

**Women's Health Information and  
Referral Service Central Queensland Inc.**



**Annual Report  
2024 - 2025**



**Women's Health Information and Referral Service Central Queensland Inc.**

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# WHIRSCQ Annual Report 2024 - 2025

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## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

**Tracey Miller**



**I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands of the Darumbal people and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.**

It's a privilege to welcome you to WHIRSCQ's Annual General Meeting. The 2024–2025 year has been one of growth and resilience, driven by our vision to empower individuals to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives free from violence and trauma. This year, WHIRSCQ delivered over 7,400 hours of counselling to more than 1,000 individuals, with outreach extending to Gracemere, North Rockhampton, Mount Morgan, Yeppoon, Emerald, and Blackwater—ensuring access for rural and remote communities. Our Dignity Hub provided over 3,200 essential services to women at risk of homelessness, and our counselling team facilitated workshops on resilience, mindfulness, and self-care, alongside creative therapy groups. Client feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 99% feeling welcomed and safe and over 90% reporting improved coping skills.

We strengthened our organisational capacity through technology upgrades, process improvements, and a successful HSQF maintenance audit. The Team ensured compliance with funding bodies and secured a \$45,000 DFV Rent Assist Brokerage Grant, supporting 26 victim-survivors to access safe housing. Community engagement remained strong through events such as the Wellness Expo, DFV Prevention Month sessions, NAIDOC celebrations, and Reclaim the Night.

Looking ahead, our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan focuses on trauma-informed practice, cultural responsiveness, accessibility, and sustainability—ensuring WHIRSCQ continues to lead in creating pathways to healing and empowerment.

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT Tracey Miller

On behalf of the Board, I thank our Manager, Janis Littleboy, our dedicated staff, and all stakeholders for their commitment. Together, we are building safer, stronger communities across Central Queensland.

Thank you

*Tracey Miller*



**The Women's Health Information and Referral Service CQ Inc.**

**Board of Directors**

Chairperson – Tracey Miller

Treasurer – Sharon Field

Secretary – Suzanne Olive

Board Member – Annette Dudley

## MANAGER'S REPORT

### Janis Littleboy



**I sincerely acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we gather, the Darumbal people and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.**

I am proud to present WHIRSCQ's Annual Report for 2024–2025 – a year marked by growth, resilience and unwavering commitment to our vision of empowering individuals to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives free from violence and trauma. This report showcases the incredible work of our team in delivering trauma-informed, culturally responsive services, expanding outreach to regional and remote communities and strengthening organisational capacity to meet rising demand. Together, we have upheld our **Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF)** compliance, maintained high standards of care and advanced community education initiatives that foster safety and wellbeing across Central Queensland (CQ).

To local Members of Parliament, including Mayor Tony Williams, Deputy Mayor Drew Wickerson, Member for Rockhampton Donna Kirkland, Councillors Shane Latcham, Marika Taylor, Andrea Friend and all others, thank you for acknowledging our service throughout the year.

To our dedicated Board of Directors. Chairperson Tracey Miller, Treasurer - Sharon Field, Secretary Suzanne Olive and Committee member Annette Dudley who continually show up and volunteer their time as committed to represent WHIRSCQ, I say thank you. Your wisdom and guidance in all areas of Governance is testament of what drives women to continually want equality for all.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, partners, and stakeholders for your continued support as we move forward with our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan to create lasting impact.

#### **Service Delivery Overview 2024–2025**

Between July 2024 and June 2025, WHIRSCQ provided counselling to **1,002 individuals** across **6,462 attended sessions**, totalling **7,453 hours**. Most clients **self-referred (37.3%)**, with

## MANAGER'S REPORT

### Janis Littleboy

significant referrals from NGOs and Queensland Police. The majority were women, with clients spanning **30 postcodes**. Of the total number of clients, **18.1%** were our **First Nations people** and **4.6% of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background**. Over half experienced both recent or historical domestic and family violence (DFV) and nearly half had reported sexual violence (SV).

Through dedication and focus we continued to offer face to face to our outreach service to **North Rockhampton, Gracemere, Mount Morgan, Yeppoon, Emerald, Blackwater** and in addition phone counselling throughout CQ. WHIRSCQ ensured individuals in rural and remote communities could access vital, trauma-informed support—breaking down barriers to care and fostering safety and healing across the region. Throughout the 2024 – 2025 period, our Dignity Hub (DH) offered meals, hygiene products, clothing, and technology support with 2,054 interactions, with April–June being the busiest quarter. Whilst the DH has now ceased due to rising costs and following Workplace Health and Safety (WHS), we know the DH played a valuable role; however, the priority continues to be the wellbeing of staff and clients and delivering core counselling services. We continue to gratefully receive donations from **Share the Dignity** and therefore can continue to stock and provide sanitary and personal items to women of all ages.

