



Annual Report 2017/2018



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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.

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 the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre (SWHC) has achieved great performance in delivering services and supporting women across the region with client centred activities.

Management, staff and volunteers work extremely cohesively and should be very proud of the work they have achieved throughout the year.

Demand continues for all services offered by the centre and attendance for the services proves that the Centre is much needed in our extensive geographical region which indicates the importance of continued funding at a level to sustain the services offered. Client waiting lists for services are never ending due to the need to operate on a tight, small budget, only just making ends meet. The staff do an amazing job working within these constraints and often supply items from their own funds. Additional funding with a view to increasing our client base and possible increase in opening times is a dream the staff and volunteers all share.



During the year our very much thought of nurse, Maureen Cable retired after 23 years of service at the centre through the Well Women's Program funded by ISLHD. We were very fortunate to have such a person at the Centre and we thank her very much for her support. She is greatly missed. The centre should have a replacement shortly.

We also saw our frontline worker Lesley Brook retire during the year which resulted in some reshuffling of responsibilities which is working very well.

I would like to congratulate and thank wholeheartedly the staff practitioners for their ongoing work providing support and services to our clients.

Well done Linda Bradshaw (Massage Therapist) and Carolyn Lette (Massage Therapist). Sally Gardner (Alternate Therapist), Kym Nicholson (Counsellor) and Suzanne Perry (Counsellor). We really appreciate your work and dedication.

We are also fortunate to have Alison Goodwin (Finance) who does a wonderful job and steps in where needed if required.

Recently we have had a student from the University of Wollongong on placement, Suzanne Buzza who is of great value with overseeing Policies and Procedures and who also steps in wherever needed.

Our Volunteers, Valerie (workshops) and Kathy (admin) are greatly valued for their support, both on the frontline and carrying out various chores.

Thank you to all ladies, very well done.

Congratulations to Tracy Lumb (Manager) whose dedication and managerial skills have guided the team through the past year ensuring the smooth running of the centre while inspiring, supporting and providing genuine care and support for all. Well done Tracy.

I would like to thank the Committee of Women (CoW) who have continued to give of their time and experience in guiding the management of the centre. Thank you to Lia Anderson, Alison Murie, Bec Kate, Jo-Anne Hewitt, Sally Lamb and Erin Nichols. I look forward to supporting the committee members during the next term.

It is a great pleasure being part of the Committee of Women and hope to see the centre continue to grow and move forward.

Lyn Gerstenberg 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 working from a trauma informed model of care.



The centre received confirmation that the funding extension arrangement would now move forward on a three year cycle; providing greater security for clients and staff over the coming years.

With the increase to our funding cycle this has allowed SWHC to plan further into our future. Strategic Planning can move towards a ten year cycle and we can plan/hope/dream of greater achievements in our future.

SWHC **welcomed** another **one hundred and thirty seven (137) new clients** to our service. Our space is always busy and this year was no exception; approximately **3,200 points of contact** by women either attending centre appointments, groups/workshops, emergency drop, drop in for information, via email or letter, outreach clinic or by telephone. SWHC continues to focus on the importance of client centred service provision, with the focus on intervention and prevention. This philosophy makes SWHC an extremely comfortable and consumer friendly sought after service. This was highlighted by the ASES accreditor who **interviewed clients** as part of the accreditation process. **Ninety eight (98) group sessions** were provided by SWHC which was an **amazing achievement** for **all staff** and **appreciated** by the **women** who **benefited** from their participation.

The staff at SWHC continues to provide a high standard of service and continue to develop, revamp and reassess workshops ensuring that all **information is accurate** and **up to date**. **Intervention and prevention** is the key focus when identifying and supporting a **diverse range of women** with often complex needs within a **regional setting**.

