life.

This year has been a year of growth for Bankstown Women Health. The Fairfield Women's Health Service (FWHS) was established in partnership with BWHC and Liverpool Women Health Centre. FWHS is now operational; I would like to thank Mariam Mourad on behalf of the Board for her leadership, her drive and her focus in guiding and assisting in the establishment of FWHS.

I appreciate that behind every great leader there is a whole team of highly dedicated and professional practitioners. I would like to thank each one of the BWHC staff who work tirelessly to improve the lives of local women and to improve the lives of women in our community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our funders, which includes SWSLHD, FACS and the Cancer Institute.

*Rene Demos
Chairperson of BWHC*

CEO Report



Another eventful and rewarding year at Bankstown Women's Health Centre, as we continue our pursuit to provide responsive and meaningful services for women and their families. Our priority is to persistently uphold our values whilst seeking to inspire hope for all the women that access Bankstown Women's Health Centre.

I am honoured to be leading a dedicated team of professional practitioners across both our Fairfield and Bankstown sites. Our team collectively works across the organisation and is continuously striving to improve the health and well-being of women and their families via accessible and effective service delivery.

This year marks my fifth year at Bankstown Women's Health Centre, which is a significant achievement for me personally. I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on some of the milestones that highlight the continuous growth and development of the Centre over the past 5 years.

2014 was my first year at Bankstown Women's Health and it was a year that denoted great change, primarily relating to the management of the centre. Our main aim of 2014 was to create stability with the Centre's team and re-establish relationships within our local government area.

In 2015, we acquired our QIC Accreditation and then moved our focus onto a more

appropriate level of accreditation that was well suited to the organisational needs. 2016 was the year we were recognised as a 'highly responsive' women's organisation across the local government area.

In 2017, Bankstown Women's Health Centre turned 40 years and in light of this milestone, we took the opportunity to rebrand Bankstown Women's Health.

2018 marked a year of significant growth where we worked alongside Liverpool Women's Health Centre to establish a new service. Fairfield Women's Health Service was launched on the 12th June 2019, and is a result of our effective partnership with Liverpool Women's Health Centre. To date, this has been one of the most significant milestones in ensuring accessible and responsive services for women across Western Sydney.

This year has been a year focused on a high level of service delivery and notably the following programs have ensured that this is upheld:

The successful establishment of Fairfield Women's Health Service, and;

The Delivery of the 'Wellness for Women' Program, which is a new initiative by Bankstown Women's Health and funded by the Cancer Institute. The program targets Arabic and Vietnamese women who are affected by cancer.

It was also the first year of the Food Share Program which is aimed at addressing one of the SWSLHD health priorities, being 'food security.' The response has been outstanding.

I would like to thank BWHC board, the BWHC and FWHS teams for their continuous support, and look forward to another productive year.

Mariam Mourad, CEO
Bankstown Women's Health Centre 2019

Treasurer's Report



From a finance perspective, the 2018-19 financial year period has again been a challenging, yet rewarding year with a strong focus on compliance, policy and procedures.

BWHC continues to perform well and is in sound financial shape, thanks to the hard work and commitment of all the Board members, the CEO and our wonderful staff and internal bookkeepers, always working together in harmony.

Most importantly, the centre operated within its projected budget and we can meet our financial responsibilities when and if they fall due.

We acknowledge the South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) for our core recurrent funding, Family & Community Service funding, and other grants we received and tendered from local bodies. These resources together, ensure we deliver the highest quality services to women and their families in our local and broader community.

The tasks of financial management and reporting has increased from previous years with the Centre now receiving funds from

SWSLHD for the operation of the re-established Fairfield Women's Health Service to co-manage with Liverpool Women's Health Centre.

In regard to financial risk management, in May 2019 the board contracted an additional bookkeeper to work in conjunction with our existing bookkeeper. This strategy ensures the Centre has a continuance plan and to keep up to speed with the introduction of new payroll processes and online accounting software.

I look forward to the next financial year, continually engaging with the community as the centre evolves and strives to achieve an important leadership role in delivering important targeted health services for women within the South Western Sydney region.

It is a pleasure to be associated and work with dedicated women on the Board, the CEO and the committed, passionate employees at BWHC.

Karen Staines
Treasurer – Bankstown Women's Health Centre Board.

Our Services

We deliver Health and Wellbeing services for local women and their families. Our services and activities are delivered in alignment with NSW health priorities and community needs.

The majority of women refer to our Centre with complex and multiple issues having experienced interpersonal trauma including domestic and family violence, and childhood abuse.

Many women who access our centre have experienced a range of issues and challenging barriers, including but not limited to; homelessness, financial barriers, unemployment, social isolation, mental health issues, domestic and family violence, family breakdown, relationship issues, language barriers, and poor health and wellbeing.

Our staff and contractors collaborate across services, disciplines and activities to provide integrated trauma-informed care to individual clients and to multiple family members, in order to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma and support each person's personalised healing and recovery process.

Information and Referral

Our full-time bilingual Information and Referral Officer Rima provides a warm greeting for women who access our services; handles telephone calls, email and face-to-face enquiries; and conducts the initial intake process for the team. A key service is providing local information, linkages and referrals to relevant local services.

Case Management

Working primarily with women experiencing domestic and family violence, our Case Managers use a collaborative process of assessment, case planning, facilitation, referrals and advocacy to identify and meet each woman's health and wellbeing needs.

The Case Managers use a strength-based, woman-centred approach that emphasises

women's self-determination, strengths, and resilience in the face of adversity. The Case Manager and the woman work closely together to implement and achieve the agreed goals within a given time frame. We work with women with Work Development Orders who are seeking to access mental health treatment and life skills courses to satisfy debt obligations. The Case Management Service receives and assesses referrals from NSW Justice Department, Bankstown Hospital, Family Referral Service, Centrelink, Housing NSW, and non-government organisations. Self-referrals are also received.

The Case Management team coordinates and facilitates many Social, Health, Educational, and Wellbeing groups to meet the needs of the BWHC Clients. This year included: Active Women, Wellness for Women, Healthy Lifestyle Group, Yoga, Food Share, Volunteers Program, Food Safety Training, the Vocational Educational Training (Certificate 3 Individual Support), events, workshops, health promotion sessions, nutrition sessions and outreach Wellness for Women sessions.



