

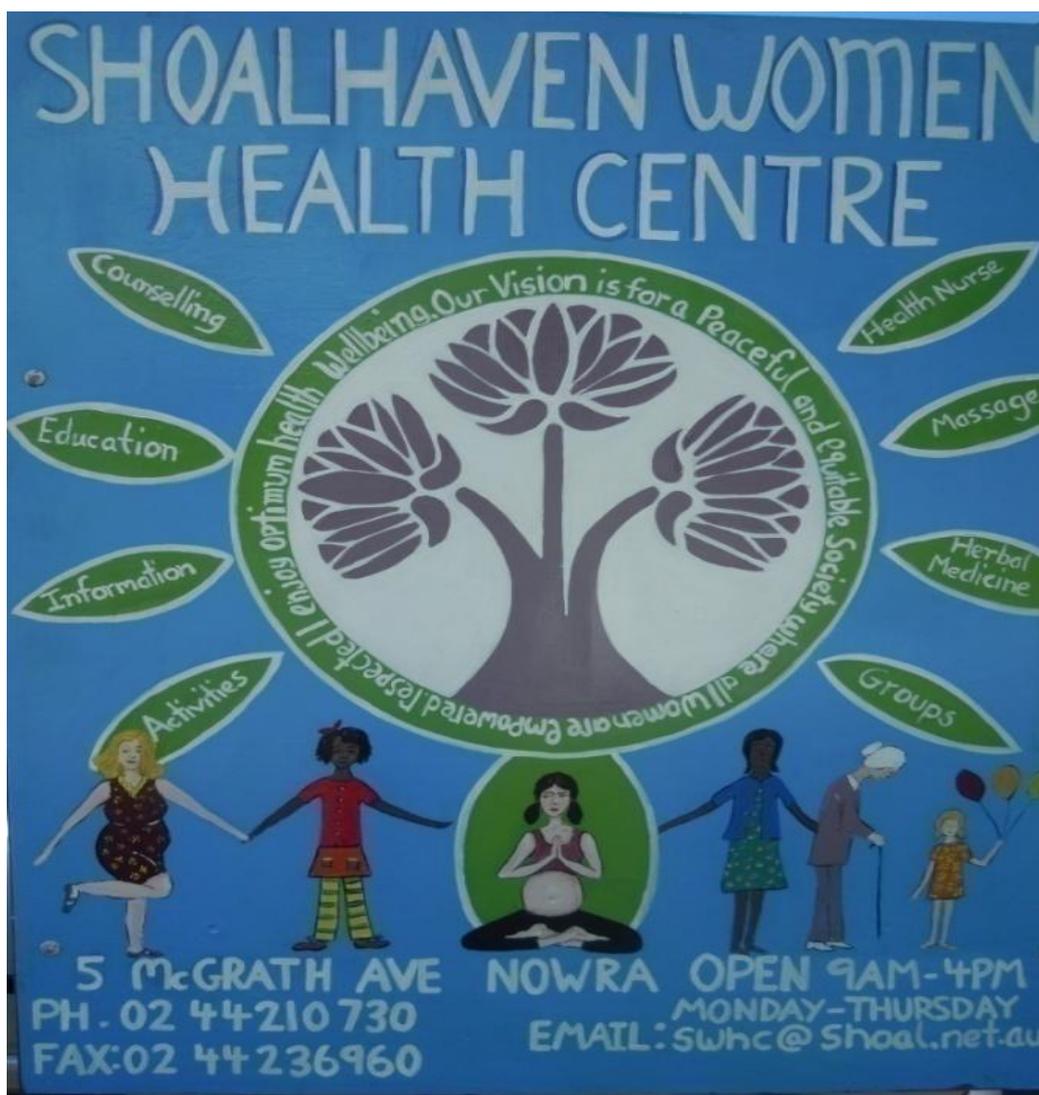


Annual Report

2015/2016



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Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) is incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Act and is a registered Charity with Public Benevolent Institution Status. This status enables donations to be a tax deductible item.

The Committee of Women (CoW), who oversee the Governance of the SHWC work, live or reside in the local community. The service currently employs eight (8) permanent part time staff. The centre is supported by volunteers, including administration volunteers and Tafe NSW Nowra Campus placement students.

Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre is a member of Women's Health NSW, the peak body for all Non Government Organisations (NGO) Women's Health Centres in NSW.

Centre Fundamentals

Vision

Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) has a vision for a peaceful and equitable society where all women are empowered, respected and enjoy optimum health and wellbeing.