#### WHIRSCQ Strategic Plan 2025–2028

Our 2025–2028 Strategic and Operational Plan reaffirms WHIRSCQ's commitment to empowering individuals to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives free from violence and trauma. The plan focuses on **strengthening trauma-informed and culturally responsive practice, enhancing service accessibility for all clients including CALD communities, building organisational capacity through staff wellbeing and compliance and promoting awareness and prevention through community education**. Guided by evidence-based approaches and cultural safety, this plan positions WHIRSCQ as a leader in creating pathways to healing and empowerment.

#### HSQF Maintenance Audit

WHIRSCQ continues to demonstrate strong governance, compliance, and service excellence. The recent HSQF audit confirmed that organisational systems, processes and practices effectively support high-quality service delivery, resulting in the maintenance of certification to the **Human Services Quality Standards**. This achievement reflects our commitment to continuous improvement, evidenced by the successful implementation of corrective actions and robust Human Resource (HR) compliance practices.

#### Community Education and Awareness

In 2024–2025, WHIRSCQ's community education initiatives were pivotal in advancing our strategic goal of fostering safer communities. These efforts strengthened partnerships with

## MANAGER'S REPORT

### Janis Littleboy

local organisations, amplified awareness of gender-based violence, and promoted holistic wellbeing. Events such as our **WHIRSCQ Wellness Expo**, **DFV Prevention Month session**, **NAIDOC celebrations**, and **Reclaim the Night** were not only informative but also empowering for all. These initiatives reflect our commitment to driving cultural change and positioning WHIRSCQ as a trusted voice in prevention and advocacy across CQ.

#### **Sector Engagement**

Throughout 2024–2025, the Manager continually participated in the Queensland Sexual Assault Network (QSAN) and Women's Health Service Alliance (WHSa). By engaging at the state level, WHIRSCQ ensures its services are aligned with broader efforts and commitment for change to prevent violence and support survivors, ultimately enhancing outcomes for clients and communities across Central Queensland.

#### **Organisational Restructure and Continuous Improvement**

As part of WHIRSCQ's commitment to continuous improvement, a review of internal systems identified the need for structural changes to strengthen operations and respond to growing service demands. Expanding team leadership within counselling and outreach supports increased staff numbers and rising community needs, ensuring sustainability and compliance with funding and HSQF standards. These changes align with the 2025–2028 Operational Plan objectives to build organisational capacity and maintain a skilled, supported workforce, positioning WHIRSCQ to deliver high-quality, trauma-informed services and adapt effectively to future challenges.

#### **Our Team:**

**Business Team Leader** - Shirin Kanan

**Rockhampton Counselling Team Leader** - Alicia Harris

**Outreach Emerald and Intake Team Leader** - Amy Charlesworth.

**Business Team** - Ann Cryer, Priscilla McQuire, Chantelle Smitheim, Valerie Noffke, Anne Munns and Rebecca Mwankenja.

**Counsellors** - Robyn Bailey, Greer Burgess, Stacy Evans, Debra Pearson, Raelene Ivers, Wendy Dolan, Michelle Close, Dianne Roche, Kerri Tighe, Manmeet Kaur, Rhonda Western, Amy Purton-Long and Veda Mahambrey.