With the ever increasing complexities of our clients the **staff remains steadfast** in their dedication; a **loyal** and **caring team** of women work in collaboration ensuring an effective and pleasant work place. All the staff at SWHC work part time due to funding constraints, so when you read the stats for the last reporting year and the clients they have supported, welcomed and delivered programs to, it is **quite amazing** to witness what they have achieved. **For a small, four day a week NGO, as a team, we do great things.**

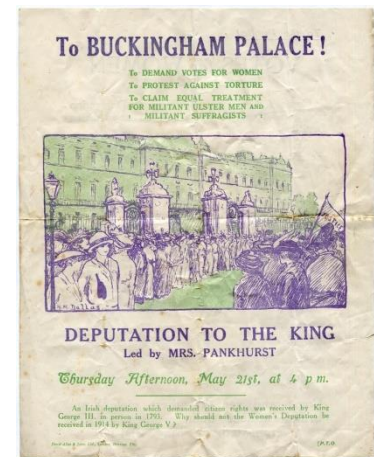
We said **'goodbye'** to **Maureen**, our beloved nurse, who has supported women in this community through the SWHC and **the Well Women's Program** for over **23 years**. The **upside**, Maureen will continue to support the SWHC as becoming *a member of our Committee of Women*. Her **contribution** and **knowledge** will be **invaluable**.

SWHC benefits from **strong networks**, partnerships and MOU's with other service providers in the region. The Shoalhaven covers a **vast geographical area** and services like ours find it difficult to meet the growing needs of existing and new clients.

Our **Women's Biz** remains a popular read and the phone runs hot with each new edition. **Facebook** provides '**updates** and **what's on**' not only at SHWC but other community services in the region; our **Website** providing a more **comprehensive overview of information**.

The **dedicated and responsive staff** at SHWC continue to provide a valuable service to women delivered in a client centred, holistic manner. Their empathy, loyalty and commitment to delivering outcomes are evident in the ongoing and growing client base. Our team going into the future will be **Ali, Carolyn, Kym, Linda, Sally and Suzanna; Nikki** our new outreach nurse; our committed **volunteers**, our supportive and encouraging **CoW**.

We all continue to be confronted on a daily basis by **gender inequality** and **bias**, gender violence, negative social media; but we see the **courage of women** speaking out **all over the world**, standing up for what is **right and fair**: #Metoo, Marriage Equality, changing laws to advance women's rights, outlawing violence against women, women's leadership and mentoring initiatives, greater reproductive rights for women; and the resistance that **continues to grow** in response to the rise of harmful anti-women policies in **countless countries**. The **march of the suffragette can still be heard** and I am privileged to be surrounded by women, who continue to strive/work, to evoke change.



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**; 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. This year saw us say **goodbye** to our **wonderful** nurse **Maureen**; **23 years** of **dedication** to the women of the Shoalhaven. For us, we were terribly sad but wish her well on her retirement journey. We look forward to welcoming her new replacement in the coming months.

Receptionist Lesley Brook, after five years of service has resigned and we wish her well in her future endeavours.

With this, our **reception** has **undergone a change** and our service is now supported by **frontline intake/health** workers. This is by way of a 'pilot' and we will review this model, in consultation with staff, volunteers and CoW in December 2018. **Staff** have **embraced the change** and we have taken the opportunity to do some much needed '**revamping**' and reorganised **our service space**. **Thanks to staff** who have carried, painted and thrown out!!

Our Staff:

- ✳ **Alternate Therapist – Sally Gardner;**
- ✳ **Counselling – Kym Nicholson and Suzanne Perry;**
- ✳ **Finance – Ali Goodwin;**
- ✳ **Massage – Linda Bradshaw and Carolyn Lette;**
- ✳ **Frontline – Carolyn Lette – supported by Suzanne Buzza UoW Social Work Student.**

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**
- ♥ **Valerie Hill.**

Elizabeth Gillen supported SWHC with her amazing administration skills, but unfortunately was unable to continue in the role due to her own commitments. Elizabeth continues to be a **wonderful** and **valued supporter** of SWHC.