Mission

Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) empowers women to take control of their own health and wellbeing through the provision of accessible, integrated health and intervention services within a caring, feminist environment.

Objectives

The objectives of the Association are:

- * To provide a non profit primary health care service for women, managed by women, within a feminist framework, in the Shoalhaven area.
- * To prioritise access for women who are living in poverty, or who have low or fixed incomes, by providing services at a minimal cost, or for no cost to ensure that women are not refused service, due to inability to pay.
- * To ensure that services reflect the needs of local women providing educational, preventative and self help programs which encompass women's life span, experience and cross a broad range of health issues.
- * To network, liaise and collaborate with other local service providers in order to provide necessary services to women in the community.
- * To facilitate access to the service activities assist women to access other appropriate services (acknowledging and addressing the different needs of women of diverse backgrounds and the barriers they may face.)
- * To uphold the rights of women who may use the service to express themselves freely, to be treated with respect, dignity and consideration.
- * To ensure the creation and maintenance of a safe, healthy and supportive environment for the well being of staff, management and women who use the service.
- * To actively encourage the empowerment of women in both the personal and social aspects of their lives by promoting informed decision making processes.
- * To provide a range of services which reflect the diverse needs of Women's Health.
- * To ensure effective community management and operation of the Women's Health Centre by and for women.
- * To encourage training and staff development of Centre staff in all areas of Women's Health to ensure the highest standard of health care to consumers.

Chair's Report

This year seems to have flown again with Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre again maintaining its high standard of support and service delivery to the women in the Shoalhaven region. The Centre has provided ongoing support to an increasing number of clients again this year despite working under the uncertainty of continued funding.

The centre's success again this year has been achievable as a result of the efforts of the committed team of passionate workers at the centre. Thank you to all staff and volunteers this year; Kym, Suzanne, Sally, Linda, Carolyn, Ali, Tracy and Maureen; Patsy, Kathy and Valarie

The Centre again saw an increase in numbers of groups and workshops held along with increases in referral and women seeking support. Increases were seen in counselling hours and continuation of support levels that have become synonymous with the centre.

The Centre saw the culmination of months of work with the receipt of the Accreditation approval notification early in the year. This was a testimony of the efforts of staff in completing all the required elements to receive this level of accreditation.

The Committee of Women have continued to support the Manager and staff of the centre and have been working on updating the Business Plan and Strategic and Operational Plans.

We continue our review of policies and procedures as part of our ongoing quality improvement process.

The Committee has been delighted to welcome a number of new members whom all bring to the committee a new set of skills and experience. We welcomed Michelle Waples, Rebecca Kate, Jo-Ann Hewitt and Lynette Gerstenberg to the Committee of Women. Sadly, we said farewell to Sally Wallace (Secretary). We thank Sally for her time and efforts over a number of years.

The Centre has seen a number of small capital expense improvements, along with some general updating of rooms and décor, which I'm sure have been appreciated by both staff and clients.

These improvements can only be achieved through clever management and control of the budget. Again special thanks should be made to Alison Goodwin who manages to micro manage the annual budget to ensure the maximum benefit to all who attend the service.

With the uncertainty of funding going forward from June next year, the Committee appreciate the continued support of the staff during this time. We understand the difficult nature of this situation and we can feel certain, that our thanks are thoughts echoed by your clients.

We remain positive for the ongoing existence of the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre in its current format ***and look forward to being able to continue to provide services to the women of the Shoalhaven for many more years to come.*** Sally Lamb **Chair**



Manager's Report

The Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre, staff and volunteers continue to support the women of the Shoalhaven with programs that provide intervention and prevention strategies.

The centre received confirmation that the funding extension arrangement would be continued for another twelve (12) months. This will ensure our funding until 30th June 2017.

Whilst this is great news for our service and clients, at the end of this period we should move towards the procurement process with the NSW Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health will undertake a scoping exercise of the women's health sector to gain a better understanding of what our services provide before we are asked to undertake this new process.

Our staff continue to show commitment to the service and our clients in this challenging climate; I appreciate their loyalty in remaining with the service through these uncertain times.

One Hundred and sixty four (164) new clients accessed the service during the reporting period. During 2015/16 nearly 4,000 points of contact by women either attending centre appointments, group/workshops, emergency drop in, drop in for information, via email, outreach clinic or by telephone. The centre continues to be a very busy space with our services providing a client centred focus and philosophy makes SWHC an extremely consumer friendly and sought after service. SWHC provided one hundred and three (103) group sessions which saw an increase from the previous year and hitting that amazing total of 100 plus!. A total of 867 women benefited from participation in group activities.

