

# Women's Health Centre Rockhampton Annual Report 2018/2019



# Contents

<b>Page</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Chairperson's Report- Kate</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Manager's Report- Belinda</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>National Women's Health Policy</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Team Leader's Report- Janis</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Project &amp; Business Leader's Report- Shirin</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Emerald Sexual Assault Service</b>
<b>15.</b>	<b>Chantelle's Report</b>
<b>16.</b>	<b>Vision Boards</b>
<b>17.</b>	<b>Women's Wellness Expo</b>
<b>21.</b>	<b>Erin- Social Work Student</b>
<b>21.</b>	<b>Amy's Report</b>
<b>23.</b>	<b>NAIDOC March</b>
<b>23.</b>	<b>Jen</b>
<b>24.</b>	<b>Dignity First Grant</b>
<b>26.</b>	<b>Yuchen</b>
<b>27.</b>	<b>Art &amp; Craft</b>
<b>28.</b>	<b>Sport and Health Expo</b>
<b>29.</b>	<b>Dianne</b>
<b>30.</b>	<b>Assertive Communication</b>
<b>31.</b>	<b>Karen</b>
<b>32.</b>	<b>Homeless Connect</b>
<b>33.</b>	<b>Ann</b>
<b>33.</b>	<b>Sexual Violence Awareness Month</b>
<b>34.</b>	<b>Yeppoon</b>
<b>35.</b>	<b>2019 Charity Ball</b>
<b>38.</b>	<b>Larissa</b>
<b>38.</b>	<b>Alicia</b>
<b>39.</b>	<b>Chloe</b>
<b>40.</b>	<b>Golden Mt. Festival</b>
<b>40.</b>	<b>Lauren</b>
<b>41.</b>	<b>Christmas Hampers</b>



## Chairperson's Report – Kate



I'd like to acknowledge and pay my respects to the traditional custodians and Native title Holders of the land, the Darumbul People, their elders, past, present and emerging, and their peoples. Gudamulli everyone. It is much pleasure that I provide the WHIRS members, staff, clients and board with a chairperson's report for 2017-2018.

As a group of volunteers ensuring we (the board) have connected to the mission statement and values of WHIRS is pivotal, and that we steer the governance ship is our most important role. For the past year I believe the board has enacted this role with much integrity and passion. However, this would not be possible without a strong collective of womens' minds and hearts, and therefore I would like to thank our Treasurer, (previous) Richa Datta and (current) Selena Utting, Secretary, Jodi Newton and Board Members, Raeleen Bougoure and Leah Munns. I want to sincerely thank you for sharing your knowledge, time and skills so generously, and your ongoing commitment to the board. Sadly, Raeleen and I are bidding the board farewell due to other work commitments, but I am so pleased that Leah and Jodi will remain on the board, and welcome in newly nominated women members. As an exiting Chairperson this gives me great confidence in the future of the board.

I am both blessed and privileged to be associated with the staff of WHIRS. Our board is extremely proud of the incredibly driven, passionate, and dedicated staff. The work you all undertake is emotionally, physically and psychologically very challenging and equally rewarding. Often you will work nights and weekends to get the message out about women's wellbeing, safety and rights.

I am very proud to say that we have achieved many great and historic moments in the WHIRS governance and leadership over the past year, the most prominent being the Emerald Sexual Assault Service. I would also like to highlight that without Belinda's sheer tenacity, drive, and hard work this momentous achievement would have not occurred, Belinda has truly been the driving force behind this accomplishment. Sadly, Belinda too is exiting WHIRS to develop her



team leadership skills with a Yeppoon based agency, and we have no doubt her blue sky thinking, and innovative ways will be equally successful in this new venture.

I want to thank all CQ community members, agencies, members of WHIRS that continue to support WHIRS in a multitude of ways; attending the Well Women's Expo, coming along to fundraising events, encouraging their work group to book a table at the Annual Charity Ball, giving a friend or loved one our phone number in times of need and support, and for speaking of WHIRS in a positive manner that builds on our reputation in the community. A special thanks to Darumbul Elder Aunty Nikki Hatfield, Michelle Landry, Federal MP for Capricornia, MP Brittany Lauga, Mick Shearer, Regional Executive Director, Central Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and Karla Way-McPhail, CEO of the Real Group for your support and championing of our service. Also thank you to all the member of the community of QC and WHIRS; it's the collective of women and community members; male and female that believe in our mission that keeps the centre thriving. A sincere thank you to all our supporters.

With a heavy heart I say farewell to the board and Chairperson role but would like to sincerely thank you all for believing in me, even when the road was uncertain and overwhelming, together we overcame these challenges with professionalism and our heads held high, and achieved great thanks. All the best for the future WHIRS and I look forward to working with you in other capacities and being a CHAMPION OF THIS WONDERFUL ORGANISATION!





## Manager's Report - Belinda Lindel



I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Darumbal People, on whose land we meet and their elders past and present.

Over the years I have shared statistics to continue to highlight the growth we have experienced as a not for profit community services organisation with Charity status. With a growing number of programs and an ever growing team, we are supporting clients on the Capricorn Coast, Mt Morgan, Rockhampton and afar utilising face to face and telephone counselling;

*Provision of advice, information and referral: approx. 12000 clients / enquiries*

*Number of clients attending for counselling: approx. 6005*

*Number of community education clients: approx. 5000*

*Number of community education hours: approx. 950*

*Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients: approx. 225*

*Cultural and Linguistically Diverse clients: approx. 115*

*And we have many external group participants using the WHC group room over the past year*

### **Some of our significant achievements over the past year include:**

- *Emerald Sexual Assault Pilot Program* : Advocating in 2018 and 2019 has resulted in this service becoming funded by the state Government. As I am writing this, we are in the implementing stages of ESASS – providing services for victims / survivors of Sexual Assault – females, males, and adolescents, current or historical abuse.
- *Black Tie Charity Ball* : This year the Ball was held at the Frenchville Sports Club with 200 in attendance and raising approximately \$10,000. The MC was Peter Rowesthorn and comedian was Fiona OLaughlin who were both funny and kept the audience enthralled all evening. The feedback received was that the ball a great success.
- *Sexual Violence Awareness month*: In October 2018 staff members of the Women's health Centre provided community education in different modalities. One example of this is



providing community education and having a presence at the City Centre Plaza answering general questions from the public and creating conversations around sexual violence. I was invited to go on several radio stations during the month of October, which in turn assisted in bringing the topic of sexual violence out into community conversations. On Reclaim the night – October 26<sup>th</sup>, we held a BBQ at WHC and had a variety of speakers on the night.

