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Welcome to the January 2022 Edition of WHOS NEWS

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Message from the Executive Director

As we begin 2022, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on our work challenges and achievements in 2021.

Despite the challenging times WHOS managed to keep our residents COVID-19 free. We even managed to open up a new Therapeutic Community (TC) in Goulburn with much welcomed funding from NSW Health to match the incredible level of local community support and assistance we received.

Keeping COVID-19 free and operating all our services is no mean feat for our TCs and transition houses. To put it simply, we achieved this by venturing into the unknown utilising our collective strengths, innovating as we go, working as teams and facing each challenge as it has arisen.

I want to thank all the WHOS staff as we could not have achieved this outcome without their collective commitment and dedication.

From initial COVID eradication strategies to now 'opening up' by lessening of restrictions - our job had become more complex in keeping COVID-19 from finding its way into our TCs. The new variant is being referred to as

less harmful, and with the great response by our staff, residents and the general community being fully vaccinated the future is looking more favourable as long as our health system can withstand the rising positive cases. However, the new challenge for us is business disruption – rather than becoming sick or dying from the virus.

The real issues for WHOS in 2022 are operating our TCs and related services with the potential of many staff having to go off work due to government mandated isolation guidelines and concurrently, if the virus does get into our TCs, how we best manage that situation. While management has developed protocols if this happens, they are untrials, and while everyone struggles with how to effectively deal with the virus, it's definitely a potential for disruption for businesses going forward.

Despite all these challenges our staff have maintained vigilance over the last 2 years, and I cannot thank them enough for that effort.



The main message I want to convey is that despite all of the real and potential problems described above, I believe we are turning the corner and there is room for optimism about the future.

I also hope everyone understands that the pandemic mandated a re-prioritization of our focus and unfortunately resulted in far fewer newsletters than we had hoped for in the past 2 years.

Please enjoy this resumption of our regular communication with you and as always your feedback and contributions are welcome.

Garth Popple
Executive Director

Open for Admissions WHOS Southern NSW (Goulburn & Southern Highlands)

The Goulburn & Southern Highlands region of NSW has a new residential and day rehabilitation program for men and women in Goulburn.

Thanks to the support of the [NSW Government Ministry of Health](#) and local community our new service is now open for admissions.

Although COVID-19 played havoc with our official opening (postponed a few times) we were honoured to have [the Hon Brad Hazzard MP](#), NSW Health Minister, officially open the new service recently. The opening was attended by the NSW Parliament [Goulburn representative, Mrs Wendy Tuckerman MP](#), and members of the local Southern Tablelands Action Recovery Committee (STARC) that worked so hard for this new service - Ms Carol James, Mr Rod Boyd and Ms Pam Waldock are the founding members of STARC and are pictured below.

All our staff and clients deeply appreciated such important dignitaries taking the time from their busy schedules to tour our new service in Goulburn and to engage with such genuine interest in the residents and our work at the treatment centre.

The services WHOS are now providing include individual and group counselling, care coordination, and referrals to other health and social services as needed. Clients are also being connected with continuing care and other support services during their residential treatment to ensure they continue to reap the benefits and maintain health and well-being.

Individuals, family, general practitioners and other service providers are now encouraged to refer clients to WHOS.



Corporate Supporters

WHOS receives an incredible level of support from the Australian Corporate Sector and we would like to acknowledge just a few of the key corporations that helped WHOS so much in 2021 with their support, advice and goods & services.

[William Buck](#)

William Buck is a leading firm of accountants and advisors with offices across Australia and New Zealand. Established in 1895, they have over 100 directors and 900 professional staff, and are wholly owned and operated in Australia and New Zealand. Throughout their history, they have assisted individuals, progressive businesses and community organisations. William Buck's strength lies in their unique philosophy summed up by the simple phrase, 'Changing Lives'.

[Cushman & Wakefield](#)

What began as a small family business in New York more than 100 years ago, is now a leading global real estate services firm that delivers exceptional value for real estate occupiers and owners. Their iconic brand has

approximately 51,000 people operating across approximately 400 offices in 70 countries, including Australia. They put clients and our people at the centre of what's next in the world of real estate and their work creates meaningful value for clients, business, shareholders, people, communities and the world.

Mills Oakley

Mills Oakley is a leading national law firm with offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Canberra and Perth. With over 100 partners and more than 670 staff, we offer strong expertise across all key commercial practice areas. From origins in Melbourne in 1864, Mills Oakley has grown to become a domestic leader in legal services with a client base of ASX-200 listed companies, mid-sized corporations, the public sector and not-for-profit organisations. Mills Oakley has a proud tradition of assisting vulnerable members of the community to protect their rights.