The SWHC continues to provide a high standard of service and continues to develop and reshape workshops, with a focus on intervention and prevention; identifying and supporting a diverse range of complexities, meeting the needs of women in a regional setting

The staff are dedicated, loyal and caring, with the client's best interests always at the forefront of their work; working collaboratively as a team, ensures a pleasant and effective working environment. This is a happy and cohesive space, being evident through our outcomes.

In February 2016 SWHC was awarded Accreditation in line with the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). This had been an enormous amount of work for staff but especially Ali Goodwin who displayed unwavering dedication to the process. This certificate acknowledges the work she has done, and continues to do.

The Shoalhaven covers a vast geographical footprint and for such a small service it is difficult to meet the needs of all clients. SWHC benefits from the strong partnerships and MOU's in place with other service providers in the region. We thank our networks and partners for their commitment to service provision and the needs of our shared clients. Our Women's Biz continues to be a sought after 'read' distributing nearly 1000 copies four times a year by post or email..... with Facebook and our Website providing further up to date information.

We continue to seek opportunities to deliver workshops/supports in different spaces and places and art therapy has grown in its popularity. Hiring space in the Shoalhaven Regional Art Gallery has proved to be a great success and provides a fantastic, safe, art space for women to undertake the work.

My wonderful staff continue to amaze me with their hard work and ability to 'stretch' themselves every year. For what can be difficult situations and working in small spaces, daily, they continue to smile..... but more importantly, we laugh: Ali, Carolyn, Kym, Lesley, Linda, Sally and Suzanne; my ever committed volunteers, my Tafe placements and my CoW who support and encourage me with their 'try it' attitude, reflects in the thanks, words, smiles and tears within the four walls of this ***amazing little place we call, the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre.*** Tracy Lumb ***Manager***



SWHC Staff & Volunteers

Centre staff continue to provide a high level of compassionate and professional service to the women of the Shoalhaven through dedication and commitment.

All staff employed part time are classified by the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Modern Award with the exception of the Financial Administrator who is a contractor and Maureen Cable, our Women's Health Nurse who conducts a weekly outreach clinic through our partnership with Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District's Well Women's Program.

Our Staff:

- ♀ ***Alternate Therapist – Sally Gardner;***
- ♀ ***Counselling – Kym Nicolson and Suzanne Perry;***
- ♀ ***Finance – Ali Goodwin;***
- ♀ ***Massage – Linda Fenech and Carolyn Lette;***
- ♀ ***Reception – Lesley Brook.***

Our wonderful volunteers support the Centre on a weekly basis and without their ongoing dedication and attendance, our services would not operate as smoothly.

Thanks to:

- ♥ ***Kathy Eade***
- ♥ ***Valarie Hill***
- ♥ ***Patsy Robb.***



The Committee of Women (CoW) are a committed, professional team who bring a range of skills and knowledge to the governance of our service. They face the challenges of the changing environment of NGO's and the legislative and statutory requirements of the position. It must be remembered that the work contributed by these women in meeting the service standards is time costly and ongoing.

The SWHC would like to thank Sally Lamb (Chair), Lia Anderson (Treasurer), Lyn Gerstenberg, Jo-Anne Hewitt, Rebecca Kate and Michelle Waples. Special thanks to Sally Lamb, our Chair who is always available to me to meet during the month and discuss, debrief and on occasion 'shake our heads'; she ensures I am well supported in my position.

The CoW conquered the process of Accreditation and has embraced the processes that were involved to reach this outcome. The importance of following the process, reviewing policy, ensuring strategic and business plans were in place is a credit to such a small team; this ensures quality outcomes and workspace for clients, volunteers and staff.

Whilst in the greater landscape of community services we are small, the requirements and obligations placed upon the centre and ultimately our Board is enormous but we continue to be guided and encouraged by the shared philosophy of the importance of the service what is essential and a basic human right for women.

Strategic Plan 2015-2018

Our Objectives...