Patsy Robb, our kind and dedicated Monday volunteer, decided to find a wonderful home beside the sea and headed south. **Patsy commenced** volunteering in **2013**; SWHC thanks her for her **years of dedication** and wish her well in her retirement.

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 demanding of their time, and, ongoing.



The **SWHC** would like to **thank Lyn** Gerstenberg (Chair) **Sally** Lamb (Vice Chair), **Alison** Murie (Treasurer) **Lia** Anderson (Vice Treasurer), **Rebecca** Kate (Secretary) **Jo-Anne** Hewitt and welcome **Erin** Nichols. Erin comes to us with vast experience and currently works in Nowra in family services. Special thanks to Lyn Gerstenberg, **our Chair** who has been

outstanding in her role and **brings vast experience** to our service. Lyn continues to be available to me to meet, discuss, debrief; and ensures all staff are supported in their positions. Lyn has also been the team leader in the review process of our Strategic Plan 2019-2029.

The CoW's **governance** of the SWHC and **attention to detail** and the importance placed upon following the process, reviewing policy, ensuring strategic and business plans are in place is a **credit to such a small team**; this ensures quality outcomes and workspace for clients, volunteers and staff. With the ever changing and competitive environment, these women **work together in a cohesive** and **dedicated manner**.



Through this **dedication** the SWHC was **awarded Australian Service Excellence Standards Certificate Level** in **January 2018** which is **current** until **January 2021**.

Accreditation Assessment Report:
ASES Certificate Level
Executive Summary

SWHC demonstrated an **exceptional capacity** for carrying out its purpose of supporting women's health. The **service model** is **strongly evidence based** and well-articulated. In addition, the Strategic Plan provides a clear blueprint for positioning the organisation for the future.

SWHC is led by an **active, skills based Board** known as the Committee of Women (CoW), which meets regularly and meets **governance responsibilities** in keeping with its **legal status** as an Association. CoW members are well integrated with the local community and are able to augment the limited resources of the centre through their contacts. There is opportunity for quality improvements around helicopter reporting against strategic and business plans.

SWHC **demonstrated** an **exceptional capacity** for carrying out its purpose particularly considering all workers are part time and make up only 2.8 FTE. **There is no doubt** that SWHC is punching **above its weight** largely thanks to **the passion** and **expertise** of staff and the commitment of the CoW. The reliance on the Manager is a risk for SWHC, however there are clear contingency strategies in place should she need to step back from her role for any reason.

An excellent policy and procedure manual underpins the work of SWHC and supports and guides staff and management towards the organisation's strategic goals and service deliverables. The key to the organisation's **success** is the **'can do' attitude** of staff and strong collaborative and **positive teamwork** observed across all role in the organisation. Continuous improvement (CQI) is embedded in the culture of the organisation and there is clear evidence of ongoing commitment to quality.

Staff are supported in this through information, training and open-door support. Clients indicated a **high level of satisfaction** with the service and positive client outcomes. Clients are placed at the centre of interventions. There are opportunities for quality improvements around diversity planning and use of pictorial images in publications to better assist people with low literacy.

SWHC is to be **congratulated** for its **achievements** against the Certificate Level of ASES. The Management Committee, Manager and staff are thanked for the warmth of their welcome, cooperation and hospitality during the assessment.

This assessment has verified that **Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre** **meets all 98 requirements** for the Australian Service Excellence Standards Certificate Level and is recommended for accreditation.

Anthea Jackson **Assessment Team Leader**



Whilst in the greater landscape of community services we are small, our focus is guided and encouraged by the shared philosophy of the importance of high quality standards of service and the basic human rights of women.

Strategic Plan 2015-2018 moving to Strategic Plan 2019-2029

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 wellbeing 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 2017-2018

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, working from a trauma informed model of care; 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 (2017/18) 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 (2017/18) obligations.
- ✓ Ensure accreditation is awarded 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, working from a trauma informed model of care; 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 and MOU's.