Craft group Tuesdays 9.30am to 11.30am



Cultural exchange morning August 2019

"I need to address what has happened to me" "The trauma keeps popping up and affecting my life" "I now have hope for the future for the first time in my life"

Generalist Counselling

A trauma-informed Generalist Counselling service is provided free of charge for women living and working in Bankstown LGA. The majority of women accessing the service are survivors of childhood trauma, including sexual abuse, who have subsequently experienced domestic violence as adults. Working within a bio-psychosocial framework, the Generalist Counselling service collaborates closely with other members of the team to maximise opportunities to support women with trauma issues and associated emotional stability and attachment (relationship) challenges. We also support women to access other services that foster their health and wellbeing.

As a counsellor advocate, the Generalist Counsellor is involved in raising awareness, knowledge and understanding of the impacts of childhood trauma and domestic violence within the community.



Child and Adolescent Trauma service (CAT service), recently named Child Sexual Assault Service

Our Child and Adolescent Trauma service provides free counselling and support for children and adolescents who have experienced violence, sexual abuse, and trauma. After-hours appointments are available enabling children and young people to access the service outside school hours. Outreach support is offered in schools when required. The counsellors facilitate the Tuning into Teens Parenting Program, and the Love Bites Respectful Relationship Program, within the local area.

Health

We promote the health and wellbeing of women and their families in our community through a combination of Health Promotion methods, primarily education, community development and advocacy.

Activities and health promotion workshops are designed to deliver information on health and wellbeing, and disease prevention to a culturally diverse community

Health Promotion activities include groups, workshops, exhibitions, events, outreach groups and health presentations aligned with NSW Health Priorities. Some examples for this year have been health workshops at local schools, wellness festivals, IWD, community centres, community hubs, cultural groups, and meetings.

Promotion

Our services

Dietician

Our accredited practising dietician has specialised knowledge of nutrition and women's health. Our dietician uses a toolbox of knowledge, skills and nutrition counselling techniques to assist women with making dietary and lifestyle modifications. Diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic disease are addressed in individual appointments, outreach workshops and weekly lifestyle exercise groups delivered by our dietician.

Furthermore, she assists those who have experienced domestic and family violence to ensure nutrition and healthy eating is maintained. A common presenting nutritional demand from women is practical advice on dealing with eating out of emotion during acute stress and trauma, associated with experiences of domestic violence and daily stressors.



Healthy Lifestyle Group held weekly and facilitated by our dietician; a nutritional educational workshop, a brisk walk, followed by a 40 minute session at a women's only gym

Contracted Services:

Psychologist

The BWHC Arabic speaking Psychologist specialises in working with all mental health issues including domestic and family violence. Our psychologist is available Thursdays and Fridays, two days per week and bulk billing is provided through the Medicare scheme. A Mental Health Care Plan is required from the patient's GP. Our psychologist has moved on, and we have just engaged a new contracted clinical psychologist.



Medical Clinic

Our medical clinic specialises in women's health issues and is provided by a female health practitioner Dr Ngaire Millener. It is a bulk billing service through the Medicare scheme.

Responding to needs of Local Women and the Community

Wellness for Women 'Cancer Support Group' at Bankstown and Fairfield Centres (funded by the Cancer Institute NSW)

BWHC has worked closely with the NSW Cancer Institute to lessen the impact of cancer for women in the community. BWHC applied for a Cancer Institute grant to address priority 6: *'improving the experiences of people with cancer in multicultural communities'*.

Research identified poorer outcomes for CALD women affected by cancer. There are many myths and beliefs about cancer in CALD communities. These myths and beliefs are addressed through the educational components of the project at Bankstown and Fairfield, and delivered by highly qualified and experienced bilingual facilitators targeting Arabic and Vietnamese speaking women. The mentor training further aims to educate women and addresses the myths and beliefs in their respective communities. The project provides a strong support focus, which includes evidence informed modalities to address emotional and social suffering. Outreach sessions have served to reach participants at local schools, parent groups, hospital oncology wards, and community centres.

Through the delivery of the program, it has been identified that a culturally sensitive and appropriate cancer support group is much needed for CALD women. 32 women from Arabic and Vietnamese speaking backgrounds have accessed the support group as cancer survivors; 16 with breast cancer, 2 brain cancers, 2 bowel cancers, 1 lung cancer, 2 stomach cancers, 2 with metastasised cancers, and 7 did not wish to disclose or discuss their cancer. In addition, 40 women attended the Mentor Training and Leadership Program.



"People think I did something bad in my past life to get cancer"

"Don't tell anyone in my community that I have cancer, as they won't talk to me, I will only tell you and not people from my cultural background"

Anna (Thao Pham) is a lung cancer survivor and attends the Cancer Support Group at Fairfield Women's Health Service. Anna has shared her story at the Fairfield Women's Health Service launch and also shared her story in a video produced by the Cancer Institute NSW, filmed at the Centre.

Responding to needs of Local Women and the Community



“Wellness for Women: Cancer Support Group” Leadership Training (funded by the Cancer Institute NSW)

A two day leadership training workshop was delivered to 20 Vietnamese and 20 Arabic speaking women who have been identified in the community as mentors. The workshop was delivered by the Cancer Council across two days at Bankstown Women’s Health Centre. These mentors are also members of the weekly support group and have received ongoing education on the myths and beliefs about cancer, cancer education and treatment, stress and relaxation techniques, healthy eating and living, and screening information and awareness.



Cancer Council Leadership Training (two day workshop, May 2019)



Cancer Council Leadership Training (2 day workshop, May 2019)

Multicultural Retreat (funded by the Canterbury Bankstown Council, and Cancer Institute NSW) in partnership with Bankstown Community Resource Group

During the Earthbound retreat in 2016, the desire to have a multicultural retreat for Aboriginal/Arabic women was expressed by the participants. The aim of the Multicultural Women’s Retreat was cultural exchange between Aboriginal and Arabic women to facilitate community cohesion. Six Arabic women were identified from the Wellness for Women program to attend the multicultural retreat. Five women who were living with cancer attended the multicultural camp retreat in May 2019. There were a total of fifteen women (eight Aboriginal and six Arabic). Women shared their stories and memorable moments. Through the sharing of stories the women realized that they shared the same struggles which created a lot of empathy and mutual support. At times there were tears and at times there was laughter and times there was both!