- **White Ribbon Day:** Once again, we held a very successful White Ribbon Day breakfast on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November, at the Rockhampton Leagues Club. Queensland Police Service - Central Queensland Superintendent Ron VanSaane, spoke and was very engaging and informative on violence within the Central Qld region. Approximately 100 people attended from the community which shows the importance of this event within Rockhampton.
- **Ready 4 Work Program:** In 2018-19 the Women's Health Centre was again successful in obtaining the Skilling Queenslanders Grant for a program for the Ready for Work program. This program was once again in the TOP 3 nominees for the Community Training Initiative from the Regional Training Awards which Kate (Chair of the Board of Directors) Raeleen (Member of the Board of Directors) Karen, Alicia, Lauren and myself attended. We are immensely proud to be nominated for this program and feedback from the participants are extremely encouraging, showing excellent results thus far.

***A huge thanks to Shirin in her amazing work and determination with the Ready 4 Work and Certificate 3 programs !***

- **CERT 3 in Community Services:** This year, we were successful in securing funding to work with an RTO in providing training for the *Certificate 3 in Community Services*, for vulnerable people to assist them getting into / back into the workforce. Currently it is still running and will be completed in November – we are very excited about this initiative!



### **Gratitude**

To all the wonderful staff at the Centre, **THANK YOU...**



SHIRIN, **Janis**, Alicia, Ann, Jen, Karen, **Chloe**, Chantelle, **Fiona**, **Amy**, Yuchen, **Di**, Suzanne, **Lauren**, **Val** and **Ammie** – You are all exceptionally talented women that I have had the privilege and opportunity to lead over the past 6 ½ years – each with your unique skills and strengths which you share with your colleagues and clients. Every staff member does an amazing job and when needed goes above and beyond for the Centre!

I would like to say a very special **THANKYOU** to our Chairperson of the Board of Directors; **Kate Moore**, for all her hard work and dedication over the past three years – Two of which Kate held the position of Chairperson. Kate is not nominating at this year's AGM due to personal reasons. On a personal note, I have learnt a great deal from Kate who is a very passionate feminist, an inspiring strong woman and will miss Kates amazing ability to think outside the box when presented with challenges. Kate, you will be sorely missed by the WHC staff, the WHC Board members and myself !

And.....from the bottom of my heart, I would like to thank our passionate and very dedicated Board of Directors - without their support and hard work providing the appropriate governance for the Centre, we would not be able to continue;

**Chair** – *Kate Moore*

**Secretary** – *Jodi Newton*

**Treasurer** – *Selina Utting*

**Members** – *Leah Munns, and Raeleen Bougoure*

*And thank-you to Ann Cryer for taking the minutes at the Board Meetings!*

I am looking forward to a very interesting year ahead,  
Belinda ☺



## National Women's Health Policy 2010- Belinda

As many of you are aware, the Women's Health Service is committed to and supports the overall objectives of the *National Women's Health Policy 2010*, and we work to achieve the five key goals by:

1. Delivering services that recognise the significance of gender as a key determinant of women's health and wellbeing
2. Planning service delivery which takes into account that women's needs differ according to their life stage
3. Prioritising the needs of the most at-risk women
4. Working collaboratively with other service providers to ensure that service system is responsive to all women with a clear focus on prevention and the promotion of health and well being
5. Supporting effective and collaborative research, data collection, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge transfer to advance the evidence base on women's wellbeing

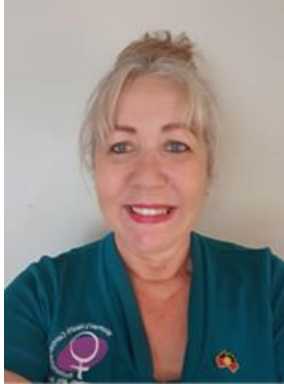
By having policies / documents which frame our strategic intent and practice, such as Human Service Quality Framework – HSQF, guides, informs and focuses our work that we do here within the Centre.





# Team Leader/Counsellor Educator & Acting Manager- Janis

*I would like to acknowledge traditional owners of this land the Darumbal people and pay my respects to elders past, present and future.*



The past year has certainly flown by and this year I am very proud to say is my 15<sup>th</sup> year as an employee of the Womens Health Centre. Today I continue to do what I love to do in working with clients and alongside other staff. I continue to witness women and their families every day courageously push through barriers, show resilience and allow us to offer our service to help them in their time of need.

My position as Team Leader/Acting Manager also includes co-ordinating Students completing their placements. Students to date completed Bachelor of Social Work, Diploma of Counselling, Diploma of Community Services or Certificate of Community Services. It is with great pride we watch the growth of students throughout their placements along their journey.

Throughout the year I have attended many events, conferences, facilitated workshops, trained with staff, attended Leadership training and forums some of which are included as follows:-

- Early July 2018 - means NAIDOC Celebrations – a week sharing and recognising the achievements of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our community. The NAIDOC March is always a highlight for myself also both personally and professionally as I am a proud 'Iman- Gungarri' woman.
- October 2018- Sexual Violence Awareness month where many hours are dedicated to take to the streets and conversations with the community and at the end of the month had our 'Reclaim the night' BBQ at our centre.
- October 2018- Youth Summit at PCYC (with Lauren). A very powerful look at/and support for our youth into the future.
- November 2018 - White Ribbon Breakfast



- December 2018 - Attended Graduations for students completing Certificate 3 in Hospitality and Ready for work, assisted with Christmas Hampers.
- March 2019 - Womens Wellness Expo – Successfully running for several years now and I see as our greatest achievements to date.
- April 2019 - Sexual Violence Prevention Community forum with Minister Di Farmer and in support of staff member Charmaine Law who chosen to represent as an Indigenous woman working with Community for many years and attended 3 roundtable consultations in Brisbane also.
- May 2019 - Qld Domestic & Family Violence practice standards workshop – Held in Mackay and was facilitated by Management Consulting Policy Programs and Evaluation, to ‘test’ draft principles and standards to identify issues to consider best approach in their implementation to organisations and services.
- Workshops within the Womens Health Centre also I facilitated were Mindfulness and Gentle Yoga weekly during school terms, Understanding Anger (with Karen) and Emotional Health and Mindfulness (with Amy).