- ✓ To provide a non-profit primary health care service for women, which is managed by women, within a feminist framework in the Shoalhaven area.
- ✓ To prioritise access for women who are marginalised and/or poorest of health issues by providing services at a minimal cost or for no cost to ensure that women are able to receive service and support.
- ✓ To ensure that services reflect the needs of local women providing educational, preventative and self-help programs which encompass women's life span, experience and cross a broad range of health issues which also recognise and respect Aboriginality and CALD backgrounds.
- ✓ To network, liaise, collaborate and establish MOU's where applicable with other local service providers in order to provide necessary services to women in the community.
- ✓ To facilitate access to services and activities and to assist women to access other appropriate services (acknowledging and addressing the different needs of women of diverse backgrounds and the social barriers).
- ✓ To uphold the rights of women who may use the service to express themselves freely, to be treated with respect, dignity and consideration.
- ✓ To ensure the creation and maintenance of a safe, healthy and supportive environment for the well being of staff, volunteers, Committee of Women (CoW) and women who use the centre and its services.
- ✓ To actively encourage the empowerment of women in both the personal and social aspects of their lives by promoting informed decision making processes and strategies.
- ✓ To provide a range of integrated services which reflect the complex nature of women's health with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- ✓ To ensure effective Governance and operation of the Centre by and for women.
- ✓ To encourage training and staff development in all areas of women's health to ensure the highest standard of integrated, client centred health care to consumers.
- ✓ Strive to maintain ethical standards in all our activities.
- ✓ Commitment to best practice and continued Quality Improvement.
- ✓ Advocating for and supporting women from a feminist perspective including at all levels of Government and their Ministries.

Our Goals 2015-2016

1. Secure and develop a strong and dynamic organisation capable of providing a range of sustainable and effective programs which address women's health and wellbeing.
2. Provide a range of multidisciplinary, integrated health services, education and information to empower women and improve their health and wellbeing, and build social and community capacity.
3. Work collaboratively with strong partnerships and cross sector organisations at local, state, national and global levels. To advocate, lobby and have a positive influence on public opinion, recognition, policy, services and practices relating to women especially those who are marginalized and of the poorest of health issues.
4. Improve access to health services and information for all women with the aim to expand and develop greater opportunities.

Our Strategies...

Goal 1 – Secure and develop a strong and dynamic organisation capable of providing a range of sustainable and effective programs which address women's health and wellbeing

Strategies:

- ◆ Maintain, evaluate and review the SWHC Policy and Procedure Manual and continued implementation of procedures across the organization.
- ◆ Maintain planning and evaluation processes and cycles to ensure SWHC operate effectively and continues to meet the changing needs of women.
- ◆ Ensure that the governance of Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre is of the highest standard and members are drawn from the local community.
- ◆ Ensure that the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre delivers high quality health and wellbeing services to target groups with budget.
- ◆ Business Plan (2016/17) to steer direction and financial planning of the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre and its services.
- ◆ Develop and maintain appropriate Key Performance Indicators in line with the NSW Health Framework for Women's Health 2013 in collaboration with The NSW Ministry of Health to underpin our Contractual (2016-17) obligations.
- ◆ Ensure accreditation is maintained with best practice industry standards.
- ◆ Ensure all staff and volunteers have optimum access to professional development opportunities. Ensure that mandatory training is undertaken.
- ◆ Ensure that all women involved in the Centre feel valued and supported.
- ◆ Maintain a strong, diverse and dynamic membership base with the aim to build and grow these numbers.
- ◆ Continually assess and source funding for service provision, training and development and infrastructure.
- ◆ Build the public profile of the Centre through a variety of activities and mediums.

Goal 2 - Provide a range of multidisciplinary, integrated health services, education and information to empower women and improve their health and wellbeing, and build social and community capacity.

Strategies:

- ◆ Continue to provide education, information and referral.
- ◆ Continue to provide and expand a range of core clinical services including alternate therapies, counselling and massage services and the Well Women's Program.
- ◆ Continue to provide and expand clinical, therapeutic and information and education groups and activities.
- ◆ Expand service provision to encompass groups and activities which address women's social, cultural and recreational wellbeing.

Goal 3 - Work collaboratively with strong partnerships and cross sector organisations at local, state, national and global levels. To advocate, lobby and have a positive influence on public opinion, recognition, policy, services and practices relating to women especially those who are marginalized and of the poorest of health issues.

Strategies:

- ◆ Work collaboratively and develop relationships, exchange information and work with key local stakeholders, organisations, associations, networks, and agencies including all levels of Government.
- ◆ Advocate and lobby through a range of mediums to facilitate improved outcomes relating to women's health and wellbeing.
- ◆ Advocate for greater support and recognition of the importance of gender specific health strategies through promotion, policy, practices and activism.

Goal 4 - Improve access to health services and information for all women with the aim to expand and develop greater opportunities.