AlSCO

Over the past 50 years, AlSCO has changed dramatically. But in that time, one thing hasn't, and that is their dedication to providing a service that is reliable, cost-effective and carefully tailored to business. Today, with 27 Branches and 48,000 Satisfied Clients, AlSCO is one of the leading providers of linen, workwear, commercial floor mats, industrial cleaners, First Aid kits and training as well as Washroom Hygiene services and Scenting across Australia. AlSCO now employ over 2,200 people Australia wide and tailors solutions particular to the needs of the people and organisations they work with.

Best & Less

Family is at the heart of Best&Less and this translates to every aspect of their business and the relationships they create with our customers, employees, suppliers and partners. They believe in the importance of investing in quality and safety while undertaking a genuine effort to lift social, environmental and community outcomes. It's a global responsibility that they encourage all to take on together.



WHOS Najara (Qld) Donations

David Grenfell from Property Today, approached Najara in 2018 as his company had made a decision to donate a percentage of the agency commissions to a charity of their choosing.

Thankfully, David chose to donate to WHOS Najara, and since 2018 he has contributed over \$17,000. This generosity has allowed us to make many big ticket items a reality over the years, for example a new commercial range hood for kitchen, additional air conditioning and other items to enhance the residents wellbeing during their stay at Najara

It is a great confidence boost to clients when they realise that there are people and organisations out there happy to support them in their recovery journey.



David Grenfell (right) and Kelsie Smith (Office Manager) from Property Today presenting another cheque to Trevor Hallewell (Sunshine Coast Manager)

NSW Health Visit WHOS Southern NSW (Goulburn & Southern Highlands)

WHOS Goulburn & Southern Highlands services were pleased to recently host a visit by Dr Tony Gill, Chief Addiction Medicine Specialist, NSW Ministry of Health, and Damien Eggleton, Director, Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs, NSW Ministry of Health, pictured below with Garth Popple, WHOS Executive Director and Gerard Byrne, WHOS Operations Manager for Treatment Services (pictured below).

The visit was an opportunity to showcase the work of WHOS to NSW Health and highlight the contributions made by staff and clients to our success.



The importance of the WHOS Southern NSW service was also recently highlighted in local media

"For every person you help with treatment, you are potentially keeping them out of prisons and hospitals and therefore saving taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars"

WHOS Media



The Sydney Morning Herald recently ran a large feature story on the importance of parks in cities, so it was no surprise to see the reporter focus on WHOS Lilyfield campus carrying on the work of Callan Park to serve the health and wellbeing needs of the population:

The patch of rainforest in the sprawling grounds of the drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre is a favourite spot for the residents.

"Where do you get this in the inner city?" Garth Popple, WHOS Executive Director, asks over the chorus of cicadas droning in the tropical January heat, minutes before a downpour that dances across the canopy.

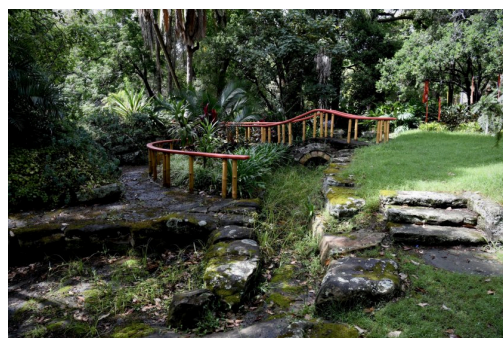
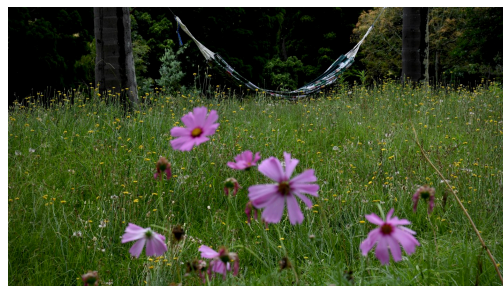
Nature appears to be reclaiming much of the area around Broughton Hall, the NSW Health-owned site on which the non-profit facility We Help Ourselves (WHOS) is based, deep-set in the corner of Callan Park, in Sydney's inner west.

The link between the natural environment and mental health is not a recent revelation. There have been numerous studies. In 2005 NSW Health published a literature review that there was mounting evidence that gardens in healthcare settings had a restorative effect on stressed patients.