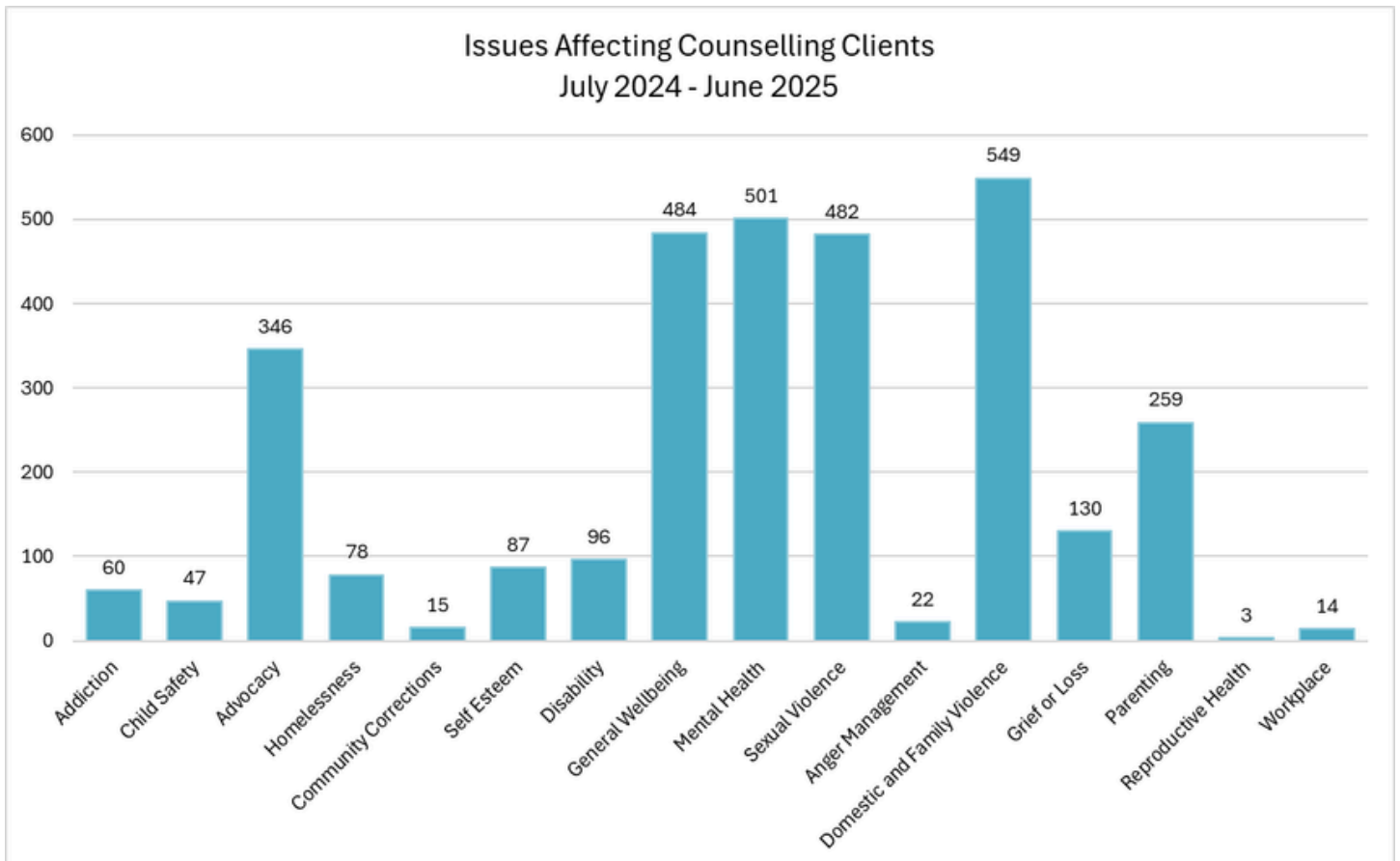
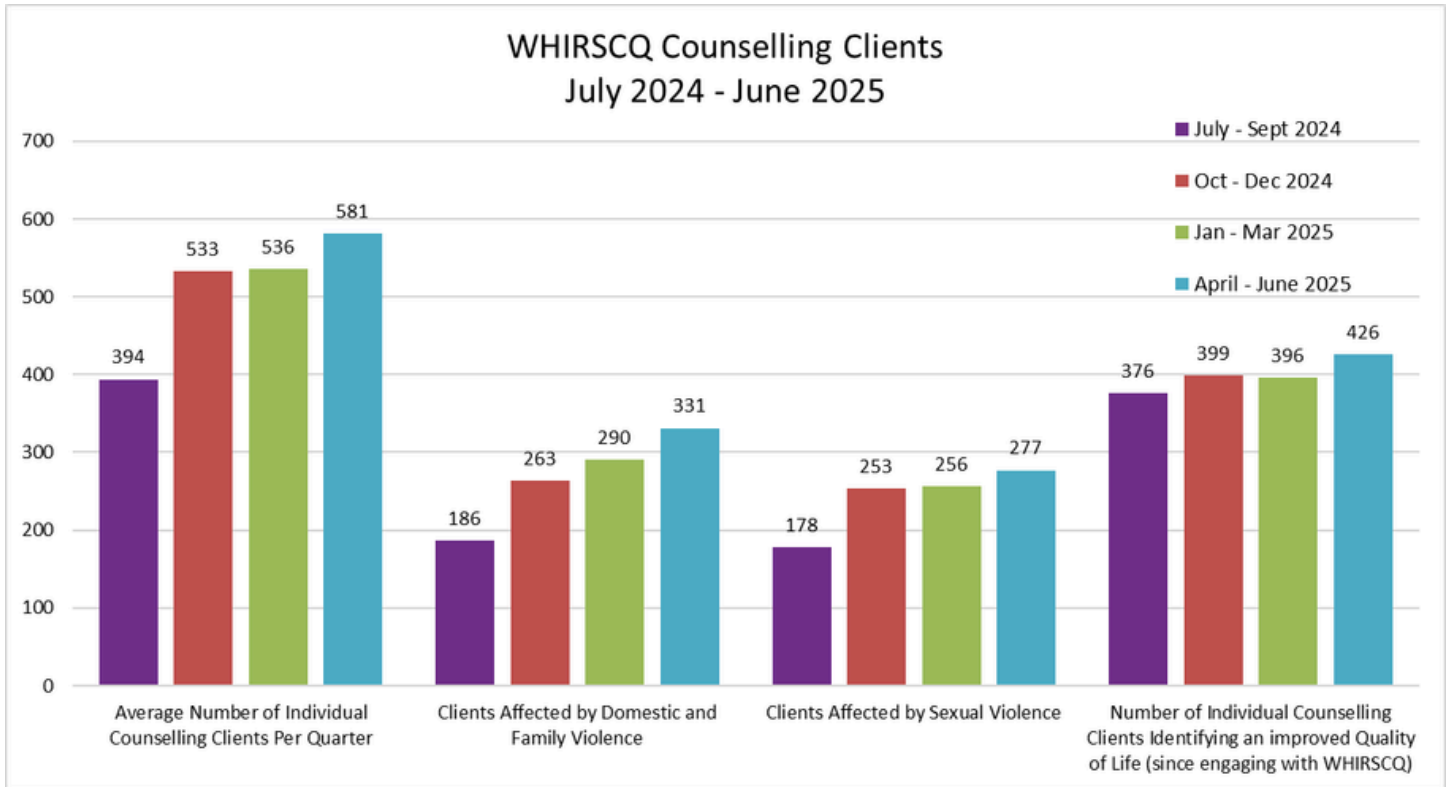
**Intake Officers** - Tineal Farlow and Pavneet Kaur.