We will continue to grow and learn as we see changes happening around us all. I look forward to moving forward with enthusiasm and dedication to encourage others as a Leader and be proud of and work alongside other staff members as a team of the Women’s Health Centre.

Janis



## **Admin Team Leader/ Project & Business Leader - Shirin**



During the period under review, the Project and Business arm of the Women's Health Centre had two main programs under its purview, namely the two programs under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative funded by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training of Queensland Government; the final year of the Take a Stand Against Domestic Violence Program under license from Women's Health Victoria; as well as participation in the Queensland Training Awards 2019.

### **Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative - Ready for Work Program**

*- 'Confident, Inspired & Ready for Work' Program in collaboration with CQUniversity (People and Culture Directorate)*

Under Round 2 of the 'Confident, Inspired & Ready for Work' Program, the Centre successfully delivered the last two intakes. Intake 3 (8 November 2018 to 7 December 2019) held in Rockhampton had 11 participants. Intake 4 (28 February 2019 to 29 March 2019) with 12 participants, was delivered in partnership with the Livingstone Shire Council (LSC) at The Hub, Yeppoon and drew participants mainly from the LCS's Alternative Learning Space of Yeppoon and Emu Park.

The general aim of this program was to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged young people 15 to 24 years, transition into the workforce by providing them with the practical skills they need to successfully find work.

Participants were given the opportunity to network with employers to learn about the various industries, employer expectations and roles available through the Employer Meet and Greet Sessions and workplace visits. Participating employers included Aurizon, Rockhampton Regional Council, Livingstone Shire Council, CQ Hospital and Health Service, Home Support Association and CQUniversity.



Arising from these intakes, as at April 2019, six participants obtained employment, one volunteer role, one enrolled in further education whilst others were planning out their next steps. Apart from gaining practical job preparation and employability skills, tools and knowledge, which enhanced their ability to seek employment or take up other pathways such as further training and education, traineeships or apprenticeships, participants had also improved their level of confidence and self-esteem.



### **Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative - Community Work Skills Program**

**- 'Advancing CQ through Skills in Community Services' Project: CHC32015 Certificate III in Community Services** in partnership with Registered Training Organisation, CQUniversity (School of Nursing and Midwifery & Social Sciences)

The Centre was successful in obtaining the Community Work Skills grant under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative to deliver the CHC32015 Certificate III in Community Services to help disadvantaged Queenslanders to gain nationally recognized skills and qualifications. Through this program, participants also obtain training and support on career advice, job preparation skills, foundation skills and individual case management.

This qualification, which reflects the role of entry level community services workers who support individuals through the provision of person-centered services. Work includes day-to-day support of individuals in community settings or support the implementation of specific community-based programs in a range of community services organisations.

20 participants have enrolled in this certificate course, which commenced on 14 May 2019. 18 participants have now progressed through the course and will graduate on 21 October 2019. To date, four participants have enrolled in CHC52015 Diploma of Community Services; two have



obtained employment, one volunteer role and others planning their transition into employment.



## Queensland Training Awards 2019



The *'Confident, Inspired & Ready for Work'* Program achieved top three regional finalist for a second year running in the *'Community Training Initiative of the Year'* category of the Queensland Training Awards 2019 by the Queensland Government. The Centre was awarded for providing outstanding assistance to facilitate the transition of vulnerable and disadvantaged young women into the workforce through the Ready for Work Program.

## Take a Stand Campaign with CQ Capras

The final phase of the Center's work in primary prevention against domestic violence through the Take a Stand Against Domestic Violence Program under license from Women's Health Victoria was in the form of local partnership comprising the Women's Health Centre, CQ Capras, Central Queensland's premier rugby leagues club and sponsor Schwarz Excavations. The *Take a Stand* campaign supports





organisations, including sports clubs to become leaders in taking a stand against domestic violence and promoting a respectful and safe environment, for all.

Approximately 50 players including coaches underwent session 1 active bystander training to take a stand against domestic violence on 22 May 2019. On 29 August 2019, 29 players, coaches and management staff undertook session 2 of the active bystander training.

Evidenced-based research and statistics tell us that one in four Australian women experienced violence from a current or ex-partner and the leading causes of domestic violence are sexism and gender inequality. Sports leaders like CQ Capras exert powerful influence as community champions and ambassadors when they stand against domestic violence, which continues to be a rising trend in Capricornia.

Organisations, groups and individuals need to be part of the solution for violence prevention and help drive real and sustainable change within our community. The Take a Stand program provided participants with the skills needed to assist them in speaking up against attitudes and behaviours that sustain violence in the community. It also equipped them with knowledge and tools to help them support others who may be affected by domestic violence.





## *ESASS – Emerald Sexual Assault Support Service- Belinda*

Emerald is a regional catchment approximately 3 hours drive from Rockhampton. It is home to around 30 000 people who live in the thirteen unique communities of Arcadia Valley, Bauhinia, Blackwater, Bluff, Capella, Comet, Dingo, Duaringa, Emerald, Rolleston, Sapphire Gemfields, Springsure and Tieri.