Service Provision

Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre activities and outcomes reflect the goals and philosophy of our Strategic Plan (2015/2018) moving to Strategic Plan (2019-2029) being underpinned by our Business Plan, Environmental Scanning Document and Key Performance Indicators from the NSW 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.

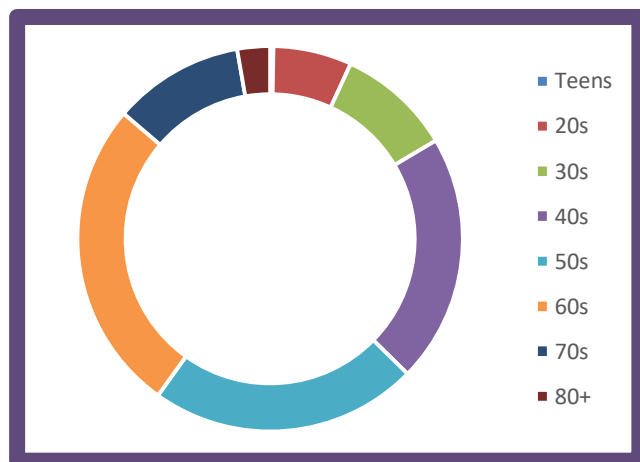
SWHC continues to evaluate its services and consult with women who attend the centre. We pride ourselves in responding to the expressed need of local women and develop assessable services with a prime focus on prevention and intervention at minimal or no cost.

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 to offer supportive and much needed services for women especially when appointments for face to face counselling are not available. Waiting time frames for face to face counselling can be extensive and books are often closed. This service provides SWHC with the ability to 'link' new/current clients into a therapeutic relationship and not just 'wait listed'. The service in the combined areas of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven handled **324** points of contact. This is an invaluable service 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 2017/18 **802** appointments were attended in core service areas.

- ✱ Provided appointments (face to face and by phone) for women across core service areas – counselling and art therapy (356 contacts), massage (252 contacts), alternate therapist (22 contacts) and the nurse (172):
- ✱ A total of **98** health education/promotion groups, events and intervention/prevention workshops across a multitude of disciplines;
- ✱ Managed an estimated number of requests for information, referral, and appointments, follow up totalling **3,159** through our Reception;
- ✱ SWHC welcomed **137** 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 and breast health, relationships, and violence/ abuse.

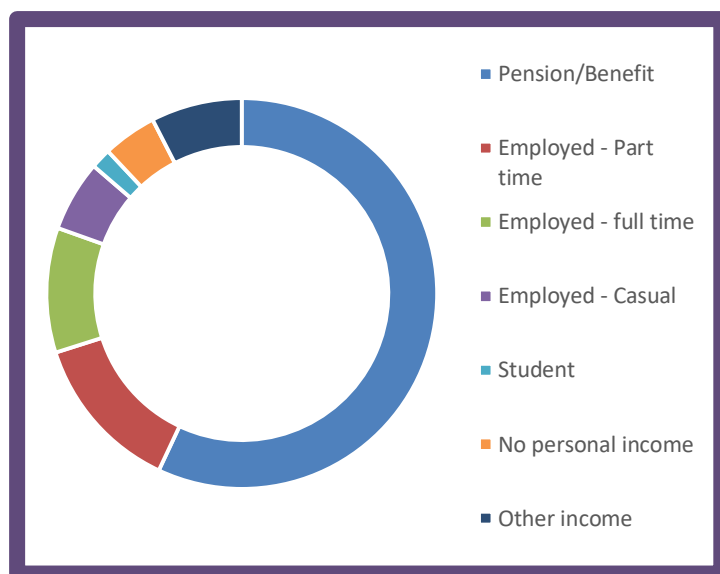


The age range of clients who accessed SWHC core services during 2017/2018 was broad. Services were provided to clients from teens to 80's+. Women's health and wellbeing is essential to the ongoing strength of family and community. Gender specific services allow women to receive client centred support throughout their lifelong journey with a focus of intervention and prevention.