**Thank you to employees who have moved on to other ventures** - Suezanne Theaker and Dianne McCrae.

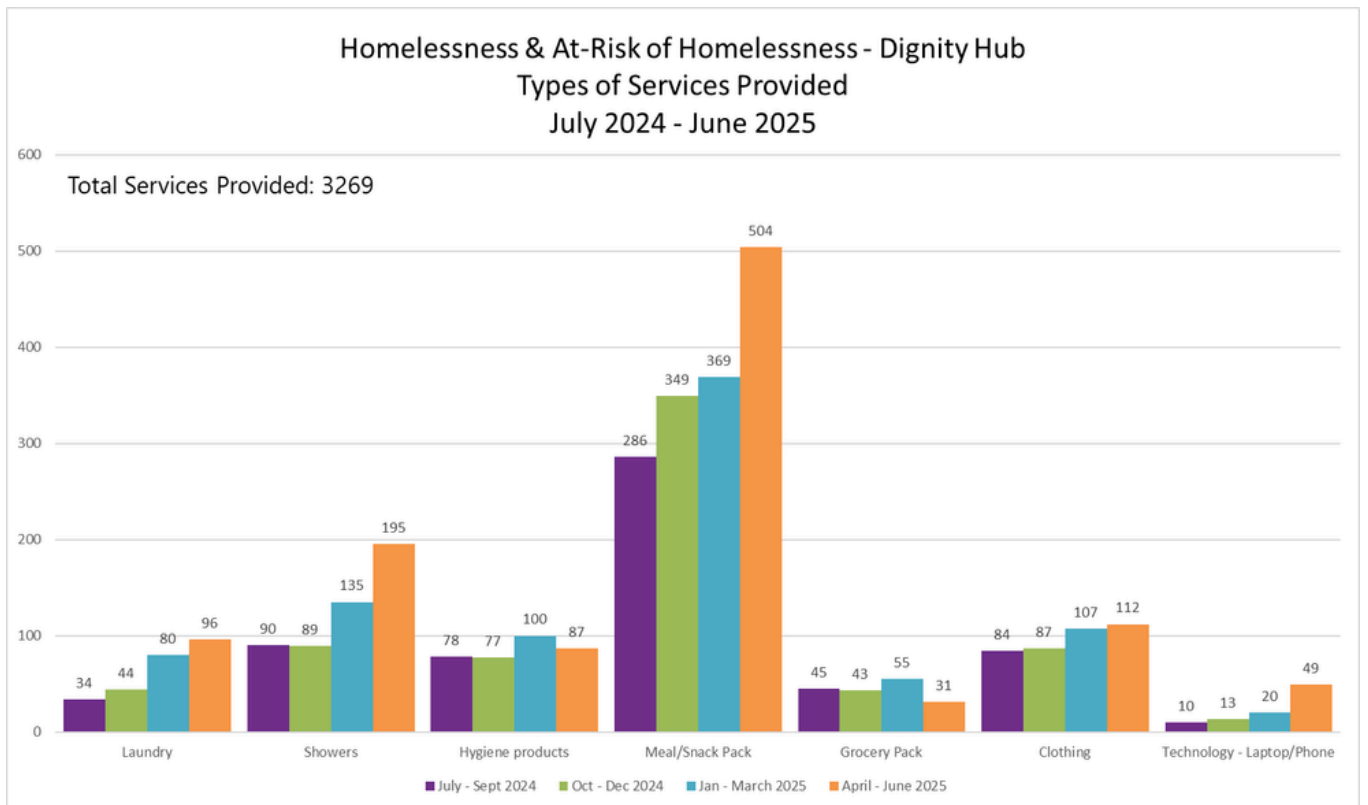
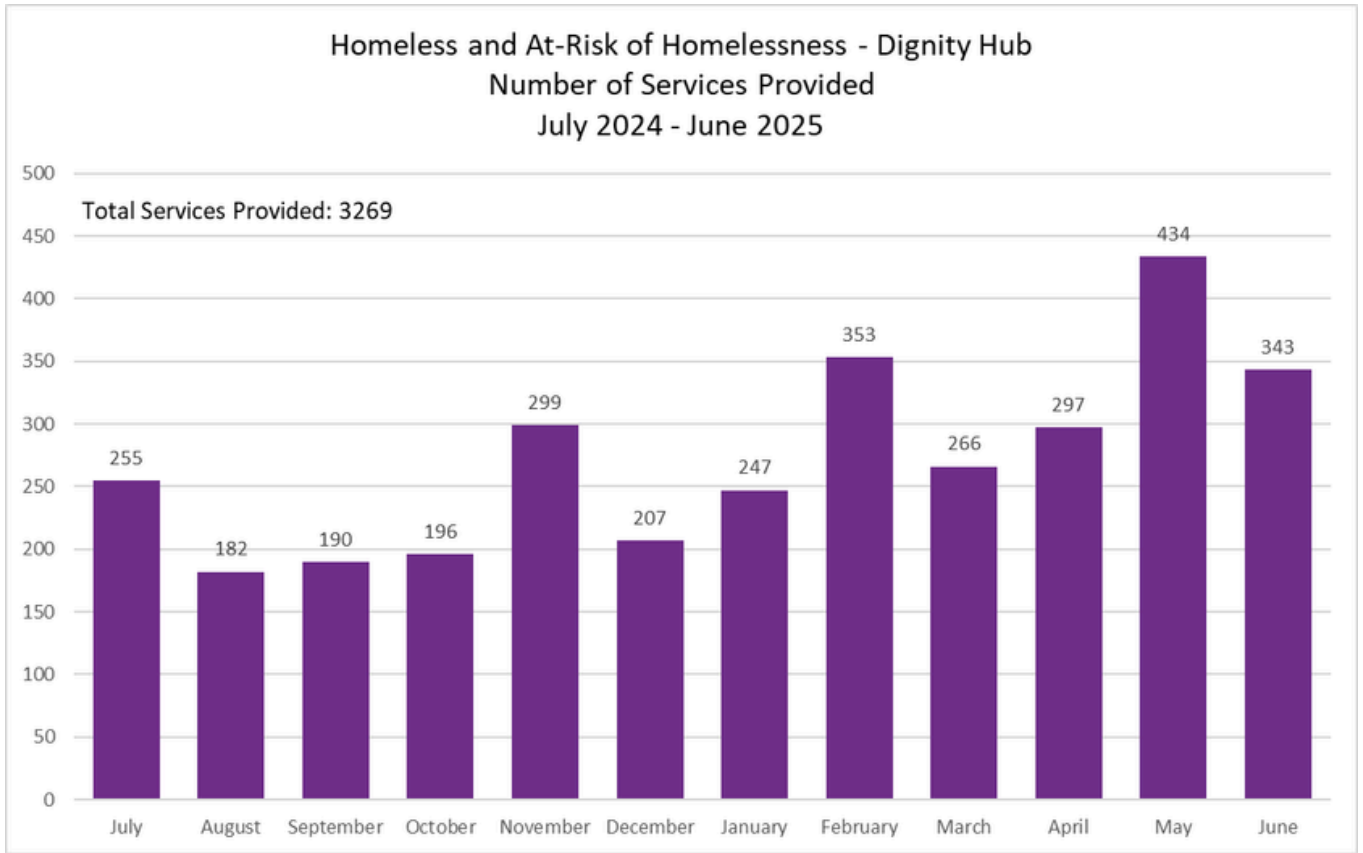
Kind regards,