In 2017, the Manager was approached by a Qld Health Social Worker for a solution focused conversation as there is no sexual assault service operating with the Central Highlands supporting the victim/survivor, the family/supporters, and or children. Once permission was obtained for a sexual assault support service pilot program - a strategic action plan was developed and then presented and agreed on by the Board of Directors of the WHC. The plan was the Manager who also holds a degree in Social Work, and a staff member, (Social Worker) outreached to Emerald fortnightly travelling out Sunday afternoon and back Monday later afternoon – delivering counselling and support to clients and their families as required. Meetings were held fortnightly to encourage stakeholders within organisations to introduce the pilot program and to opt-in and keep referring clients towards achieving the common agenda – aligning all involved in the goal of establishing a permanent service to the Central Highlands. This pilot program started in February and ended in May. Chantelle and I outreached to Emerald fortnightly with statistics showing;



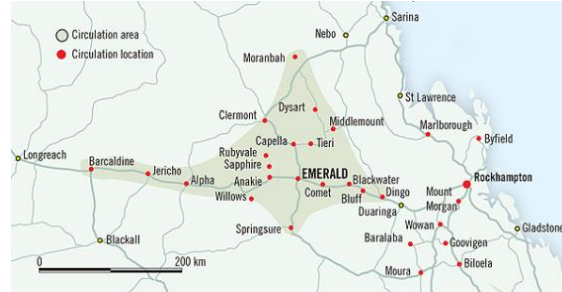
19 individuals accessed the service aged from 3 to 60+ years of age, with a vast variety of circumstances with referrals from QPS, the Emerald Hospital, with many from organisations within the CQ region.

After a year and much advocating to the Queensland Government about the need for a sexual assault support service in the Central Highlands with support from many government and non-



government organisations, the WHC were allocated the funding for the next 5 years for the provision of service delivery.

I have seconded into the role of implementation and service delivery for the next 12 months, with Janis Littleboy acting as the Manager for the Rockhampton WHC and supported by Alicia Harris and Karen Briggs seconding in the Counselling Team Leader role (6 months each) and Shirin in her role as the Administration Team Leader. This is an exciting time and opportunity for staff to upskill and to provide this much needed service with the Central Highlands community.



## **CHANTELLE- COUNSELLOR/ EDUCATOR**



As I write this, I'm awaiting my new role, starting at the end of July: Motherhood. As many people know, I've worked at the Women's Health Centre and dedicated myself to my role as counsellor/community educator for twelve and a half years. I have a passion for fighting for the rights of women and encouraging women to develop stronger self-awareness, find their voice, be strengthened to make the choices and changes that they want in their lives. I doubt this will ever change.

To say this year has been huge is an understatement. In addition to counselling in Rockhampton and Yeppoon, I've enjoyed facilitating sessions for the Ready for Work program and our ongoing workshops such as Assertive Communication, Confidence through Self Awareness, and Vision Boards. I've had fun working with the women in our ongoing Art and Craft group, and celebrating special events such as Christmas with these amazing and funny women.

I've had the opportunity maintain my connections and network with colleagues in the community services industry, as well as promote the services of the Women's Health Centre through attending events such as Homeless Connect, the Emergency Services Day, the CQ Health and Sports Expo, and the Rockhampton Cultural Expo (this one I love particularly because the food is always fantastic). I have had the privilege of working with the amazing



women as a team at all the events that we have held over the year; this includes the diverse array of students who we have been lucky enough to have join us on our journey.

Once again, my favourite project has been the Women's Wellness Expo. I am incredibly passionate about the Expo and enjoy seeing our community come together for such an amazing day, which is growing bigger and better every year.



I will be returning to the Women's Health Centre in February 2020, so I look forward to seeing everyone then!

## Vision Boards



Lauren, Narelle (Student) and Chantelle facilitated a Vision Board workshop on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February. This was a very popular workshop with 18 women coming along to create their own works of art.

Vision boards allow a unique way of working on your self-esteem and confidence in a safe, confidential environment, and are a tool used to help clarify, concentrate and maintain focus on a specific life goal. Literally, a vision board is any sort of board on which you display images that represent whatever you want to be, do or have in your life.

We encourage participants of the workshop to look to their vision board when they're feeling discouraged, lost, stuck, confused, frustrated, etc. and to pull inspiration and motivation when feeling negative emotions; because these vision boards were created while feeling happy & inspired, we hope that looking at their vision board will continue to evoke positive emotions.



Participants commented in feedback that they found this workshop a positive experience, particularly with regards to inspiration for setting goals, defining ideas, gaining further input and ideas, and having the support and encouragement from other participants.

## 2019 Women's Wellness Expo



On Sunday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March, the 2019 Women's Wellness Expo was held from 9am to 1pm at the Rockhampton Showgrounds and sponsored by the Rockhampton Regional Council and CQ Party Hire with in-kind support from the Queensland Ambulance Service. Jodi Newton from our Board of Directors was the MC for the event.

The focus of the Expo this year, along with the theme for Queensland Women's Week had a focus on encouraging women and girls to improve their financial literacy and capability and to raise awareness in the community of how we can address the issues that contribute to women's financial disadvantage and economic insecurity.



In line with this focus, we had guest speakers on the mainstage to share their knowledge and experience with attendees. These included: Kris Palmer—Financial Counsellor, Member of FCA (Financial Counselling Australia), Accredited member of FCAQ (Financial Counselling Association of Queensland), Elize Hattin—Author, Business Coach and SmartHub Manager and Kerry Hayes—Westpac Bank Manager.



This year, the WWE featured almost 90 stalls promoting local businesses, supports and services which relate to the health and wellbeing of women and their families. In addition to the stalls, attendees had the opportunity to participate in free activities such as 'Mastering Your Mind' with Carolyn Sandaver from Inspired by Art, mindful





colouring in, or interact with Veronica Bom's from Heart Centered Equine Assisted Counselling's therapy ponies. If that wasn't entertainment enough, in between guest speakers on the main stage attendees enjoyed performances by Sabaya Belly Dance, Sing Australia and line dancing with Juswannadans.



Once again, the Relaxation Retreat was a highlight of the WWE, with many women experiencing free one on one treatments such as massage, Reiki, and healing touch, or participating in group meditation and mindfulness. These opportunities of course would not be possible without the contribution of the qualified and experienced practitioners who donated their time and skills, many of whom have continued to support the WWE for a number of years. This year's Therapeutic Volunteers included: Hawaiian Body Balance, Reiki & Oils with Mel, Gina Baker from Energy Balancing and Healing, Lorraine Shaw Remedial and Pregnancy massage, Nikita Nails and Beauty, New Era of Love, and Irena from CQ Meditation Society Ananda Buddhist Centre.