Multicultural Retreat, May 2019

Responding to needs of Local Women and the Community



Volunteers unpacking food for the food share program, June 2019

Food Share Program

The Food Share program provides the Canterbury Bankstown Community access to weekly fresh fruit, vegetables and staples, for a small donation of \$2 towards transport costs. The Foods Share Program has become a community hub, reducing food insecurity, ensuring the community has access to fresh nutritional food, and meeting the community nutrition and health needs.

Volunteers Program: An Information session was held for 16 women from the community who wished to volunteer for the food share program. Volunteers committed to attend a food hygiene handling course, and an interview to be successful for the volunteer roles.



Offering a craft and art social group, via a partnership with SSI, June 2019

Working with Cultural Groups in our Community

BWHC connects with cultural groups in the community, by attending group meetings, facilitating health education talks, and building connections to ensure BWHC reach the most marginalised women.

Legal Aid DV Outreach Service:

BWHC, in partnership with Legal Aid NSW, delivers a fortnightly outreach legal aid to support women experiencing domestic violence. Women who have experienced domestic and family violence are able to access legal advice and support through appointments with Legal Aid staff in our safe, women-only space at BWHC.

BWHC Have your Say Day

Our annual Have your Say Day is the time when BWHC consults with the community about their needs and service provision. The 2018 Have your Say Day was combined with our annual End of Year Xmas Celebration and Presentation.

86 attended this event. Certificates of appreciation were given to 12 of our Food Share volunteers. There was a celebration of women and culture with music, presentations, cultural food and speeches. Centre client surveys were completed.

Responding to needs of Local Women and the Community



WIN leadership Camp: Building Local Worker's Capacity

BWHC organised a Leadership Camp for the local community workers.

12 participants and emerging leaders were identified from the local community sector through a recruitment process. These workers were invited to take part in the camp in order to build their capacity to be our next generation of leaders, as their roles requires them to go beyond traditional management competencies to achieve organizational objectives.

Using the three components of self-awareness, empowerment and activation, the program was focused on aiding participants to recognize their strengths, build an ongoing support network of peers from a range of industries and sectors, and develop the skills and confidence to achieve their leadership potential.



Community Housing Consultation:

The Community Housing Consultation was planned and facilitated by BWHC and attended by approximately 70 stakeholders who shared and discussed their personal and professional experiences of accessing DV-specific crisis accommodation in Canterbury Bankstown LGA. 16 attendees expressed interest in joining a committee or action group to shape future discussions around the issue of DV-specific crisis accommodation in our community.

Quote: "About time someone is doing something about the lack of access to crisis accommodation in our area. Thank you BWHC, this is what is needed."



BWHC Board Secretary Amani Haydar, an advocate for women's issues and working closely with local federal member for changes to the domestic violence legislation

Collaborating with Local, State and Federal Government, and NGO Agencies

Women's Community Shelters Community Forum

Tuesday 23rd July at 6.30pm
Revesby Workers' Club (Function Centre)

Women's Community Shelters (WCS) is working with Revesby Workers' Club to explore the establishment of a shelter in the Canterbury Bankstown LGA.

The Shelter will support up to six women and their children who are homeless or leaving domestic violence and provide up to three months safe housing, with on-site support to assist with their needs.

Come along and discuss the potential establishment of a women's shelter in your area.

Location: Revesby Workers' Club, Function Centre, 2B Brett St, Revesby NSW 2212

Get Involved: Interested in being a part of this project?
Please RSVP: angelas@rwc.org.au by Friday 19 July.

For more info: Please email: hello@womenscommunityshelters.org.au




Women from Vanuatu came to BWHC and shared their traditional dance, stories, and weaving. BWHC clients came dressed in their cultural costumes and celebrated with the South Sea Islander women

BWHC has collaborated with the women's community shelters and Revesby workers to join the committee to establish a local women's crisis accommodation shelter



Advocating for improved parking at the Bankstown Hospital



Cultural Exchange Morning

The aim of the cultural exchange morning was to improve understanding of the South Sea Island Culture, history, and recognition of the injustices served. 48 local women from the community attended this event.

Quotes: "So glad I came, I have never been better since I started coming here to the BWHC, about 4 weeks ago." "I feel so comfortable and connected somewhere."

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Australia is renowned for being a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) country, and a large and growing CALD population are Arab-Australians. The health benefits of physical activity are widely reported, from reducing the risk of various chronic diseases to also helping with weight control. Despite these benefits, many Arab-Australian adults are not doing enough physical activity for health.

Finding fun, enjoyable, and culturally appropriate physical activity programs as an Arab-Australian is a challenging process as many programs do not consider the various cultural norms and practices of different CALD groups. We have developed a culturally tailored program aimed at increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour for Arab-Australian women aged 35-64 years.

The 12-week program will aim to highlight the importance of physical activity, offer strategies and opportunities to address the barriers with physical activity. Unlike other programs, this program will be tailored to suit the Arab-Australian culture.

ARE YOU AN ARAB-AUSTRALIAN WOMAN AGED BETWEEN 35-64?

Would you like to participate in a free physical activity program aimed at increasing your physical activity levels for health?

You're invited to participate in a physical activity program designed for Arab-Australian women aged 35-64 years.

If you would like more information or if you would like to participate in the program please contact:

AFRINAH EL HAJARI
af.hajari@westernsydney.edu.au
02 9595 9200

DR JESSIE DEVLIN
j.devlin@westernsydney.edu.au
02 9595 9200

Partnership with Western Sydney University, August 2019

Collaborating to Achieve Women's Health Priorities

We work in partnership with agencies, government bodies and funders to deliver specialist services and activities in alignment with Women's Health and SWSLHD priorities.