*Janis Littleboy*

# STATISTICS



# STATISTICS



## STATISTICS

Other data about WHIRSCQ service delivery (1st July, 2024 – 30th June, 2025):

### Counselling:

- Most of our clients self-referred (37.3%).
- Other significant referral channels include Non-Government Organisations (21.7%) and the Queensland Police Service (17.9%).
- 1002 individuals received counselling; of these, 988 were female, 4 were male, and 2 were Non-Binary, 5 were LGBTIQ+ and 3 declined to answer or identified as 'other'.
- 6462 sessions were attended; 904 were not attended.
- The total of session hours was 7453.
- The largest age group to receive counselling were 41 – 59 (33.7%) closely followed by the 26 to 40 age group (32.6%).
- 54.8% of our counselling clients have experienced family or domestic violence, either recently or historically.
- 48.1% of our counselling clients have experienced sexual violence, either recently or historically.
- 18.1% of our counselling clients identify as having a First Nation background.
- 4.6% of our counselling clients identify as culturally and linguistically diverse.
- The majority of our counselling clients reside in postcode 4701 (41%); we worked with clients residing in 30 different postcodes.
- 4.4% of our counselling clients were experiencing homelessness at the time of intake.

### Dignity Hub

- We provided 3269 services (laundry, showers, hygiene products, meals and snack packs, grocery packs, clothing, and technology services) in 2054 interactions (individuals may receive more than one service in an interaction).
- May was our busiest month with 434 services provided. May was also our busiest month last year with 280 services provided.
- We gave out 342 hygiene products; we may have given more depending on the individual's circumstances.
- We provided 1508 meals and snack packs. Last year we provided 1236.
- We provided 174 grocery packs; Last year we provided 117. this does not include hampers that were distributed to counselling clients in need at Christmas.
- The biggest quarter for the dignity hub was April – June 2025 with 1074 services provided on 636 occasions (individuals may have attended on more than one occasion in the quarter).

## STATISTICS

Information, Advice and Referral (from Reception Administration) for the period of July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025:

- WHIRSCQ provided information, advice and referral on 340 occasions (that did not progress to intake).
- WHIRSCQ received 120 queries about the services we provide, referral and intake process (these were not completed intakes).
- WHIRSCQ received 79 queries about termination.
- WHIRSCQ received 25 queries about medical centres.
- WHIRSCQ received 104 queries about sexual health services, such as sexual health checks.
- WHIRSCQ received 31 queries about accommodation (not domestic and family violence related).
- WHIRSCQ received 22 queries requesting support for domestic and family violence support (not counselling related, including accommodation, information about completing applications and court support).
- WHIRSCQ received 89 other queries, including making donations to WHIRSCQ, assistance with transport, completion of paperwork, support for men and children outside of our service provision, and requests for financial aid.

## **BUSINESS TEAM LEADER**

### **Shirin Kanan**



#### **Overview of 2024–2025**

The 2024–2025 period was marked by significant progress for WHIRSCQ, with growth in service delivery and strengthened internal capacity. The Business Team demonstrated professionalism and commitment, ensuring compliance with contractual obligations to funding bodies—Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and from 2025 onwards, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety—as well as adherence to the Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF).

#### **Business Team Members**

- **Business Team Leader:** Shirin Kanan
- **Finance Officer & WHS Officer:** Ann Cryer
- **Communications Officer:** Chantelle Smitheim
- **HR Administration Officer:** Priscilla McQuire
- **Reception Administration Officers:** Valerie Noffke, Anne Munns, Rebecca Mwanjeka
- **Intake Officers:** Tineal Farlow, Pavneet Kaur (jointly supervised with the Emerald Outreach & Intake Team Leader)

#### **Key Achievements and Highlights**

**Financial Position** - WHIRSCQ maintained a strong financial position in full compliance with departmental contracts, Australian Accounting Standards, and ACNC regulations. This was achieved through the collaborative efforts of the Manager, Business Team Leader, Finance Officer, Accountant, and Treasurer.