Attendees to the WWE also had the opportunity to attend information sessions and workshops which were held in the James Lawrence Pavilion B. These included Shirin, our Project and Business Leader promoting the Certificate III in Community Services, Tracey from Body and Soul Yoga conducting a Basic Yoga and Mindfulness session, Desley Cowley from Oaktree Retirement Village and Michelle Boon from Envigor Home Care discussing retirement living options and aged care insights and Marie Zonruiter from Bon Doula Healings who held a women's circle around heart and womb embodiment practices.



Of course, every event needs to have food, and attendees to the WWE were treated to a variety of goodies. A number of food vans were in attendance, and as usual, the coffee van was a favourite. Martina and the team at Headspace held a sausage sizzle, and shared the profits from this with the Centre. For those seeking more traditional, affordable nourishment, Centre staff worked hard to prepare and sell scones with jam and cream, sandwiches and cupcakes. The use of the kitchen was kindly



donated by the Rotary Club of Rockhampton West. Attendees were also treated to complementary tea and coffee.



Joining us on the day were three amazing volunteers who gave their time to assist with a multitude of tasks from running information and resources between areas to preparation and serving in the canteen. Thank you for all your help, Aroha Liebhart, Lenore Hixon and Madison Schmidt.

The Women's Wellness Expo is a unique event in our community which caters to a diverse range of audiences. It is evident from the growth in stall holders and participant numbers that this is a valuable event in our community which connects women and their families with services and supports, as well as bringing our community together as a network. This event is not possible without the teamwork of the staff at the Women's Health Centre; they are an amazing group of women who always work incredibly hard when it comes to making our events the best that they can be.

***Feedback from participants:***

*"I love the stalls and how diverse it is. It's so fun and unique."*

*"I think that the Expo is a great way to get all the information I was seeking in one place."*

*"Heaps of exhibits for women in one place; everyone has been friendly and approachable. Very friendly atmosphere."*

*"It has a bit of everything. Good way to get the information you wouldn't normally see, The retreat was wonderful. More please."*







## *Social Work Student Placement- Erin*



Hi, my name is Erin. I completed my third year placement at the Women's Health Centre in 2019. I had such a great time full of laughter and learning! I learnt so much about my practice framework, especially under a feminist framework from a strengths perspective. I was lucky enough to be involved in the sexual assault prevention consultation with Minister Di Farmer, the expo, numerous interagency network meetings, team building and of course going out on the boat! I really do feel so lucky that I was

given the opportunity to be here. The women here taught me so much about myself and about my role as a social worker. I gained more from this placement than I could have possibly imagined. I knew from the moment I walked in to the Centre for my initial interview that it is a special place. The whole team have their own quirks and strengths and it has been so good getting to know everyone. I can't wait to finish up with university and utilise all of the new skills I have developed while being here!

## **AMY - COUNSELLOR/EDUCATOR**



One of the most rewarding things in life is to be able to work in the particular field of your choice. Working in the National Women's Health Program and Sexual Assault Support Services here at The Women's Health Centre, Rockhampton has afforded me this precious experience. Continuous opportunities to refine my skills as a counsellor through Supervision and Professional Development have increased my thirst for knowledge and further education in order to be of more benefit to my clients.



My main purpose at WHC is to assist clients to improve their mental health, achieve set goals and better themselves in many areas of their lives. However, I have also learned so much from each of my clients' personal journeys. I am often in awe of their inward strength and resilience, their indomitable spirits which will not be quenched though they have experienced numerous injustices and sustained much trauma. I use a range of approaches from different therapies including CBT, DBT, Strength-based, Solution-Focused and Psychodynamic Approaches. My clients are predominantly from Rockhampton though I do offer phone counselling to those who are further afield from surrounding areas who are unable to attend Rockhampton sessions. They are from all walks of life, and range from age fifteen to seventy-five.

I enjoyed being one of the facilitators in the "Ready for Work" segment of the CHC32015C Certificate III in Community Services, which is a special training funded through the Queensland Government's initiative for Skilling Queenslanders. Mentoring the participants in this course was also one of my responsibilities. I also had a part in presenting Sessions One and Two of "Take A Stand" against Domestic Violence training for CQ Capras this year. Co-facilitating in self-help workshops, as well as running group and information sessions make up the other part of my varied responsibilities.



This year I attended the Emergency Expo by the Fitzroy riverfront. This expo was well attended and rescue demonstrations on water were also included on account of easy access to the river. The Multicultural Festival was also held at the same venue from the late afternoon through the night. The festival showcased fashion through the different national costumes, cultural dances and songs, as well as cuisine. After sunset, the parade started with a Chinese Dragon Dance.

The work at the centre can be challenging at times because the fluidity of change presents its own challenges. However, when all is said and done, the work really is very satisfying and rewarding. Colleagues and staff are very supportive of one another and do often share insights and information relevant to our field. This makes it easier to bear and deal with challenges that creep up from time to time. I look forward to continue working alongside my lovely colleagues and staff at the centre.





# NAIDOC MARCH 2018



The staff of the Women's Health Centre proudly marched in the NAIDOC march again in 2018. The NAIDOC march is something the staff proudly do each and every year, and this year we were especially proud as the theme was "Because of her we can!" It was a pleasure to celebrate our

Indigenous workers and the many indigenous women that access our service.



## Reception/Administration – Jen



In my role at reception I enjoy greeting people with a warm friendly smile and help to make our visitors feel welcome and supported. The same applies to clients who call only the smile is a calm voice. Over the past 6 months I have assisted Shirin with Certificate 111 in Community Services which I find interesting. I enjoy being of service myself and learning new skills.

I helped with the Annual Charity Ball emailing many businesses and organizations with the Invitation with every spare minute in the hopes that we would sell all the tickets which we did.



At the Women's Wellness Expo I helped Janis and Amy in the retreat which was a great success. Team building and training with Karla have been valuable for improving communication, I also attended a 2-day workshop on suicide prevention and e-safety training which was most interesting. I am grateful to work with a group of such amazing women and being able to support them with admin. The need for our services is growing as more people are reaching out for help and the wait list keeps growing. I hope we can continue to expand, grow and offer more support to the community.