Strategies:

- ◆ Target key groups of women to expand our client profile. Working to expand our 'new to service' client base.
- ◆ Expand our existing outreach services in the Shoalhaven.
- ◆ Build and expand partnerships and MOU opportunities with other services, organisations and groups to offer an extensive, diverse, supported, client focused service to women.
- ◆ Explore and build our technological capacity to increase opportunities for women including services profile and contact via Website and social media.
- ◆ Continued participation, support and auspice of the Shoalhaven IWD Committee.
- ◆ Continue to work towards increased service provision by exploring a variety of options including funding submissions and opportunities, partnerships, MOU's, consortia or amalgamation.

Service Provision

Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre activities and outcomes reflect the goals and philosophy of our Strategic Plan (2015/2018) being underpinned by our Business Plan, Environmental Scanning Document and Key Performance Indicators from the Ministry of Health which determines our direction and service outcomes during the reporting period.

Project and service goals were achieved across all areas of service delivery. Outcomes and client support met and in many areas exceeded expectation.

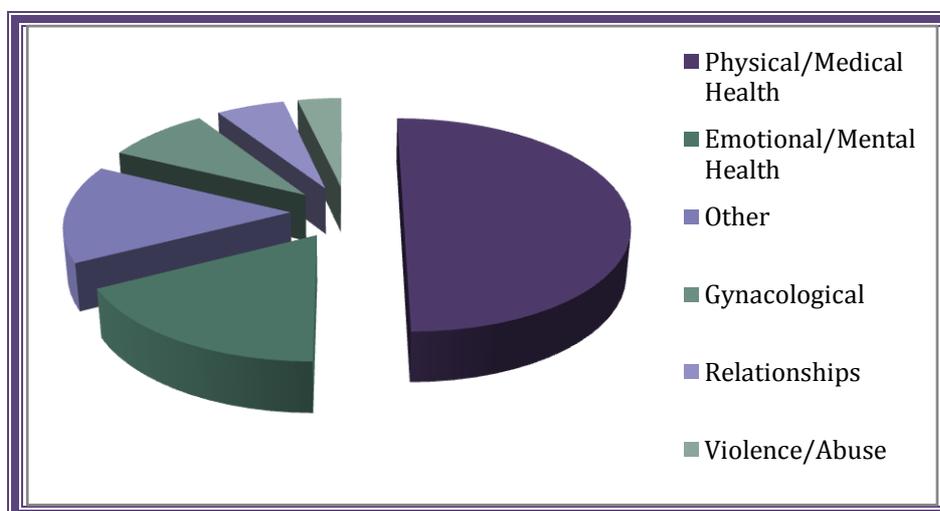
SWHC continues to evaluate its services and consult with women who attend the centre. We pride ourselves in responding to the expressed need of local women and develop assessable services with a prime focus on prevention and intervention at a minimal or no cost.

The SWHC and the Illawarra Women's Health Centre (IWHC) continue to work and support our services through a strong, positive and supportive MOU. The Telephone Counselling Service for the region continues offering supportive services for women. The service in the combined areas of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven handled **320** points of contact. This is an invaluable service to our women and SWHC looks forward to this continued collaboration between the two services. Thanks to Sally Stevenson for her ongoing support of SWHC and the women of the Shoalhaven.

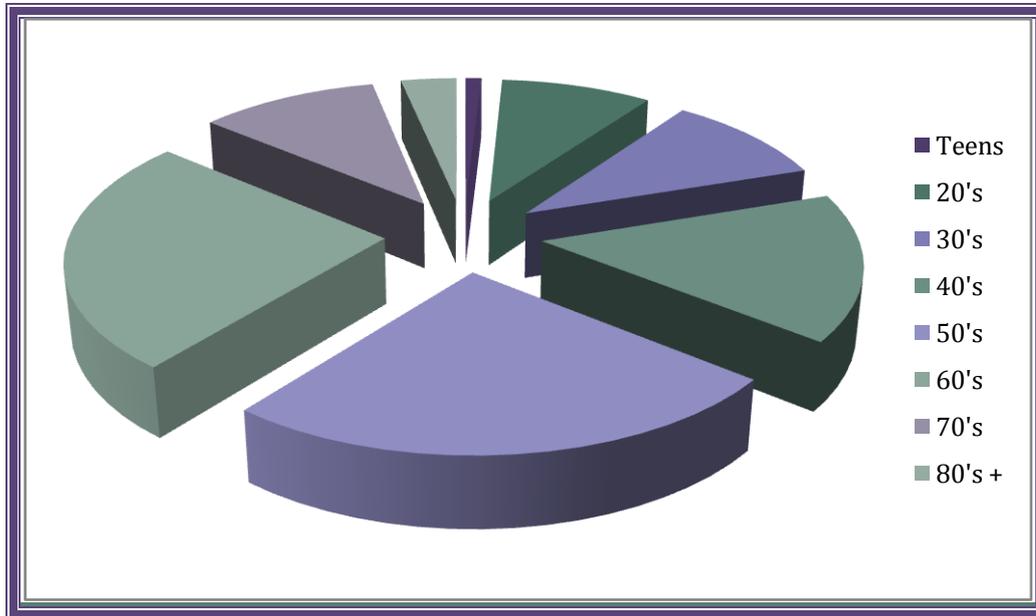
During 2015/16 **800** women attended appointments in core service areas.