**Continuous Improvement** - Commitment to quality was upheld through HSQF processes, including regular policy reviews ratified by the Board, a Continuous Improvement Register informed by feedback, and twice-yearly client surveys to guide service enhancements.

**DFV Rent Assist Brokerage Grant** - A \$45,000 grant from the Queensland Government was successfully secured and fully expended, supporting 26 victim-survivors of DFV or sexual violence at risk of homelessness to access or maintain safe housing.

## **BUSINESS TEAM LEADER**

### **Shirin Kanan**

**Community Education and Awareness** - WHIRSCQ actively engaged in prevention and capacity-building initiatives, including:

- **Wellness Expo (March 2025)** promoting women's health and wellbeing.
- **DFV Prevention Month Information Session (May 2025)** focusing on DFV in Capricornia, non-fatal strangulation, coercive control legislation, benefits of counselling, and the community's role as upstanders.
- **NAIDOC March and Information Stall (July 2025).**
- **Reclaim the Night BBQ and Candlelight Ceremony (October 2025)** during Sexual Violence Awareness Month.

Additionally, WHIRSCQ maintained a strong presence at community events through information stalls to broaden outreach.

**Intake Process** - Refinements were implemented to improve assessment quality and streamline service delivery through ongoing feedback and consultation.

**Technology Upgrades** - Introduced the 3CX phone system and provided laptops and mobile phones to outreach counsellors and WFH staff, improving communication, reducing response times, and ensuring uninterrupted client support.

**Digital Engagement** - Strengthened community connection via WHIRSCQ's website and social media platforms, launching campaigns to raise awareness on health, wellbeing, and gender-based violence.

**Dignity Hub** - Delivered 3,269 services between July 2024 and June 2025 (average 272 per month) to women experiencing or at risk of homelessness, providing meals, hygiene products, clothing, showers, laundry, and grocery packs in a welcoming environment.

**Statistics and Reporting** - Robust data collection and analysis ensured accurate reporting to funding bodies, informed strategic planning, and supported continuous improvement.

### **Summary**

The Business Team played a pivotal role in maintaining operational excellence, financial compliance, and service quality. Through technology upgrades, process improvements, and community engagement, WHIRSCQ strengthened its capacity to deliver responsive, client-focused services while meeting all regulatory and contractual obligations.

*Shirin Kanan*

**ROCKHAMPTON COUNSELLING TEAM LEADER &  
EMERALD OUTREACH AND INTAKE TEAM LEADER  
Alicia Harris & Amy Charlesworth**



The 2024-2025 financial year has been another busy and rewarding year for the WHIRSCQ counselling team. In an exciting update, Amy Charlesworth is now the Emerald Outreach and Intake Team Leader. Amy's team consists of Emerald Counsellors Kerri & Veda and our Intake Officers Tineal and Pavneet. The team in Rockhampton has remained the same this year, consisting of: Alicia (Team Leader), Amy P, Deb, Di, Greer, Manmeet, Michelle, Raelene, Rhonda, Robyn, Stacy, Wendy.

**2024-2025 Summary**

Housing remains a challenge, with many clients reporting a decrease in availability of rentals and an increase in rental costs. An increase in the cost of living has been experienced across the board. Despite the challenges faced by our clients, it has been amazing and inspiring to witness the strength, resilience and commitment shown by our clients.



We facilitated the following workshops in Rockhampton this year: “Building Resilience”, “Confidence Through Self-Awareness” and “Mindfulness and Self-Care” with a total of 32 participants. Our counsellors have continued to run the Arts & Craft group every Monday and Thursday. We attended a number of community events to raise awareness of our service and the work that we do. The events we attended this year include: “Golden Mount Festival” (Mount Morgan), “Rockhampton Regional Council Staff Wellness Forum” (Rockhampton), “D&FV Candlelight Vigil” (Emerald), “D&FV Awareness March” (Emerald), “Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Walk” (Rockhampton), “Hands of Support” (Rockhampton), “NAIDOC” marches and events (Rockhampton, Emerald and Blackwater), “CQ Youth Interagency Health Forum” (Rockhampton), “Zonta Says No Breakfast” (Rockhampton) and the North Rockhampton High School “RU OK? Day Mental Health Expo”.

“Sexual Violence” and “Domestic and Family Violence” remain the cornerstones of the work we do. WHIRSCQ held our “Domestic and Family Violence Information Session” in May, and our “Reclaim the Night BBQ and Candle Lighting Ceremony” in October. These were strongly supported by our counsellors and staff.