Women's Health Priority: Violence

Our trauma-informed Casework and Generalist Counselling services work primarily with local women whose health, wellbeing and safety are being negatively affected by issues associated with domestic and family violence. Women are provided with support and practical assistance to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and their children. Women are linked as relevant to our trauma-sensitive health and wellbeing activities and externally to relevant local services.

Women's Health Priority: Lifestyle-Related Chronic Disease

Facilitating a healthy lifestyle group each week, the group aims at addressing and supporting women who have or are at risk of a lifestyle-related chronic disease. Our dietician Renee delivers a program designed to address the nutritional needs of local women, which ranges from obesity, diabetes and metabolic syndrome. It's during this group that women are supported and provided with practical tools pertaining to portion control, nutrition, healthy eating and participation in physical fitness with a personal trainer at a local women's only gym.



NSW Health Eating Strategy: Food Security

The Food Share Project is a successful and innovative initiative that provides women and their families access to food security. The Food Share program offers weekly access to free fruit, vegetables and food items. This project aims to increase the consumption of fruit and vegetables, increase community awareness of

healthy eating, and enable all women and their families to have access to food.

Women's Health Priority: Reproductive and Sexual Health:

Our Health Promotion Worker facilitates many outreach information sessions in the community. A women's health doctor provides cervical screening, menopause management, pre post-natal care, and all medical issues relating to women's health.

Women's Health Priority: Screening

Weekly women's health clinics are provided by our contracted Women's Health Doctor to provide cervical screenings, breast screenings, domestic violence screenings and checks for sexually transmitted diseases. Our Health Promotion Worker has facilitated 20 outreach groups encouraging women to book for Breast Screen NSW and cervical screening test.



Women's Health Priority: Mental Health and Social Wellbeing

Our Generalist Counselling service works collaboratively with other members of the interdisciplinary team within our feminist bio-psychosocial framework to support women and children with experiences of domestic and family violence, including childhood trauma, to heal and recover from loss, grief and interpersonal trauma. Our Child Sexual Assault Service is funded by FACS and CSA counsellors also collaborate closely with other members of our team, including the Generalist Counsellor, which optimises our capacity to support the healing and recovery of women and their families.

Women's Health Priority: Reduce Disease and Illness, and Mental Health and Wellbeing

Facilitating a weekly over-55 years Active Woman Group, where each week the group aims at addressing physical exercise to enhance balance, and for falls prevention. Education and information on health and wellbeing is delivered in this group.

Collaborating to Achieve Women's Health Priorities

Women's Health Priority: Mental Health and Wellbeing

In collaboration with Ability Links, BWHC was able to offer a craft mindfulness group each week. The group aim was to address the impact of social isolation of women in our community. Our weekly healthy lifestyle group also addresses not only nutritional information and education, but also develops social connections and encourages physical activity.

Local Domestic Violence Committee

BWHC staff members regularly attend network and interagency meetings. BWHC chairs the local domestic violence committee which is held on the third Tuesday of the month at Punchbowl Community Centre. The Canterbury-Bankstown Domestic Violence Liaison Committees work for the community, providing services to women, children or families where domestic violence is identified. Meetings provide the opportunity for networking and sharing information about services, trends, training opportunities, community education and raising the awareness of the impact of violence on the lives of women and children. These are all key areas that each committee takes a leadership role in. The committee is involved in various community awareness campaigns, including No Excuse for Abuse, It's Time to Talk, Stronger Communities, and training and awareness campaigns

Raising Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Amongst the Local Community by Attending Different Events:

Participating locally in events such as White Ribbon, and No Excuse for Abuse by Campsie police area command.

Women's Health Priority: Violence

The NEW SEXUAL ASSUALT VIDEO was released in collaboration with Canterbury-Bankstown Council, other local agencies and the Domestic Violence Liaison Committee. BWHC were instrumental in developing the Canterbury Bankstown Says NO to Domestic Violence video.

Canterbury-Bankstown Says NO to Domestic Violence



No Excuse for Abuse working committee, sponsored by Campsie police area command, February 2019