WHOS' vocation educator Lenny Ramsay, who introduces clients recovering from substance addictions to working in the gardens and elsewhere about the lush grounds, says passivity is crucial.

Read the full story at: [‘Designed to heal’: The Sydney garden that may be key to our mental health](#)

We also want to thank photographer Dean Sewell for the wonderful photos he took in and around WHOS Lilyfield campus.





Caring for Broughton Hall - 2022

Fundraising Initiative



Our goal remains quite simple - we need to raise significant funding to address the day to day management issues and future needs of the Broughton Hall Therapeutic Gardens.

A recent grant from the NSW Government Community Building Partnerships program (with was strongly supported by our local [State MP, Mr Jamie Parker](#) & the [Friends of Callan Park](#)) has helped us procure the much needed water tanks to help sustain the gardens in a more environmentally friendly manner. However, WHOS has always set the highest example of custodianship of Broughton Hall and the Therapeutic Gardens and we want to continue this healing history of the gardens and need your help to do so.



All the necessary work will be overseen by our expert staff and assist our clients for future vocations.

Some of our plans include using the natural water collection in ponds and swales to ensure the health of trees and the site ecology in general. No chemical pesticides or herbicides will be used and all weeding will be done by hand with all suitable waste to be composted where safe to do so.

Please contact us if you can help with donations of funding, goods or services to help WHOS in this important work.

West's Tigers Program Grant



Recently WHOS received an important grant from [West's Ashfield](#) to provide for a 2022 season of the [West's Tigers Foundation](#) fitness and leadership program for all WHOS Lilyfield residents. In broad terms the program will improve the fitness of WHOS residents, however it will also focus on providing residents with an understanding on the importance of physical fitness to maintain overall good health and wellbeing. The program will have an understanding that many residents who have faced debilitating drug and alcohol dependencies in their lives will require specially developed programs. The program will also develop leadership skills by encouraging residents to assist in the delivery of some weekly sessions. Some of the specific program details include: Up to 75 residents from WHOS facilities are expected to attend each weekly session, with residents split into separate groups of men & women.

WHOS Hunter Bedding Upgrade Grants

The WHOS Hunter residential therapeutic community centre was recently awarded some much needed funds from [East Cessnock Bowling Club](#) and the [Cessnock Leagues Club](#) for a bedding upgrade. The service in Cessnock will be able to replace some of its older beds with new and more appropriate beds and bedding to enable quality rest for our clients and to enhance their mental

health resilience and well-being.

The bedding upgrade funding will contribute to improving our healthcare delivery and directly benefit individuals in their journey of recovery. WHOS as always works closely with their local communities and greatly appreciates the support of Cessnock clubs.



ACHS Award for WHOS



The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving quality in health care, representing governments, consumers, and peak health bodies throughout Australia.

The annual ACHS Quality Improvement (QI) Awards were introduced in 1997 to acknowledge and encourage outstanding quality improvement activities, programs or strategies that have been implemented in healthcare organisations. In 2021, the 24th Annual ACHS QI Awards were open to submissions from all domestic ACHS and international ACHSI member organisations, which include WHOS.

WHOS was pleased to receive a Special Commendation for its Initiative to Advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Outcomes as a result of being the first organisation to receive Double Accreditation as part of an ACHS and ATCA Partnership Initiative

You can watch WHOS receiving its commendation at the ACHS Awards Ceremony: <https://whos.com.au/achs-whos-2021-award/>.

WHOS Videos

WHOS was very pleased to receive funding from the [Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies \(NADA\)](#) to develop a real and valuable insight into the Therapeutic Community (TC) model at a residential treatment service, as well as our day program centres. The new and high quality videos provide a greater level of easy to access information and resources for people considering treatment at a TC and include the client journey from assessment to participation in the TC program and the many aftercare options available.

The videos [which can be accessed on the WHOS website](#) have been updated to include information on our new service for Goulburn and the Southern Highlands Region of NSW.