Health Education Programs focused on prevention and intervention strategies, self-esteem issues, confidence building, diet, nutrition and lifestyle issues. Women attended an extensive range of workshops and groups held at the Centre and outreach locations including:

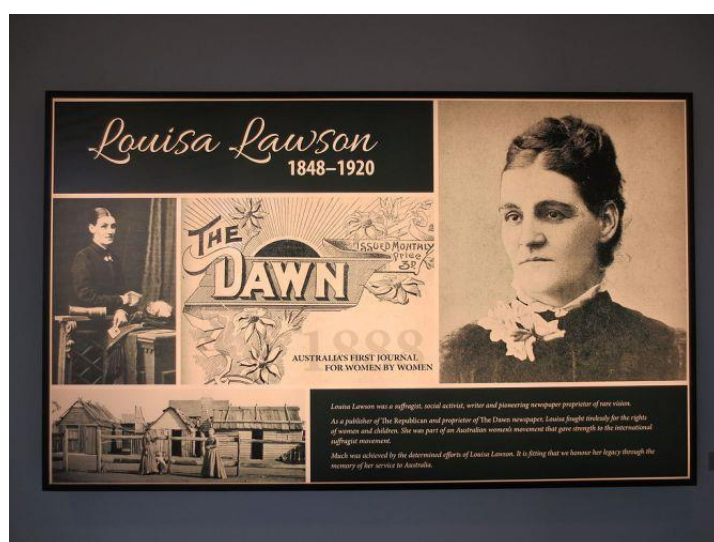
- ⊙ **Art Therapy**
- ⊙ **Arthritis**
- ⊙ **Assertiveness**
- ⊙ **Boost Your Energy**
- ⊙ **Breast Health Awareness**
- ⊙ **Chronic Disease Awareness**
- ⊙ **Craft Catch Up**
- ⊙ **Creative Menopause Retreat**
- ⊙ **Eco Living**
- ⊙ **Legal Clinic**
- ⊙ **Mindfulness Based Stillness Meditation**
- ⊙ **Mindfulness Revisited**
- ⊙ **Multicultural Group**
- ⊙ **New to Town**
- ⊙ **NAIDOC Day**
- ⊙ **Pelvic Floor**
- ⊙ **SDMH Sub Acute Unit – Community Hot Seat**
- ⊙ **Self Esteem**
- ⊙ **Self-Massage & Gentle Stretch**
- ⊙ **Stillbirth Foundation Group (Host site)**
- ⊙ **Stress Management**
- ⊙ **Women's Wellness Festival**
- ⊙ **Women's Wisdom Group**

Through the collection of data on client registrations **139** women identified 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.



Socioeconomic information collated demonstrated the largest client group in this area was women on a pension or benefit which represented 57% of all women. 10% of women indicated they were employed full time, 13% working part time, and 6% reporting that they worked casually. 8% of women reported having other income, 2% of women were students, and 4% 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 from a trauma informed model of care with a **primary focus of client centred care**. The number of new clients continues to grow 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, we are unable to meet all requests which can be equally distressing for clients and staff. 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. Again, this process can have its challenges due to demand in a regional area with limited community services.



Comments and Feedback

- ♥ Service Provider – Supporting both myself and our shared clients over the past few years, SWHC, has been, and will continue to be, a service that ultimately delivers!! The energy, dedication and overall outcomes for the clients your team provides, is greatly appreciated and has not gone unnoticed..... I truly will be hard pressed to find a duplicate service/team elsewhere!
- ♥ Learning different way to overcome things;
- ♥ I felt comfortable within the group to be able to add how I feel;
- ♥ Was better to not feel so alone, when other women shared about their experiences;
- ♥ I was made feel welcome and accepted for who I am and not judged in any way, and that's great;
- ♥ I learnt to be a stronger person;
- ♥ Feel more power to make decisions;
- ♥ Freedom to speak and be heard;
- ♥ Because it opens your eyes on a lot of things;
- ♥ I learnt the true meaning of domestic violence;
- ♥ I feel a lot more confident in myself and have grown to enjoy myself more;
- ♥ Every course is a step in the direction of my personal recovery. The women's health centre is my safe haven.