## ***Dignity First Grant***

On the 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 we were delighted to find out that we were the recipients of the Dignity First Fund. Karen and Alicia submitted the application a few months earlier, proposing turning the storage room into a laundry and updating the bathroom & toilets, creating the Centre's Dignity Hub. We were fortunate enough to have the washer and dryer donated to us, but until the Dignity First Grant, we had nowhere to put them and unfortunately they sat unused. Over the last few years, it had become obvious that there were many local women who were homeless or sleeping rough, and the need for somewhere safe to shower, have something to eat was increasing. We have been accepting donations of pre-loved clothing for a few years now, and for women who were homeless, having access to a fresh set of clothes increased their dignity significantly. Along the same line, we figured women who were homeless may actually want to keep the clothing they own, and having access to a free laundry would enable to do this. We are so pleased to be able to offer this service and since keeping stats in July, have found a steady increase. We do predict in summer our dignity hub usage will increase even more! With the grant we were also able to update the couches in the waiting room, buy a shed for the carpark to safely store chemicals and cleaning supplies, and buy more cupboards to store the clothes and supplies we keep on hand for homeless women.





**Dignity**

**First**

**Grant**

**WHC dignity**

**Hub**



## *Yuchen- Counsellor/Educator*



Year 2018 - 2019 is a year of transformation and growth for me, as I graduated from the University of Queensland in Brisbane with a master of counselling degree and joined the Women's Health Centre Rockhampton as a youth sexual assault counsellor. My name is Yuchen. I was born in China, moved to Australia at age of 16. My experience of trying to adapt to and aspire in a foreign country, as a teenager, forced me think about concepts including culture, identity, interpersonal relationships, humanity, power relations etc. At that time, I wished I had known better. I started to search for those answers through my undergraduate study in psychology and science, meanwhile volunteering in many places to support refugees, hospitalized children and families. I wanted to keep in touch with more people in this world to hear their voices within. I came back to China after graduation and started teaching, both young children and adults in many areas. Later, I came back to Australia again to pursue my study and career in counselling, with the intention to support those in need and understand more about humanity. During my study last year of study in master of counselling, I was placed at the YMCA vocational school Kingston campus as a wellbeing counsellor to support marginalized adolescent students. It was a year to good learning in how to support youth in many areas of their lives. The decision to work in the area of youth sexual assault with the Women's Health Centre was driven by my passion to work with youth particularly in the area of trauma work. It is an exciting journey to start, looking forward to this coming year ahead.





# Art and Craft Group



Our art and craft group days are Monday and Thursday. The ladies that attend are women from all walks of life and all do different activities of their own. Some draw others knit and we even have those that show each other how to sew or do other activities. As with any group there are rules and we looked at with this group:

- What do you value in this group?
- How do we keep everyone safe?
- Process for participants, when there is an issue.

Here are some of the things that the value about art and craft.

- Its good, meet other people, share
- Make good friends
- Friends old and new
- Learn off other people
- Keep each other happy, one big happy family
- Its welcoming, can be creative
- Get to mix with a lot of people, get out and about
- Comfortable to be yourself.



How do we keep everyone safe? And the process when there is an issue!

- 
- Respect
- Be positive
- Listen
- Respectful language
- Art and craft is a fun group not counselling.
- Listen to each other, do not interrupt
- Talk to the person, first
- Speak to the facilitator
- Put it in writing.





## 2019 Sports and Health Expo

Held at the Rockhampton Showgrounds on Sunday 24 February 2019, the Sports and Health Expo consisted of with clinics, competitions, workshops, health checks and interactive sites. The annual Sports and Health Expo is a community event aimed to encourage the Rockhampton Regional community to get involved in physical activity, healthy eating and healthy lifestyles. It is a holistic initiative to help boost participation in sport, recreation and health within the Region. The event targets all ages, particularly children and promotes involvement in sports and recreation activities from the grass roots level through to Masters.

This year, Belinda, Erin and Chantelle attended promoting the centre and its services, as well as the upcoming Women's Wellness Expo on the following Weekend. We received a great deal of positive feedback regarding community awareness of the Women's Wellness Expo and the services we provide to our community.



## Dianne- Counsellor / Educator



Working at the Women's Health Centre has created some great opportunities for me both professionally and personally. The services we offer to members of the community can make a big difference in the client's circumstances as well as their emotional health and wellbeing, including my own. Reflecting on my own profession development I was lucky enough to attend a three day conference on PTSD with Janis held in Caloundra from the 21-23 August. The conversation highlighted the devastating impact of PTSD on the Australian community and discussed PTSD protocol that will help sufferers manage their condition. This conversation included keynote speakers sharing their personal life experience (mostly first responders). Their stories were inspirational and a great testament to healing and recovery.

On a personal note I would like to share an experience I had recently on my way to work. I was stopped at the train line waiting patiently??? There were about six cars in front of me and I could see an Aboriginal lady knocking on the passenger side windows of the cars in front of me looking distressed and obviously asking for help but to no avail. I quickly made sure my doors were locked as the lady walked up the line of cars to my car. I was reluctant at first but soon had my window down and I was talking with her. She asked, 'can you help me please? No one will help me'. My fears very quickly disappeared and without hesitation I said of course I would without knowing what her request might be, luckily for me she asked to go to the library. The lady was upset; however, was very polite and thankful. As we drove past the Women's Health Centre towards the library and Coffee House (where I get my morning coffee before work), I pointed at the Centre and said to her, "do you know what that place is across the road? She said, "no". I said well if you go there after 9am they will give you a nice cup of tea (or coffee) something to eat and you can have a shower if you would like. She said, "will they really" and proudly I said, "yes".

She did come to the Centre that morning and was helped. She thanked the staff and was so grateful. I learned later that she was from Brisbane. My point to this long story is that I felt so proud to be part of the Women's Health team of professionals. The care given when clients and



others in the community attend the Centre is inspiring, and a place that I am proud to be a part of. I find the work that I do as a counsellor at the Centre does make a difference and I too am grateful.