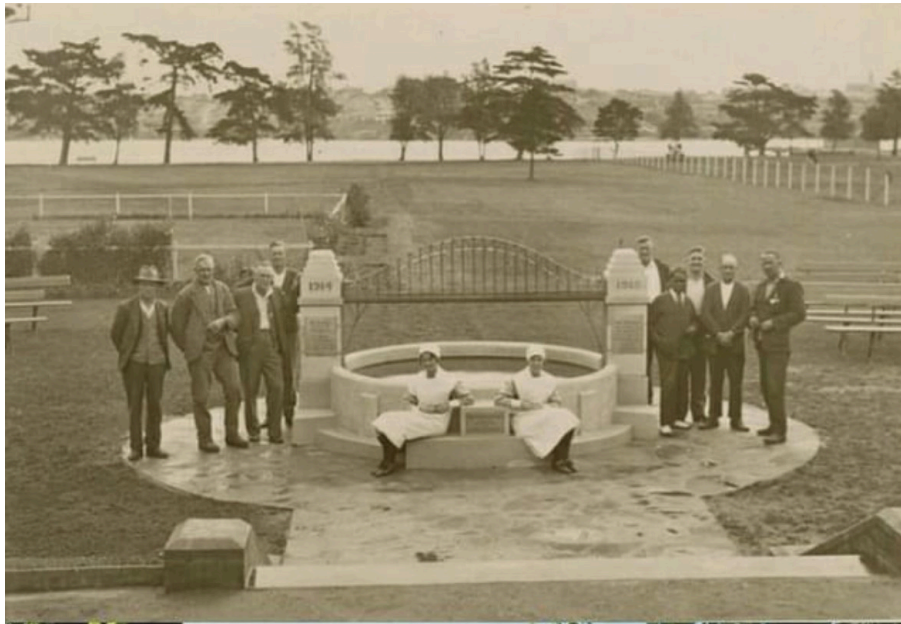
We are hopeful that the videos will also assist people seeking treatment for their substance use problems to be better informed when making their decision.



Callan Park History

Our strong commitment to preserving the heritage, historic and cultural values that embody Callan Park has developed into a very positive and ongoing relationship with the [Friends of Callan Park](#) community group. It is easy to use progress as a means to ignore the lessons and values of the past, but we deeply appreciate that since the late 1800's, Callan Park has been a home for the therapeutic treatment with mental health problems and post-war trauma. For over 20 years, the Friends of Callan Park have been advocates for protecting Callan Park, and this is a vision we proudly share with them.

We would like to share just a couple of photos that show a part of the true spirit of Callan Park



**"BROUGHTON HALL." A BEAUTIFUL LEICHHARDT RESIDENCE NOW USED AS A
CONVALESCENT HOME FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS.**



Client Stories



New Beginnings - Female Client story

I am a proud Papua New Guinea/Torres Strait Islander woman. This is my story.

After 30 years of drinking as an alcoholic I can proudly say I am now in recovery, living sober and loving myself and life. And trust me it wasn't easy, but it was worth it. No Regrets as they say.

I was born in PNG and came out to Australia in 1975 when I was 1 year old and was raised by my adoptive parents in Sydney's South West suburbs. I grew up in a blue-collar family in a housing commission. Both my parents and my brother worked, and I had a normal family life.

My biggest thing when I was younger was being the only coloured kid at school and being picked on because of it. I started drinking at around 15. My parents worked all the time and so did my friends' parents. So, while they were all at work, we used to sit in the park with a carton of VB twist-tops and a pack of cigarettes, living like kings, or so we thought.

Fast-forward to after 30 years living in the bottom of a schooner and thinking that my life was defined by that schooner glass. Dumpster diving, bumper shooting, doing unsavoury things down laneways with strange men just to get that next beer. Couch surfing, sleeping on floors at friends' places, and outstaying my welcome.

Then living the last 3 years on the street, sleeping in parks under trees or in public toilets with my feet pressed firmly on the door so no one would kick it in. Sleeping on park benches using sheets of newspaper as a blanket and pillow to keep me warm on a cold night. Washing myself and my clothes in public toilets and wearing them on a sunny or windy day, hoping they would dry before sunset. Even using trees as my clothesline. Doing what I needed to do to survive.

By this stage in my life, I was a broken woman with no fixed address, no identification, no family. Some had disowned me; some had just given up on me. My biggest fear was being estranged from my only child, my son, who is now 29 and also suffering from the disease of alcoholism. Like they say alcoholism does not discriminate, neither does any disease of addiction.

Having hit rock bottom was like being in the bottom of a waterless well and my bungee rope had snapped. Then having to crawl my way up to the top to get out.

The last 12 months prior to coming to WHOS was the straw that broke the camel's back. It was filled with mental, physical, and lateral abuse. Frequent and scary blackouts, memory loss, and other things that I would rather not mention.