***Lovely, happy, safe, supportive,
genuine environment and staff;
invaluable info & therapy.***

***To the beautiful staff at the
Women's Health Centre,
asking R U OK happens every day.***

***The journey with the Women's Health Centre
is always powerful and full of support & information.***



Well Women's Nurse Program

Nowra Outreach

Women's Health Nurse

Clinical Service to Shoalhaven

Women's Health Centre.



The Women's Health Service at ISLHD has undergone several changes throughout the year with the July retirement of Maureen Cable the Clinical Nurse Consultant who had been in the role for over 20 years.

Recruitment has now been completed with the introduction of Women's Health Nurse Nikki Gordon who will be providing clinical services to the Women of the Shoalhaven and Ulladulla areas.

With the changes to the national cervical screening guidelines now implemented and changes to the nurses role, this allows for a more mobile service reaching more women, enabling service provision to disadvantaged women in those areas who do not or are unable to access mainstream services.

The Women's Health Nurse will continue to provide the Well Women's Clinic at the Nowra Women's Health Centre on a monthly basis to women from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Services mostly include;

- Cervical screening
- Breast health
- Preventative care
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Contraception
- Menopause
- Education and research

Services will be prioritised for women;

- Mental health issues
- Alcohol and Other Drug dependencies
- Blood Borne Infections
- Disabilities
- Homelessness
- Aboriginal women
- Women from CALD or Refugee backgrounds



Health

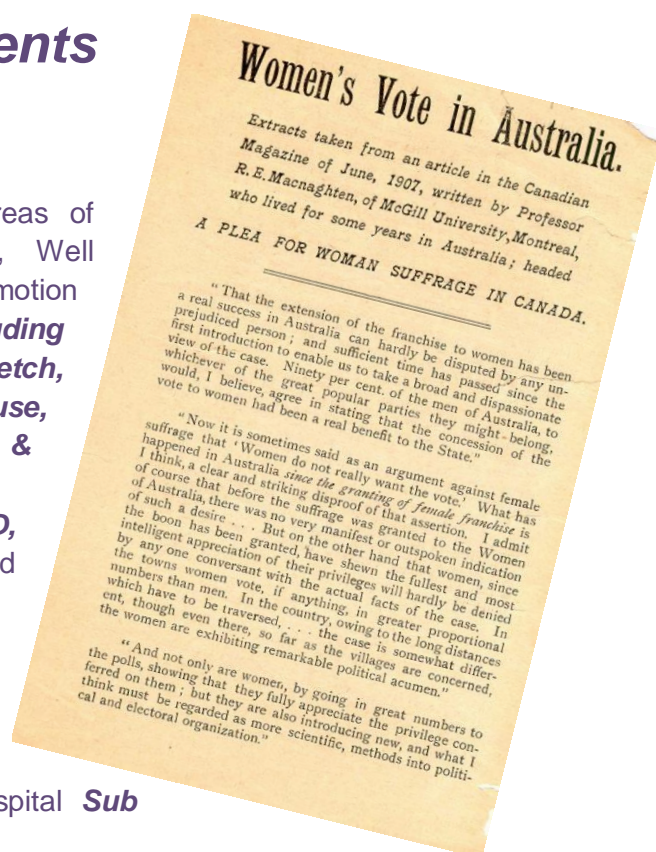
**Illawarra Shoalhaven
Local Health District**

The Women's Health Service looks forward to continuing the Well Women's Outreach Program in collaboration with the Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre.