## ***Assertive Communication Workshop***

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of March, Amy and Chantelle facilitated the Assertive Communication Workshop. This workshop aims to increase participant self-awareness, self-empowerment, and provide participants with options and strategies for assertive communication within their everyday lives. This workshop is a popular, well attended workshop for the Women's Health Centre, with continued high participation rates, and we run this workshop twice a calendar year.

The women who attended this group interacted well with each other and connected with the material that was presented, sharing their own personal experiences freely with each other. Feedback from participants indicated that participants enjoyed the interactive nature of the group, providing the opportunity to share information and practical ideas with each other. Other positive feedback regarding the information provided was that participants enjoyed learning about their own individual behaviours and communication styles, the choices we make and techniques and strategies to modify behaviours.

Assertiveness is a core communication skill which allows us to control stress and anger, work through uncomfortable situations, overcome negative thoughts, improve coping skills, boost confidence and allows us to have greater faith in the decisions that we make. Assertiveness is a skill that takes time and patience to learn, and that some of the people around us might not respond well to us being more assertive. In these circumstances, the individual needs to remind themselves that being assertive is about respecting others AND themselves, and there is nothing wrong with having their own voice and saying no.



# Karen- Counsellor/Educator



Another year has flown by and it feels like only yesterday I was doing this report for 2018.

Looking back over the last year I can say that it has been a year of growth and acceptance for me.

Some of the things I have been doing this year are:

- Counselling, support and information
- CQ support for adult survivors of childhood trauma, stake holders meetings.
- Reclaim the night B.B.Q.
- Training- support people who have an intellectual disability through the justice system
- Women's wellness expo.
- Learning new skills on reporting statistics and implementing our new data base.
- Confidence through self- awareness workshop.
- Team building at Rosslyn Bay.
- Sexual Violence Prevention Awareness Community Forum with Minister Di Farmer.
- Facilitating Art and Craft
- Outreach weekly to Mount Morgan

I would like to share an inspirational story from a client's journey. This client has experienced trauma through her life. Some of her coping skills have seen her become addicted to certain things, in trouble with the police and on bail conditions. This story could be about so many clients that access the Women's Health Centre. This amazing person has for over 12 months been able to stay away from these things and make a new life for herself. She credits the support of Women's Health Centre and the other supports she has been accessing for helping her change the path of her journey. The real person that needs to be thanked is this women.



She has overcome trauma and addictions to shine. So when asked why I am still in my job after 13 plus years, I say, to witness the true strength of those that access counselling and support and go on to shine. It also helps to work with an amazing lot of colleagues!

## **CQ Homeless Connect**



On May 23rd, 2019, Chloe and Chantelle attended Homeless Connect at the Rockhampton Showgrounds. Homeless Connect brings together businesses and community groups at a one-day event to give free services to people experiencing homelessness or those at risk of homelessness. Attendees are provided with a free breakfast and lunch whilst they interact with a variety of community supports and services. At the event, Attendees can have a shower, get clothing, bedding and food, have a haircut and attend personal health needs such as health screening, podiatry, oral health, etc.

This year, the Women's Health Centre gave out free sanitary items and shared the message about the update to our bathroom and laundry facilities with clients and services. We had the opportunity to interact with a great deal of clients, women and men, and connect with other service providers to learn about services that we can utilise to support our clients, such as the Rockhampton Food Bank.





## **BOOKKEEPER- ANN**



Over the past twelve months I have attained my Cert IV in Bookkeeping and grown in my role within the Centre to incorporate Board as Secretariat and backup to Human Resources. I enjoy the challenge of my position and working with colleagues who are both helpful and fun.

The Centre provides a safe and supportive venue for many women in need and I believe there is a high caliber of skills within our team and an evident passion for what we do. Our workshops and fundraising activities are well received and attended.

Staff training and team building have been amazing opportunities over the last twelve months to learn new skills and gain a greater understanding of each other.

I look forward to the upcoming year, continuing my role as Bookkeeper and working together with the staff and the Board to move the Centre forward in the best possible way.

## **Sexual Violence Awareness Month- October 2018**



The Month of October is always a busy one for us, as Sexual Violence Prevention is always something we work hard to raise awareness about. In 2018, we had our stall in City Centre Plaza, we held a movie night and hosted a BBQ at the centre as well as doing as social media campaign which included news and radio interviews.

Sexual violence is something we assist clients with year round, but October is the month we do all we can to get conversations happening and try to reduce stigma for survivors.





## Yeppoon Outreach

We have continued to offer our counselling services to the Yeppoon community and adjacent townships twice a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Chantelle/ Yuchen have visited Yeppoon on Tuesdays and Charmaine was visiting the Capricorn Coast on Thursdays. It has been wonderful connecting with the kind and helpful staff at the Yeppoon Community Centre and we are proud of the continued partnership that allows us to deliver our services to Yeppoon & the Cap Coast.



## 2019 Charity Ball

The 2019 Charity Ball was once again well attend. The Staff of the Centre worked tirelessly to ensure the event was successful. We had fantastic support from local businesses wanting to support the Centre through sponsorship. A huge thank-you to the Frenchville Sports Club for the amazing venue and the efforts from their staff with the set up. Sensational Parties took care of the decorating, providing a gorgeous enchanted forest theme. Lou's balloon art was nothing short of amazing! A huge thank you to our other sponsors:

- ✓ The Real Group
- ✓ FM Studios
- ✓ DeBortoli
- ✓ Empire Hotel
- ✓ 7 News
- ✓ 990 4RO

We were thrilled to have Peter Rowsthorne MC the night and Fiona O'Loughlin as the comedic act. Thanks must also go to Photo Booths Rock for suppling the photo booth for the night, it got plenty of use! The Rhonda Janes Band kept everyone dancing and wanting more. And last, but not least, a huge thank-you to everyone who attended on the night!