But, for the grace of a higher power of my own understanding, the staff at New Beginnings here at WHOS Rozelle loved me back to life, giving me a sense of purpose and guiding me by giving me the resources and tools that recovery has to offer to every individual that walks through the WHOS Admissions door. I have been given my life back. A loving life. A life beyond my wildest dreams. A life that lets me know that I am enough, that God has always loved me. WHOS provided me with access to the external Fellowship of AA, whom I now call my family.

It is true: when they say stick around, listen for the message and the miracles will happen. Believe it! The best years of my life are ahead of me and I know that it is limitless. It truly is a "gift of recovery" to be free living a clean and sober life.



Gunyah - Male Client Story

My story starts with school. I went through school and completed year 10 but I had started selling pot in year 9. When finishing year 10 most people do work experience and go into a job. I didn't. I finished school and went on using drugs. I was hanging around older people and it quickly progressed to selling and taking speed and went hand in hand with drinking alcohol.

Over the next few years this continued until ice came about. It became what I thought was normal. My addiction progressed to using and moving ice while smoking it every day and drinking every day, and with that came trouble with the law. I moved to Queensland to live with my father who I soon realised was an alcoholic.

At first things were going well, I was working and moved out with a friend who was also working. Then I quit my job and started drinking and scamming and moving drugs once again. Over the next few years, I went to prison a number of times for drink driving, assault charges, and supplying drugs.

When I got out on the last occasion, I moved to Brisbane away from the last town I lived in where the police knew me. I started working, wasn't touching drugs but was drinking every day. I met a nice girl from the Gold Coast and started a relationship and we moved in together. Over the next few months, she realised I was an alcoholic. She gave me the option, stop drinking and be with her, or keep drinking and leave.

I chose her. I quit drinking and life was great. I had everything I wanted in life, a good job, great relationship, money in the bank, and a nice home. What more could I need? Around 18 months passed, and I thought I would be able to take drugs once as a reward which led to drinking, and I lost everything as fast as I could blink. My relationship, house, car; it was all gone, so I went back to Sydney and got involved with what I knew best: drinking, hustling drugs, and taking them.

I was still in denial that I was drug dependent and an alcoholic. It was not long before I was in prison again. Once released from prison I tried the normal life again, getting a job and trying to control my drinking.

I was out for dinner and drinks with friends when I met my future wife. Two years later roughly we got married. I managed to hide my addiction for of a fair while. As long as I worked, she didn't mind me drinking every day after work. A few years went by and there were many times my wife took me to detoxes and supported me to get sober, but many times I broke promises to stay sober.

Eventually my wife rented another place for me to stay. When I was drunk or high, I had to stay there she said. But if I was sober and clean, she said I could stay at home with her. But my addiction was in full flight, and we grew apart and eventually separated.

About a year later I got a date to go to rehab and was court ordered to attend. I had my ex-wife back in my life, I was free from addiction and life was great. But once my court case was over, I completed rehab, left, and relapsed.

At the end of 2019 I'd been in active addiction for a few months. I missed being clean and the life that came with it, so in 2020 I went back to the same rehab for myself, not court ordered. I completed the induction phase and left. Got my own unit from housing and put into action what I've learnt the year before. I was loving life clean and sober in the community doing the suggested things, home group/service.

At around eight months later I relapsed based on a resentment at someone at work. But I have learned from it and where I went wrong, and I have WHOS to thank for that. They gave me my life back because of their program. They opened their doors to me.

Today I'm free from active addiction. I have good relationships with my family and a great friendship with my ex-wife. This is because I am clean and sober today. And today I'm proud to say I am in recovery and life is great.

WHOS Centres - click for information



Our Corporate Sponsors and Supporters



As we enter a new year, we would like to publicly thank and acknowledge all our corporate sponsors and supporters over the years - their support and assistance has been invaluable.





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**DAILY
MEDIA
SERVICE**

As part of WHOS commitment to improving the information flow in the AOD and related sectors, we were pleased in mid-2015 to introduce our new Daily Media Service. This is a valuable and free service which was previously provided by other organisations and which many in the sector felt was a real loss for them when the service ceased. Accordingly, WHOS re-instituted a similar media service so many working in our sector and related areas could once again receive a daily summary of media articles and stories of interest. The WHOS Daily Media Service is free to subscribe to and all you have to do is fill in a form on our [website](#) to receive the latest industry news.

Giving Back - Donating to WHOS

[Click here to Donate to WHOS](#)



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