White Ribbon, Bankstown Centro, July 2019

Service Statistics

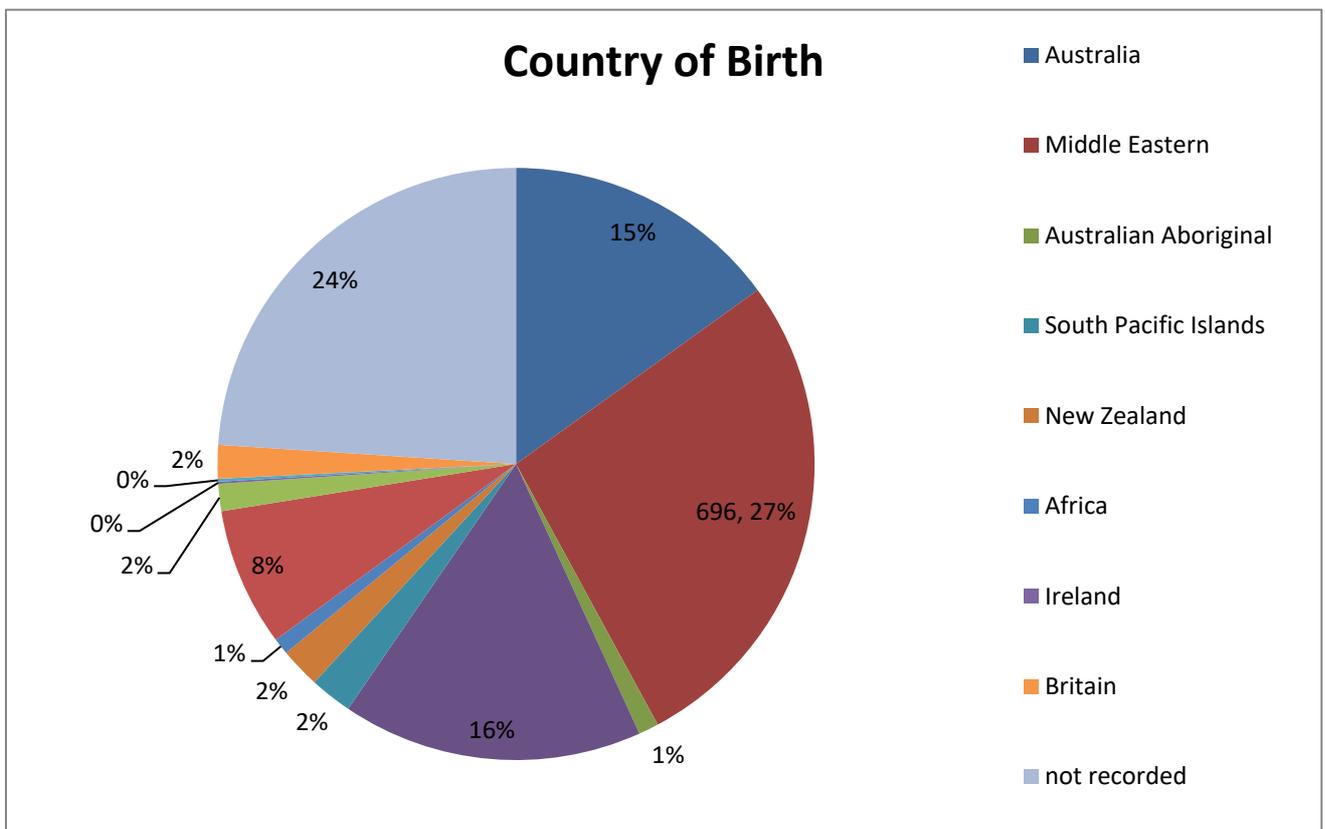
01/07/2018 – 30/06/2019

Client Service Contacts: 1836 (occasions of service, attended centre appointments)

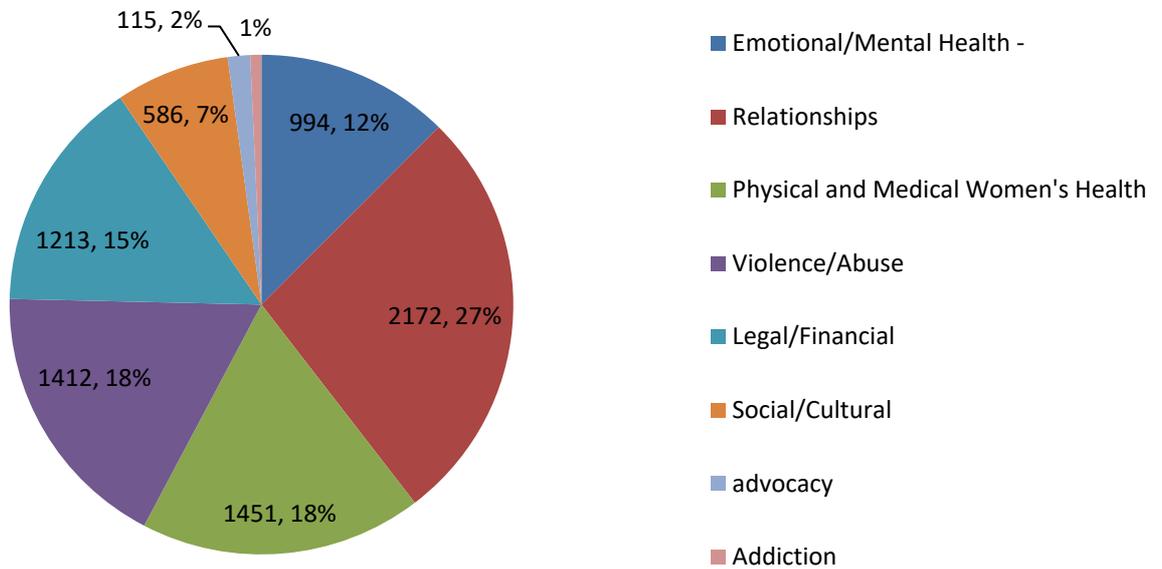
Client Service Contacts: 2709 (occasions of service includes information, phone calls and support)

First point of Contact: Clients contact (560 phone calls, 3,149 emails, 2161 face-to-face, 420 internal referrals)

Attendances at Groups, Workshops, and Activities: 4304



Presenting Issues



Collaborating to Meet the Needs of Families

CSA counsellors Greta and Cherie from our Child and Adolescents Trauma Counselling Service (CATS) attend the local Families NSW Interagency meeting, networking and promoting the CATS service to local agencies.

Tuning into Teens:

The CSA Counsellors, now the Child and Adolescent Trauma counsellors delivered the Tuning into Teens parenting program at Birrong High School, August 2019. The program was delivered to 14 parents

Quotes: *“Being able to identify my emotions as well as my own has been really helpful.”*

“Through emotion coaching techniques I have been able to get my children to open up about their worries and concerns.”

“I loved this program, it has been very useful.”

“I am more aware of conversing with my children and recognising their emotions. I now ask them what they feel and how they would like to resolve a situation.”

“I feel like I know my child and can put myself in their shoes.”



Love Bites:

The CATS counsellors deliver 2 Love Bites programs per year in partnership with Mission Australia and NAPCAN. Love Bites is a successful, accredited school-based domestic and family violence sexual assault prevention program, and respectful relationship program.

The BWHC team regularly attends meetings such as South West Sydney Local Health District Safe Start Panel, Families NSW interagency, SWS Domestic and Family Violence Alliance Network, Canterbury - Bankstown Domestic Violence Liaison Committee, Multicultural Network, Canterbury - Bankstown inclusive communities, Canterbury - Bankstown Safety Reference committee, the Council Women's Reference Group, Stronger Communities, Blaxland Stronger Communities committee, Cancer Institute meetings and forums, Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault committee and Safety Action meetings.



Case study: Assisting Women to Become Independent, Have Options and Control of their Lives Using Trauma Informed Approach

Rema*, aged 30, first visited our centre in 2015 as she had relationship issues and felt very isolated at home. Client was from Bangladesh and did not know what her rights were in Australia. Over the years, client attended information sessions as well as courses. Client was very determined to be educated, know what her options are if she left the abusive relationship, and make sure her son would be cared for.

Client attended her appointment in February 2019 and gave me information regarding her situation. Client was traumatised and found it difficult to explain her circumstances and what issues she needed assistance with. Client also felt overwhelmed by her situation. Client had been physically assaulted by her husband in front of friends and police were called.