- * Provided appointments (face to face and by phone) for women across core service areas – counselling and art therapy (267 contacts), massage (251 contacts), alternate therapist (28 contacts) and the nurse (223):
- * Recorded **867** women attending a total of **103** health education/promotion groups and intervention/prevention workshops across a multitude of disciplines;
- * Managed an estimated number of requests for information, referral, and appointments, follow up totalling nearly **4,000** through our reception and introduced another **164** new clients to our service.

Presenting issues across counselling, massage and the alternative therapist service were extensive but the main presenting issues were in the broad areas of physical/ medical health, emotional/ mental health, other, gynaecological, relationships, and violence/ abuse.



The age range of clients who accessed SWHC core services during 2015/2016 was broad. Services were provided to clients from Teens to 80's+. Women's health and wellbeing is essential to the ongoing strength of family and community. Gender specific services allow women to receive client centred support throughout their lifelong journey.



Health Education Programs focused on prevention and intervention strategies, self esteem issues, confidence building, diet, nutrition and lifestyle issues. **867** women attended workshops and groups held at the Centre including:

- ⊙ **Art Therapy**
- ⊙ **Arthritis**
- ⊙ **Arthritis & Fibromyalgia**
- ⊙ **Boost Your Energy**
- ⊙ **Candle Making**
- ⊙ **Cheat Ageing with a Happy Heart**
- ⊙ **Chronic Pain**
- ⊙ **Eco Living**
- ⊙ **Finance Education Workshop**
- ⊙ **Introduction to Yoga**
- ⊙ **Meditation Group**
- ⊙ **Menopause**
- ⊙ **Mindfulness Based Art Therapy**
- ⊙ **Mindfulness Based Stillness Meditation**
- ⊙ **New to Town**
- ⊙ **Pelvic Floor**
- ⊙ **Scams**
- ⊙ **Self Esteem**
- ⊙ **Self Massage & Gentle Stretch**
- ⊙ **Shopping Rights**
- ⊙ **Stress Management**
- ⊙ **That Sugar Film**
- ⊙ **Women's Wellness Festival**
- ⊙ **Women's Wisdom**
- ⊙ **Yoga for Everybody**

The majority of new clients attending workshops go on to access further SWHC services

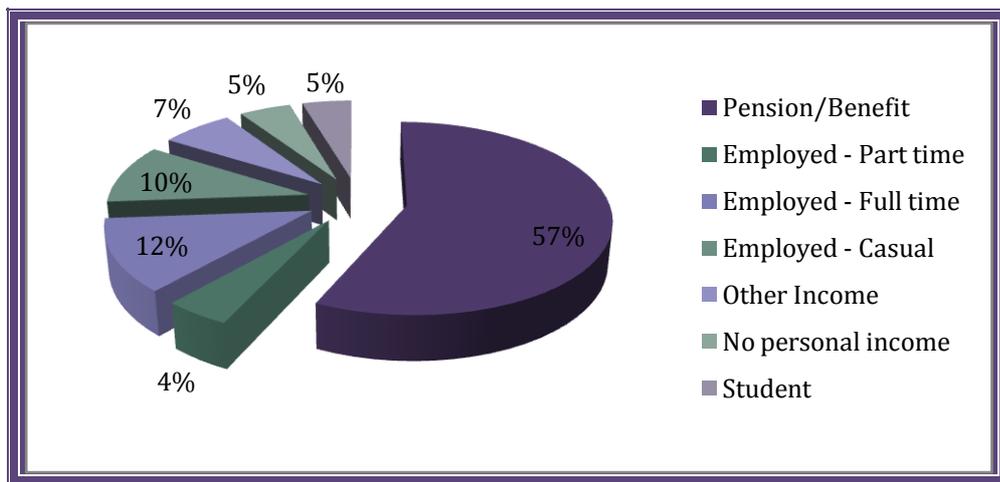
Clients report feeling less stress, more informed and well supported about health and wellbeing and able to make more informed choices.