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 assertiveness, self-massage and gentle stretch, stillness based mindful 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 *Shoalhaven Partnership Project*;
- ◆ 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*;
- ◆ Introduction of *Liz Parnell* to our service from *South Coast Law & Mediation* who provides *two pro bono legal clinics per month* to clients at our centre. Support in Family Law property issues, parenting disputes, criminal law; will, power of attorney and enduring guardian; information about applying for legal aid and tenancy disputes;
- ◆ *Outreach* to the *Ulladulla* Community Resource Centre by the *Alternative Therapist* in six (6) weeks blocks, twice a year.



Service Promotion

- ◆ Our website is outstanding: www.shoalhavenwomenshealthcentre.org.au and our continued thanks must go to *Tracey Johnston* who designed and continues to maintain our page;
- ◆ Continuation of *Women's Biz* our newsletter publication. This is available in hardcopy or via email – up to 1,200 copies are distributed three times per calendar year;
- ◆ Our *Facebook page* is well supported and *liked*. Updates are posted several times per week *keeping our information up to date, interesting, informative, topical and community focused*;
- ◆ Print and broadcast media when opportunity arises;
- ◆ Public speaking opportunities upon request.



Organisational Development

- ◆ **Australian Service Excellent Standards** (ASES) achieved - current;
- ◆ Policy and Procedures are **reviewed on a monthly basis** to adhere to our **Policy Review Schedule** to form part of our QIP;
- ◆ **Business Plan 2017/2018** and **Environmental Scanning Plan 2017/2018, SWHC Compliance Register and Risk Management Register**
- ◆ All staff undertaking **Cultural Competency** training online through SBS;
- ◆ All staff undertaking **Question Persuade Refer (QPR)** on line training with the **Suicide Prevention Collaborative Illawarra Shoalhaven**
- ◆ **Volunteer** program continues; all volunteers joining the organization are offered training in **Mental Health First Aid**;
- ◆ **MOU** with **Anti-Poverty Committee**
- ◆ **MOU** with **Barnardos**
- ◆ **MOU** with **IWHC**;
- ◆ **MOU** with **Shoalhaven Partnership Project**
- ◆ **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;
- ◆ **Staff** attendance at centre **Planning Days**;
- ◆ **All staff** undertake appropriate supervision.



Women Supporting Women

Shoalhaven International Women's Day 8 March 2017

The Shoalhaven International Women's Day Committee (SIWDC) supported six events in the Shoalhaven for International Women's Day (IWD) 2018. They were held from Shoalhaven Heads in the north to Ulladulla in the south and were spread over the month of March.



The events recognised women's' achievements and acknowledged the social, economic and political challenges faced by women. They were filled with a sense of fun and resilience. Over one thousand people participated and many more observed. Through this identification with women's' experiences the Committee believes that Community is strengthened.

The range of events – Trivia Night, International Women's' Day Awards, Women's' Weaving Circle, Women's' Performance Night, Writers' Night, and Women's' Wellness Festival – showed a recognition by the Committee of the diversity of women's' needs and experiences. They combined enjoyment with learning and sharing.

A number of new women joined the 2018 SIWDC and helped organise the events. Through their help the Trivia Night was held in Ulladulla at the Dunn-Lewis Centre. The Centre gave generous support to the organisers and helped facilitate a successful event. Thanks to Jean Ledgerwood, Judith Rourke, and the staff at the Centre.

Thanks to the work of Moira Lawry the Women's' Performance Night has grown in its audience and the number of performers. This has led to a current reassessment of how to shape the night. The Awards (under the stewardship of Meroogal Historic House), and the Wellness Festival, are also thinking about how to reshape aspects of their events. Thanks also go to Shoalhaven Women's Health Centre, LISA (Lesbians in the Shoalhaven Area), and Shoalhaven City Council for their contributions.

Margaret McHugh
On behalf of SIWDC
9th October 2018