Client was experiencing low self-esteem, anxiety, depression and feelings of loss, and physical and emotional abuse. Client also felt that she was being intimidated and isolated by her partner, and needed assistance in navigating the legal system as well as domestic violence services.

Client was very emotional and informed me that police had charged her husband with domestic violence assault and an apprehended violence order taken out. Client was also concerned what her community and family would think about the situation and having police involved. Client has informed me that this was not the first time she had been assaulted, but friends saw the assault and police were called.

Client was given an apprehended violence order and her husband was not allowed to reside in the house until after the court matter. I ensured I listened to the client, and ensured her needs were important and completed relevant paperwork in relation to Victims Services immediate needs brokerage, as well as ongoing needs such as Housing and Centrelink. Client also wanted to undertake her test to be an Australian Citizen which was very important to her. After the first court date client decided to

I really appreciate the caseworker and her passionate and caring relationship with me when I was desperate. She provided me the support when I was most in need

"We are so lucky to have the Women's Health Centre. It is a great support for women. Hope will stay for ever and ever."

leave her home and move in with friends, then apply for Start Safely.

Housing forms were completed and submitted, and in the interim client was granted \$5,000 brokerage through Victim Services for rental expenses and household goods.

Client received legal advice from the legal aid domestic violence unit, as well as seeing a psychologist through Victim Services to assist her with emotional abuse, depression, anxiety, and parenting assistance with her son. Centrelink was also informed of her situation and her information updated and she was given the Newstart Allowance.

I had regular contact with client and needed to explain face to face any emails she received or information as English was her second language.

Client had lots of strengths which were utilised to enable her to become independent and decide for herself what choices she wanted to make. Client was able to navigate the legal system as well as apply and be successful in receiving Start Safely and passing her exam to be an Australian citizen.

Client regularly makes contact with the service to inform myself what she is doing and how happy she is with her life.

**Names and personal details have been changed to uphold confidentiality and privacy.*

Case study: Assisting Women across all Age and Ability Status towards Making Nutrition and Physical Activity Priority.

Case study: Assisting women across all age and ability status towards making nutrition and physical activity priority.

NSW Health Priority: Lifestyle health related chronic disease, nutrition and physical activity/healthy weight, mental health and social wellbeing.

Demonstrates: Trauma informed approach, collaborative interdisciplinary teamwork.

Sarah* is a 58 year old Egyptian born married woman, of Egyptian and Syrian heritage, who was referred to our dietician by her health care professional outside of the centre.

Sarah was referred to our service secondary to suffering from several medical and mental health issues. Her conditions require medication. She currently lives at home with her husband. Sarah is currently under the care of a psychiatrist and psychologist outside of Bankstown Women's Health Centre.

Due to her complex medical issues requiring nutritional intervention, she was referred to the dietician service to gain professional assistance. On the client contacting the centre, she was interested and begun participating in the healthy lifestyle group run by the dietician, followed by a 30 minute personal training session at the gym. Sarah attended for many consecutive weeks and made a personal effort to schedule an appointment to see the dietician for a face-to-face consultation.

Having attended both the healthy lifestyle group and face-to-face consult, Sarah has had successful results on a multifaceted level. First success can be seen through weight loss, followed by reported improvements of biochemistry markers. More so, Sarah has voiced that her general health and wellbeing

has significantly improved since commencing the class and accessing the dietician service. A significant improvement seen by this client is the development of education and empowerment of the client by the service to make informed decisions about her own health and wellbeing.

Whilst attending the centre, Sarah was only medically focused, with her medical regime structured around what her GP and specialists had prescribed, both medicinal and herbal. One specific marker which caused significant stress to Sarah was her endocrinologist prescribing a low carbohydrate diet to stabilise blood glucose levels and reduce Hba1c (biochemistry marker). Irrespective of following a low carbohydrate diet and exercise, her blood glucose levels remained elevated. With the dietician providing education to her regarding the stages of diabetes, and its progression, the dietician recommended a review of medication was needed by her specialist. Sarah was empowered to discuss the review of her medications with the specialist, which resulted in stabilised blood glucose levels.

Renee will continue to see Sarah on a regular basis with the goal of weight loss and blood glucose stabilisation a priority.

**Names and personal details have been changed to uphold confidentiality and privacy.*

Case study: Child and Adolescent Trauma Counselling Service

Subjected to emotional abuse and having been exposed to sexual abuse from a young age, sixteen year old Vivian* struggled with her day to day life. Not knowing who she could trust, Vivian felt confused, ashamed and worthless. Also, Vivian was blamed by her family for her sexual assaults and was told by her family that they did not believe her and she was making it all up.

After disclosing a recent sexual assault and self-harm to her friends, Vivian was referred to the Child and Adolescent Trauma Counselling Service where the counsellor ensured a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space for Vivian to come and talk. Working from a Trauma-Informed approach, the counsellor worked with Vivian providing a safe space for Vivian to talk, explore and unpack her feelings and emotions. The counsellor provided Vivian with information around trauma, validated her feelings and gave Vivian the safe space she needed to understand she was not to blame and that she deserved respect.

Vivian was able to unpack some past unsafe choices and draw connections to her past abuse, her trauma and the impact this had on her. At times Vivian felt challenged while working through her trauma, however over the two years she attended counselling regularly by choice, she was able to get to a stage where she no longer blamed herself and she no longer felt shame around her sexual abuse. Instead Vivian began to feel empowered; she no longer had thoughts of self-harm, and started to think about her goals in life. Working with the

counsellor, Vivian was able to look at her network of support and recognise who she felt safe with and who she could trust.

Working in conjunction with Case Management, Vivian was also able to pay off some debts through the WDO.

**Names and personal details have been changed to uphold confidentiality and privacy*



Our Services

Fairfield Women's Health Service (FWHS) is now up and going full steam ahead. The Service was officially launched in June 2019 and is funded by South Western Sydney Local Health District through NGO partnership for Health. The target group is immigrant, CALD and refugee women from the LGA of Fairfield. The Fairfield Women Health Service provides treatment/prevention programs regarding mental health issues, supports and treats issues of child/family violence, provides prevention programs to reduce disease and illness, and provides programs to delay or prevent chronic disease in alignment with NSW health priorities, funding and grant agreements. The model is a partnership between Bankstown Women's Health Centre (BWHC) and Liverpool Women's Health Centre (LWHC) to deliver health and wellbeing services for immigrant and refugee women in the Fairfield LGA.