Through the collection of data on client registrations *145 women* indentified as disabled. This was an increase of clients from the last reporting period. This included: Chronic Health Complaint, Physical, Psychiatric, intellectual, Brain/Nerve Damage and Vision/Hearing.

Women voiced their increase in confidence and feeling less isolated.

Socioeconomic information collated demonstrated the largest client group in this area was women on a pension or benefit which represented 57% of all women. 12% of women indicated they were employed full time, with 4% 2015/16 the Centre received nearly **4000 requests for information and or referral** by phone, drop in, email or through practitioners and staff; including follow up.

working part time, and 10% reporting that they worked casually. 7% of women reported having other income, 5% of women were students, and 5% of women reported having no personal income. We saw an increase in the amount of women who received a pension or benefit.



SWHC provides a **multidisciplinary, integrated** health service with a **primary focus of client centred care**. The number of new clients continues to grow at a steady rate and returning clients are a constant with the service. The number of clients utilizing other services provided by SWHC demonstrates the direct benefit to our clients. SWHC consistently receives **high numbers of referrals** from other local health services requesting service provision. Unfortunately due to service demands, on occasion, we are unable to meet all requests. Staff ensure when service provision cannot be supported by SWHC that referrals to other supporting agencies within the region are undertaken to ensure clients received the most client focused, appropriate service.

Clients report **positive changes to lifestyle, health and wellbeing** as a **direct result** of participation in service provision. Clients comment on **individual attention** received and even in group situations **each person is recognized**.

Clients comment **'no request is too great'** and staff, practitioners and volunteers will **'go out of their way'** to provide information and resources. SWHC continues to receive feedback surrounding the **welcoming, friendly, information, safe and non judgmental atmosphere** of the Centre.

Nowra Outreach

Well Women's Health Nurse Program

Clinical service to Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre.

A total of 44 Well Women's Health clinics were held at Shoalhaven Women Health Centre.

The women's health service provides, pap smears, sexual health (swabs/urine) testing is included in the clinical service and offered to women < 26 of age, breast health information, information on Contraception and Menopause, a check-up after you have had a baby, including information about pelvic floor muscle tone, resources and advice for women planning pregnancy or for women who are pregnant and any other women's health concerns.

The women's health nurse also receives phone calls from clients who have been referred from the women's health centre for information concerning women's health issues and possible referral for further management.

The women's health nurse also responds to drop in clients to the centre who require medical information and referral to discuss pregnancy options.

The emergency pill is available to women requiring treatment due to failed contraception.

The women's health nurse also provides Education/Information sessions on a range of women's health topics as per demand.

The Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) promotes access to a range of feminist integrated health care options for women.

The centre offers an environment that promotes a "Welcoming" and inviting environment to all women and especially to those women who are "nervous" about accessing services for their health care needs. Maureen Cable **Nurse.**



Health

Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District

Major Activities & Achievements

Service Provision

- ◆ Continuation of service provision in core areas of counselling, massage, alternative therapist, Well Women's Clinic (outreach), and health promotion (*internal health education workshops including yoga and gentle stretching, meditation, menopause, relationship and self esteem workshops & outreach groups*);
- ◆ Community development activities including *IWD, The Women's Wellness Festival, NAIDOC* and partnerships/networking relationships and activities with other agencies;
- ◆ Participation in the *Nowra Domestic & Family Violence Interagency* and the *Balancing the See-Saw Reference group*;
- ◆ Network member of *Shoalhaven Suicide Prevention & Awareness Network* (SSPAN);
- ◆ Member of Shoalhaven District Memorial Hospital *Sub Acute Forum*;
- ◆ *Sector activism/ advocacy* in areas of improved service delivery to women and their families;
- ◆ The continuation and growth of groups i.e. *Women's Wisdom group; Mindful Meditation and Art Therapy*;
- ◆ The continuation of *New to Town* which offers social support to reduce isolation;
- ◆ Introduction of *Ageing with a Healthy Heart, Scams, Shopping Rights, Finance Education Workshop, Chronic Pain, Eco Living, That Sugar Film and Candle Making*.