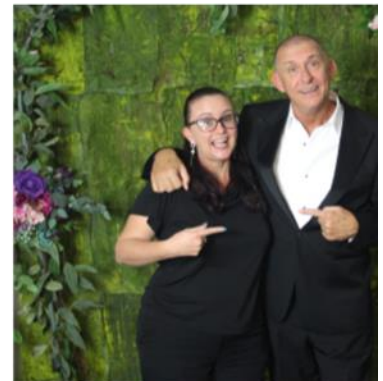




# 2019 Charity Ball!









## LARISSA- INDIGENOUS SEXUAL ASSAULT COUNSELLOR



My name is Larissa Fewquandie and I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am a Ghungalu and Iman woman who grew up in Rockhampton mainly with my dad's family line. I also hold a strong connection with my South Sea Islander heritage from my mum's family line. I am a mum of 3 children ages 14, 7 and 5, two boys and a girl.

I am honoured to be a part of such an amazing service and team of women that aligns with my own values and professional practice framework. I am excited to be of service to the clients who seek support from Woman Health. My Social Work practice framework is client centred, strengths based and trauma-informed care and always assessed from a cultural lens because of my Aboriginal heritage and experiences. I understand the complexities that woman can present with and acknowledge the care needed to be able to walk with the client through their healing stages.

Thank you and I am looking forward to working and growing within the team.

## Alicia-Counsellor/ Educator



Here we are again, Annual Report time! It amazes me how quickly time flies... it will be 2020 before we know it! The 2018/2019 has been a full on year, as they all seem to be! I am in my 10<sup>th</sup> year here at the Women's Health Centre, and I love that I am still as full of passion for the Centre, our clients and all we do in the community as I was when I first started! It is a privilege and an honour to work here, each and every day to have clients who trust me and feel they are safe and valued and can open up

and talk about their most challenging experiences, thoughts and behaviours. I feel awestruck by our clients, their strength and their resilience. I feel so fortunate to be surrounded by a team that is highly skilled, motivated and passionate... the support these ladies provide as employees and colleagues is second to none!

This year I have supervised two social work students, Erin and Suezanne. Our social work students have to do 1000 hours of on the job work placement, they do not get paid to be here, but they have duties much like every other employee. As a supervisor, I love to assist the students in their

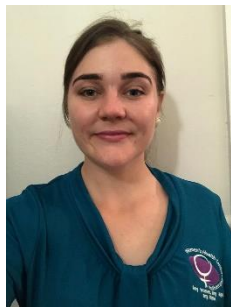


journey from student into social workers, seeing the theory they have spent years learning mesh with the realities of practice is really awe inspiring. It was really exciting to work on the Dignity First Fund Grant with Karen and see the changes to the Centre take shape! This year I also applied for a Grant for Sexual Violence Prevention, and was thrilled to find out our submission was chosen to receive funding for our 'Posters and Coasters in Pubs and Clubs' campaign. That campaign is currently running so look out for feedback around that in next years' report!



I look forward to another year at the Centre, working with our amazing team, doing the inspiring and valued work that we do!

## Chloe- Intake Officer



Hello, my name is Chloe. I'm currently studying a Bachelor of Social Work (Honours) at CQU and completed my third year placement at the Women's Health Centre. I learned so much during my placement from the wealth of knowledge and experience that the people here have. I could not have asked for a better place to experience my first step into the field.

At the tail of my placement, I was offered the newly established role of Intake Officer. This new position has proven beneficial for the counsellors as they were then able to provide the time they were allocating to intake to more client sessions. This role has been challenging in some ways for everyone as we negotiate new processes and are all learning how this position works. But who doesn't like a challenge?!

While my role primarily entails going through the intake process with new clients, I also engage with women experiencing or at risk of homeless. These women show such strength and resilience through the adversity they face. I work with Jen and Lauren to assist with meals, clothing, and access to laundry and shower facilities. As I believe this is an important part of our service provision in empowering women, I began recording how many women are accessing our service and provide this information to the Team Leader, Alicia; hoping that in the future



this information will be able to contribute in accessing grants/funding to assist women experiencing homelessness further.

## Golden Mount Festival



Karen and Chloe attended the Golden Mount Festival in May of this year. To be part of the atmosphere and celebrations proved to be a great day for both of us. We shared in the festival, which is a real community gathering of families in the area as well as people attending from everywhere. It was great to meet so many people and listen to their stories.

The locals are very supportive, this was evident when people come up to Karen and I for a chat, and were keen to know about the Women's Health Centre and the support services we offer. We spent a wonderful day handing out information to those who were interested and to those who were not so interested. We received positive feedback from a number of people on the day and look forward to attending next year.



## Lauren- Administration



I work in reception/Administration three days a week, my primary roles include, welcoming clients, fielding incoming calls, general housekeeping duties, and supporting in various ways the counsellors with the work they undertake. Another great part of my work includes assisting the Project and Business Leader Shirin with the skilling Queenslanders for work programs that we have been running this past year.

Once again we had a busy start to 2019 with the Expo and Charity Ball to keep busy with, both these events were a huge success and made the effort worth it. My role leading up to the expo was to organise the attending food vans and stall holders by securing



registrations, it is such a pleasure to see it all come together on the day. The Ball is a huge event in our yearly calendar raising much needed funds for the Centre, my role this year was organising the multi-draw.

Another ongoing aspect to my role is overseeing the small but incredible resource Centre, borrowing is open to all in the community, items for loan include books, cds, and dvds. We welcome donations that are relevant to women's health and wellbeing to better grow and continue to provide relevant and helpful information to those in need.

Working at Women's Health is a pleasure and a challenge knowing that what we do as a team assists those in need to make a difference in their lives.



## Christmas Hampers



Once again 2018 saw a very productive end of year! Well over 40 families in need were provided with grocery hampers to make their Christmas a little more stress free and enjoyable. Our hamper drive has gotten bigger and bigger each year, and we are so grateful to the businesses, organisations, families and individuals who jump on board and sponsor a hamper! Our hamper drive is a massive task, in 2018 Charmaine did a marvelous job

of coordinating the drive, with all staff helping where necessary. As usual, though, none of it would have been possible without the amazing support we receive from local individuals, families and businesses. We thank everyone who donated from the bottom of our hearts!





If you would like to donate or sponsor a hamper for a vulnerable family this year, it's not too early!

Please contact Janis or Alicia by call the Centre on (07) 49 226 585.