The service offers:

Bilingual Client Service Officers

Currently the Service is available Monday – Friday, and the reception is closed Wednesdays. The BWHC and LWHC workers share this role of 2 days each. The client service officers are bilingual and speak Vietnamese and Arabic, and so are able to provide information and referrals in different languages for women who have language barriers.

Bilingual Case Management Service

BWHC provides 2x bilingual caseworkers for women in the community, working primarily with women experiencing domestic and family violence. Our Case Managers use a collaborative process of assessment, case planning, facilitation, referrals, and advocacy to identify and meet each woman's health and wellbeing needs.

The case workers use a strength-based, woman-centred approach that emphasises a woman's self-determination, strengths and resilience in the face of adversity. The case worker and the woman work closely together to implement and achieve the agreed goals in a given time frame. The case workers also facilitate the cultural Vietnamese group each Wednesday, and coordinates different educational programs within the group to meet the needs of the women. Extra workshops outside of the group are also offered, such as the cultural exchange morning, the breast cancer session, and Vocational Education Training Qualification Certificate 3 individual supports.

Bilingual Dietician Service:

BWHC provides a free and confidential dietician service, outreach workshops, and a weekly healthy lifestyle group. This service provides information and advice about food, nutrition, and weight management. The dietician can assist with special dietary needs for women with conditions such as diabetes, cancer, food allergies and chronic health conditions.

Clinical Nurse:

Joanne Perks from LWHC provides a free and confidential service every fortnight. This Clinical Service includes Cervical Screening, breast check, pregnancy test, post-natal check, and screening for heart disease, Chlamydia tests, and pelvic floor assessment. Information and referral on domestic violence, sexual assault and other women's health issues is also provided.



Bilingual Counselling Service

LWHC provide bilingual counsellors (Arabic, Khmer and Vietnamese). The counselling service offers a brief intervention trauma informed service.

BWCH Deliver Events and Workshops at FWHS

BWCH developed and facilitated many workshops and events at Fairfield Women's Health Service throughout the year. These events and workshops included the official launch of the Fairfield Women's Health Service, the breast cancer session event, multicultural exchange morning, end of year celebrations, and health education workshops.



Legal Fair, Cabramatta, May 2019



Women at the breast cancer session event, August 2019



Cultural Exchange Morning, August 2019



Health Promotion Education, August 2019

BWHC deliver Groups and Workshops at FWHS:

Healthy Lifestyle Group: A weekly group aimed at increasing healthy weight and prevention of chronic disease, as well as an exercise and education program facilitated by BWHC Arabic-speaking accredited practicing dietician.

Vietnamese Cultural Group: Aimed at addressing social isolation and improving the health and wellbeing of Vietnamese women, in a culturally sensitive and woman-safe space.

Active Women's Group: A weekly group aimed at increasing balance and strength for women 55 years of age and over. New clients are engaged each term.



Wellness for Women Cancer Support Group: (Cancer Institute grant). This group aims to improve the health and wellbeing of Vietnamese women who have experienced cancer or been impacted by cancer. The healthy living education component of this group aims to educate women on the myths and beliefs surrounding cancer in the Vietnamese community. Nutritional education is also offered in this group for chronic health conditions, food allergies and cancer delivered by a Vietnamese speaking trained group facilitator.

Cancer Council Leadership Training: Develop skills for leadership and support groups. 16 attended the 2 day workshops. 14 completed evaluations and reported an increased knowledge and understanding of women's cancer education, and increased knowledge of cancer group facilitation. *Quote: "I feel more confident to support women from my back ground when they have cancer."*



Term 3 2019, Vietnamese cultural group

Client Service Contacts: 824 (occasions of service, and attended centre appointments)

Client Service Contacts: 858 (occasions of service includes information, phone calls drop-ins, and attendances)

Attendances: (occasions of service, including letters, emails and contacts), 17 dietician attendances, 112 case management attendances

Attendances at Groups, Workshops, and Activities: 858

Number of clients by service



Snap shot of BWHC and FWHS Press Releases and Media Engagement



Helping women escape domestic violence

Canterbury Bankstown **Says NO to Domestic Violence**

Sydney Women's Counselling Centre manager Margherita Basile, Bankstown Women's Health CEO Mariam Mourad, Canterbury MP Sophie Cotias and Father Apostolos Tryfillis at the community consultation on domestic violence.

ISSUES around providing crisis accommodation for women with disabilities; with young children or large families; who don't have permanent residency or citizenship or who are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATS) or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

As well as collecting information from the community, the event aimed to gauge levels of community interest for a proposed "local government-funded crisis refuge to provide trauma-informed, culturally-sensitive accommodation and support for women and children escaping from domestic violence".

Facilities in accessing crisis accommodation for women with disabilities; with young children or large families; who don't have permanent residency or citizenship or who are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATS) or Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

As well as collecting information from the community, the event aimed to gauge levels of community interest for a proposed "local government-funded crisis refuge to provide trauma-informed, culturally-sensitive accommodation and support for women and children escaping from domestic violence".



ART INSPIRED BY WOMEN'S STORIES

Local artist Amani Haydar has launched Bankstown Arts Centre's 2019 program with her exhibition *Malika/Queen of the Home*. It celebrates the ways in which women create a sense of home and belonging while also incorporating personal histories of growing up in an Arab-Australian household. Alongside the exploration of female stories and resilience, the works were influenced by the beauty that can be found in suburban spaces in spring.

There will be an artist's talk on Thursday, January 24, from 6.30pm-8pm. **Bankstown Arts Centre, Incubate Gallery: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm until January 31. Details 9707 5400**

Champion News

MAY 29 2019 - 12:30PM

New women's health service helps dispel cancer myths

Chris Boulous

Local News



Group facilitator Ann Nguyen with Bankstown Women's Health Service CEO and Operations Manager Mariam Mourad and Kerrie Newcombe outside the new Fairfield Women's Health Service. Picture: Chris Lane

Have you heard the tale that cancer is caused by bad luck? Or the idea it is the result of an ancestor's evil deed.