Service Promotion

- ◆ Our website is outstanding: www.shoalhavenwomenshealthcentre.org.au and thanks must go to *Tracey Johnston* who originally designed and continues to maintain our page;
- ◆ Continuation of *Women's Biz our newsletter publication*. This is available in hardcopy or via email – just under 1,000 copies are distributed quarterly;
- ◆ Our *Facebook page* is well supported and **liked**. Updates are posted several times per week, *Lesley our wonderful Receptionist* does a fine job in sourcing and *keeping our information up to date, interesting and topical*;
- ◆ Print and broadcast media when opportunity arises.

Organisational Development

- ◆ *Australian Service Excellent Standards* (ASES) awarded. Accreditation received 2nd February 2016;
- ◆ Policy and Procedures are *reviewed on a monthly basis* to adhere to our *Policy Review Schedule* (three year cycle) to form part of our QIP;
- ◆ *Business Plan 2015/2016* and *Environmental Scanning Plan 2015/2016, SWHC Compliance Register and Risk Management Register*
- ◆ *Volunteer* program continues; all volunteers joining the organization are offered training in *Mental Health First Aid*;



- ◆ **MOU** with **Waminda, IWHC and SWHC**;
- ◆ **MOU** with **IWHC**;
- ◆ **MOU** with **Waminda**;
- ◆ **Staff** attended **training/personal development** opportunities to assist with supporting clients who may present in crisis situations; **mandatory training** is attended in line with our service standards.

Clients comment '**no request is too great**' and staff, practitioners and volunteers will '**go out of their way**' to provide information and resources. SWHC continues to receive feedback surrounding the **welcoming, friendly, informative, safe and non judgemental atmosphere** of the centre.

The SWHC supports local agencies and works in partnership to:

- ◆ **Auspice local events** e.g. IWD;
- ◆ Agency visits and attending local community agency events and celebrations e.g. **The Women's Wellness Festival, NAIDOC**;
- ◆ Providing guest speakers and **outreach opportunities** e.g. workshops; Agency updates;
- ◆ Supporting **women's issues through activism** including women's pregnancy choices, IWD activities and Women's Wellness Festival;
- ◆ Supporting **Awareness Days**;
- ◆ **Providing** and **receiving/providing supervision** to and from workers from other agencies;
- ◆ Aligning services between **IWHC and SWHC** to develop a **coordinated regional approach** to service delivery and opportunities;
- ◆ entering into **partnerships with other organisations** in sourcing funding and program implementation - e.g. ClubsGrants, Shark Tank, Women's Wisdom group in partnership with ILSHD and various workshops/information sessions



Shoalhaven International Women's Day 8 March 2016



There were seven International Womens Day events during the month of March.

- * Trivia Night Fundraiser, Nowra School of Arts
- * Community event, Jelly Bean Park, Nowra
- * Ulladulla IWD Business Breakfast and Awards
- * Meroogal IWD Awards
- * Women's Performance Night, Huskisson Community Centre
- * Women's Wellness Festival, Nowra Golf Club
- * Writers Night, Our Bookshop, Berry

Together these events brought to the community a recognition of women's' achievement, an acknowledgement of the social, economic and political gains still to be made by women, and a great sense of resilience and fun.

The month of activities began with a challenging and fun-filled Trivia Night. Its successes a fundraiser lies in the current balance of the Shoalhaven International Womens Day Committee: \$4361. As a result of this healthy bank balance the Committee has decided to support an IWD Art Competition in 2017 with a prize of \$1000.

A new initiative for 2016 was a community event in Jelly Bean Park, Nowra. In this public space the Committee showcased local talent and, with the help of the Red Cross, provided fresh fruit salad to all. Violet Green was an outstanding guest speaker. We received many positive comments from the passers-by who stopped to listen and watch, or accept a flyer. Our thanks to Shoalhaven City Council staff who assisted with this event.

A large number of writers, readers and listeners assembled for the Writers' Night. Humour mixed with, the intensely personal, in writings of prose and poetry. Those attending were warmed by soup and the generosity of the writers who read their work.

Unfortunately, bad weather disrupted planned activities for the Womens Wellness Festival. A moving and informative welcome to country was given, and many information stalls gathered undercover to service those attending.

The Performance Night was outstanding, with the Huskisson Community Centre filled to capacity. Both 'tried and new' performers created a night of great entertainment.

Success of the International Womens Day events lies beyond the Committee, and numerous thank-you letters were sent to acknowledge these contributions.

Marg McHugh
SIWDC
20th October 2016



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Funded by NSW Health Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District



Health
Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District