**COUNSELLING TEAM LEADER**  
**Alicia Harris**

**Client feedback**

We completed client surveys in April/May and received valuable feedback. In summary of the surveys:

- 98.9% of respondents felt welcomed and safe at the Centre
- 100% felt that confidentiality, duty of care and consent to share information were clearly explained
- 93.2% felt that counselling has assisted in identifying and managing negative thinking
- 90.9% felt their understanding of themselves had improved.
- 85.2% felt counselling assists them to better manage life's challenges.

Client surveys are completed twice yearly. We are currently completing our second round of surveys for 2025.

The WHIRSCQ counselling team have worked hard to provide a high-quality, professional and confidential counselling service. We are proud to have led the team in 2025 and look forward to continuing to lead their teams in 2026. The commitment, passion and dedication of the counsellors is second to none, and we thank them for their hard work and effort, day in and day out.

Until next time,

*Alicia Harris & Amy Charlesworth*

## Prevention, Capacity Building and Awareness Raising

WHIRSCQ's service delivery incorporates providing prevention, capacity building and awareness raising to individuals, government and non-government service providers who would benefit from greater awareness around gender-based violence, health and well-being and issues.

The workshops, groups and events that WHIRSCQ had organised or participated in from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 include:

- Arts and Crafts group – ongoing, every Monday and Thursday
- Homeless Connect - 4<sup>th</sup> July
- ROCKNAIDOC March and Family Fun Day - 12<sup>th</sup> July
- Central Queensland Multicultural Association Connectors Web for Healthy Relationships - 14<sup>th</sup> July
- Building Resilience workshop - 16<sup>th</sup> July
- Blackwater NAIDOC March and Expo - 26<sup>th</sup> July
- Central Queensland Indigenous Development Morning Tea - 7<sup>th</sup> August
- Central Queensland Health, Sport and Recreation Expo - 25<sup>th</sup> August
- Yeppoon State High School RU OK? Day - 3<sup>rd</sup> September
- Jean Hailes Women's Health Week - 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> September
- Emerald Women's Health Night - 5<sup>th</sup> September
- Confidence Through Self-Awareness workshop - 6<sup>th</sup> September
- Sexual Violence Awareness Month Digital Campaign – October
- Reclaim the Night BBQ and Candle Light Ceremony – 25<sup>th</sup> October
- CQ Fair Day, 2<sup>nd</sup> November
- Queensland Country Women's Association Branch Meeting - 7<sup>th</sup> November
- Arts and Crafts Christmas Morning Tea - 25<sup>th</sup> November
- Girls Time Out Pathways to Prosperity - 4<sup>th</sup> February
- WHIRSCQ Wellness Expo - 6<sup>th</sup> March
- International Women's Day - 8<sup>th</sup> March
- Golden Mount Festival - 3<sup>rd</sup> May
- Rockhampton Regional Council Staff Wellness Forum - 8<sup>th</sup> May
- Emerald Domestic and Family Violence Candlelight Vigil - 14<sup>th</sup> May
- Emerald Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month Awareness March - 20<sup>th</sup> May
- Hands of Support - 22<sup>nd</sup> May
- Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Walk - 22<sup>nd</sup> May
- Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month Information Session - 29<sup>th</sup> May
- Mindfulness and Self-Care workshop - 26<sup>th</sup> June

## Prevention, Capacity Building and Awareness Raising



Emerald NAIDOC Day  
8<sup>th</sup> July, 2024



ROCKNAIDOC March and Family Funday  
12<sup>th</sup> July, 2024



Reclaim the Night BBQ and Candle Light Ceremony  
25<sup>th</sup> October, 2024



ACON Pride Staff Training  
10<sup>th</sup> September, 2024



Arts and Crafts Group  
Christmas Morning Tea  
25<sup>th</sup> November, 2024

## Prevention, Capacity Building and Awareness Raising



WHIRSCQ Wellness Expo  
6th March, 2025



Golden Mount Festival  
3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2025



Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month Information Session  
29th May, 2025

## Contributions to WHIRSCQ



Donation from BreastScreen  
10th December, 2024



Donation from Anmaree Black and Karen Rogers  
from TBMMBEKIND in honour of Murphy  
Margaret and Tayla Black  
25th May, 2025.



Christmas hampers for clients in need  
2024



Donation from Green Leaves Early Learning  
31<sup>st</sup> March, 2025



WHIRSCQ Christmas Lunch  
13<sup>th</sup> December, 2024