These are just two of the myths being dispelled at the new Fairfield Women's Health Service (FWHS) in Cabramatta.



EXPANDING the emergency department along with new maternity services, a psychiatric emergency care centre as well as a long overdue, larger car park are part of Labor's \$65 million plan for Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. Full story on page 3.

Champion News

"The research showed women from culturally diverse backgrounds tend to think cancer is fatal and that sufferers should put their health in God's hands."

Bankstown Women's Health Service chief executive Mariam Mourad

Cancer: 'not contagious'

BY CHRIS BOULOUS

"I was in shock," she said when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. "I had no idea it was so serious." Mariam Mourad, CEO of Bankstown Women's Health Service, says she was shocked to learn that cancer is not contagious.

"A lot of people from my community say cancer is contagious and they even get it from me," she said. "I was shocked because in a previous life I did something wrong."

"I was in shock," she said when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. "I had no idea it was so serious." Mariam Mourad, CEO of Bankstown Women's Health Service, says she was shocked to learn that cancer is not contagious.

"A lot of people from my community say cancer is contagious and they even get it from me," she said. "I was shocked because in a previous life I did something wrong."



POWERFUL: Anna Thai Phan shares her story at the launch.

Bankstown Women's Health Service CEO and Operations Manager Mariam Mourad says she was shocked to learn that cancer is not contagious.

"A lot of people from my community say cancer is contagious and they even get it from me," she said. "I was shocked because in a previous life I did something wrong."



CELEBRATION: A Duetto Aboriginal performance and a Vietnamese cultural dance opened the launch. Picture: Chris Lane

Bankstown Women's Health Service CEO and Operations Manager Mariam Mourad says she was shocked to learn that cancer is not contagious.

"A lot of people from my community say cancer is contagious and they even get it from me," she said. "I was shocked because in a previous life I did something wrong."

Funders & Other Partners

Bankstown Women's Health Centre is a member of Women's Health NSW and there are 21 sister centres across the state. We are primarily funded by NSW Ministry of Health. The Child and Adolescent Trauma Service is funded by the Department of Family and Community Services. We work collaboratively with a wide range of peer agencies and other partners across the community.





Cancer Institute NSW



Our Values

We value women's own knowledge, skills and their right to make informed decisions about their health.

We recognise the importance of the social, environmental, economic, physical, emotional and cultural factors which influence the health and wellbeing of women and their families.

We recognise the effects of sex-role stereotyping, gender discrimination, racism and homophobia on health and wellbeing.

We Value the importance of maintaining health and wellbeing by focusing on preventative practices.

We actively encourage the empowerment of women in both the personal and social aspects of their lives with a focus on their changing roles and responsibilities throughout the lifespan, including reproductivity and parenting.

We support the emotional and social wellbeing of women and their families who have been affected by trauma.

**Bankstown Women's Health Centre
Inc**

Level 1, 24-26 Jacobs Street
BANKSTOWN NSW 2200
ABN 74 181 873 702

Financial Statements- For the Year ended 30 June 2019

| | 2019 | 2018 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Income | | |
| SWSAHS Grant | \$641,550.00 | \$580,600.00 |
| Dept Family & Community Service | \$97,417.64 | \$95,134.41 |
| Clients Donations | \$3,330.00 | \$5,381.95 |
| Food share | \$4,460.85 | \$0.00 |
| Doctors Contributions | \$7,744.01 | \$8,538.00 |
| Grants Brought Forward | \$53,697.81 | \$0.00 |
| Interest Received | \$2,136.72 | \$1,440.43 |
| Other Fund | \$64,000.00 | \$40,655.15 |
| Membership | \$0.00 | \$17.10 |
| Managed Services Reimbursement | \$5,600.50 | \$9,444.21 |
| Miscellaneous Income | \$26,103.16 | \$0.00 |
| Reimbursements | \$1,940.91 | \$506.92 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total Income | \$907,981.60 | \$741,718.17 |
| Less Expenses | | |
| Accounting & Audit Fee | \$45.45 | \$5,048.60 |
| Administration | \$6,291.41 | \$7,940.00 |
| Advertising & Promotion | \$556.20 | \$8,355.07 |
| Bank Fees & Charges | \$271.67 | \$293.39 |
| Canon Printer & Service | \$2,528.87 | \$2,965.54 |
| Committee & Board Expenses | \$1,034.43 | \$1,872.87 |
| Consultant | \$8,849.95 | \$3,950.00 |
| Depreciation | \$0.00 | \$3,982.66 |
| Donations | \$301.00 | \$110.00 |
| Equipment | \$43,918.58 | \$27,875.67 |
| Filing Fees | \$194.00 | \$180.00 |
| General Expenses | \$248.25 | \$1,478.48 |
| Governance Training | \$0.00 | \$700.00 |
| Insurance | \$8,191.70 | \$7,352.61 |
| Maintenance | \$1,520.60 | \$2,547.60 |
| Office Costs | \$4,983.00 | \$3,559.97 |
| Programs & Projects | \$16,464.73 | \$4,049.32 |
| Provision for Unspent Funds | \$0.00 | \$35,061.45 |
| Reference Materials/Books | \$244.03 | \$390.91 |
| Rent | \$2,982.45 | \$2,921.80 |
| Staff - Conference / Meetings | \$10,674.10 | \$11,073.73 |
| Staff - Supervision | \$4,273.70 | \$4,938.17 |
| Staff Amenities | \$2,680.76 | \$1,930.36 |
| Staff- Training | \$894.55 | \$3,802.02 |
| Subscriptions/memberships | \$4,935.15 | \$5,632.94 |
| Telephone | \$8,027.46 | \$9,625.00 |
| Travel Costs | \$6,645.00 | \$280.97 |
| Wages | \$612,907.59 | \$460,534.88 |
| Wages - On Costs | \$94,407.91 | \$80,279.33 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total Expenses | \$844,072.54 | \$698,733.34 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Net Surplus | \$63,909.06 | \$42,984.83 |

Contact us

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