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Welcome to the October 2019 Edition of WHOS NEWS

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Message from the Executive Director

As the sun sets on another year, it is with a sense of pride I can look back at our achievements so far in 2019 at WHOS. What is especially exciting is that we have a number of plans that we have spent some years working on, potentially coming to fruition in 2020 - which is truly looking like an incredible year if all our hard work pays off.

Some of that hard work has already paid off this year with the opening of a new Community Group Home at our Sunshine Coast service - Najara. This new building has been designed to meet the growing demand for female focused services at WHOS and is a result of the hard work of our team at Najara, led by Trevor Hallewell, and the support of the Federal Government, the local Federal MP, the Hon Ted O'Brien and the wider Sunshine Coast community.

Other significant events for WHOS in 2019 were celebrating 20 years for our OSTAR program, 10 years for our RTOD program and the 10 year anniversary in Callan Park for WHOS Rozelle. WHOS occupies the Broughton Hall site in Callan Park and could not have been as successful as we have been in revitalising the area and returning it to its roots of helping people in need without the unending support and good will of the local community and in particular the Friends of Callan Park. We are hoping to celebrate many more milestones at this site.

As many of you know, WHOS also does a lot of work on the international stage. In particular, our focus has always been towards the Asian Region. We receive many delegations and VIPs from across Asia to learn about the WHOS model and we are always willing to assist where we can with training and professional support - our recent training of therapeutic community staff in Macau (with Hong Kong based participants attending as well) being a prime example.



On the international stage we have unfortunately seen that some governments and communities don't understand the distinction between residential services and therapeutic communities (TCs); and how TCs have a defined model of care, accreditation and standards that ensure that TCs are the gold standard of residential programs. It's not always understood that we work with complex, severe and vulnerable people with alcohol and other drug dependence (AOD) in contrast to those in other services that work with people that have less complex and mild or moderate AOD dependence. As a result, any cost comparisons for the people we treat should be made with the hospital and prison systems, not regular counselling sessions for those with a level of control over their AOD use.

Thankfully in Australia, we know that when people see our services and talk with our clients that any outdated views of our services they may have held are dispelled when they see the care, compassion and outcomes delivered by a therapeutic community.

Yet despite our best efforts we often fall short in receiving the level of government support we need to operate effectively, and this is where the invaluable contributions and assistance of our many corporate (and individual) supporters comes to the fore. Without their assistance we would simply struggle to help the people we help every day.

I also want to make special mention of the community volunteers that make up our rural fire services - it is a service that many of us don't really appreciate until it's your life and property under threat of bush fires, something that our Hunter WHOS staff understand all too well after recent bush fires in the area. Our heartfelt thanks go to the brave people that work in dangerous conditions to selflessly help others in need.

Please enjoy this edition of WHOS News which has a special focus on our Sunshine Coast Centre - the Najara Therapeutic Community - which is seeing a significant expansion thanks to the Queensland Government - something we hope will further demonstrate the substantial value we bring to addressing drug and alcohol issues in the community.

Garth Popple
Executive Director

Sunshine Coast Expansion

With support from the Federal Government a new 6-bedroom Community Group Home Residence was officially opened this month at our WHOS Najara Nambour Service.

It was officially opened by the Hon Ted O'Brien MP (our local Federal MP) with Garth Popple and Trevor Hallowell (Najara Manager) with a ceremony that was attended by many VIPs including local State MP, Mr Martin Hunt and representatives of the Sunshine Coast Council who also lent a lot of support to the project.

The new Community Group Home will enhance WHOS Najara capacity in accommodating female clients in transitional care and will enable WHOS to admit more individuals (in particular females with severe substance dependence) and as a result, reduce local rates of hospital presentations, homelessness and drug related criminal activity – it has been estimated that the project will increase WHOS' regional capacity intake by another 24 individuals each year, many of whom would otherwise would have been placed on our waiting list.

Unlike most service providers who run similar government funded residential programs, 70% of the WHOS Transitional care service running costs are self-funded due to client contribution towards boarding

costs. The unique WHOS model of transitional care provides significant cost savings for the government and the public sector. We estimate the potential saving for the community to be over \$860,000 a year. Moreover, 100% of WHOS transition stage clients receive pre-employment training and assistance in gaining paid and/or volunteering work. It's also important to understand that all the building materials were locally sourced to support local businesses and the design and construction were delivered by local builders.

At the Official Opening, Garth Popple summed up the view of WHOS as follows: *"Due to high demand WHOS Najara has operated at close to 100% percent occupancy for more than a decade, which has resulted in a waiting list average of approximately 30 days. This new community group home will help enhance better outcomes for the women who come through our service and reduce the wait-list for future admissions. As an organisation, opportunities to add to infrastructure are difficult to come by and the WHOS board and staff would like to acknowledge the Federal Government for the provision of funding via its Building Better Regions Fund. We also want to thank our local member Ted O'Brien for his tireless efforts to see this project to fruition."*

The new Community Group Home was funded by the Federal Government's Building Better Regions Fund (50%) and WHOS (50%).

The photos below show the building in the early stages of building and the finished home, the official opening ceremony and happy staff.





[Seven News Report on Opening](#)

[The Hon Ted O'Brien MP Speech](#)

WHOS Hunter

ATCA Training & Community Drug Action Team

Recently some of our staff at WHOS Hunter completed training with the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association along with other WHOS services staff. The training covered the elements associated with Therapeutic model and was completed by Julie-Ann Campbell (Assistant Manager) Nathan Stig (Community Support Worker) and Jamie Young (Manager) - pictured below



The WHOS Hunter staff also participated in a recent Community Drug Action Team (CDAT) forum at the Cessnock PCYC. The event was organised by the CDAT at the instigation of WHOS Hunter Manager Jamie Young, who is a member of the CDAT. The forum included members of the public and community services sector (particularly those not directly involved in providing alcohol and other drug services) to inform them of the range of services available in the local area - including Family Drug Support (FDS) and Addiction Specialists. WHOS also provided a series of talks to the attendees, along with FDS and researchers from Newcastle University, on addressing drug and alcohol issues.



Macau & Hong Kong TC Training

As part of the WHOS commitment to promoting the delivery of therapeutic community programs across Asia, a training program was provided for staff working in Macau in Hong Kong at ARTM Macau, with whom we have a long standing collaboration and a formal MOU for co-operation.

The training was provided by experienced trainers and covered topics that included:

1. What Are Therapeutic Communities?
2. What is a Therapeutic Community Approach?
3. What are the Fundamental Components of Therapeutic Communities?
4. How Is Treatment Provided in a Therapeutic Community?
5. How Do Therapeutic Communities Treat Populations with Special Needs?
6. How Are Therapeutic Communities Adapting to the Current Environment?
7. Harm Reduction within a Therapeutic Community environment



Sydney College of the Arts (University of Sydney)

Apple Mac Donations

One of our neighbours at Callan Park is the University of Sydney College of the Arts, which currently occupy the Kirkbride site. In the true spirit of neighbourly help they recently provided WHOS Rozelle with a number of Apple Macs for use by our clients as they prepare for life back in the community. The computers help with the important tasks of clients preparing resumes for work, sending applications for training or employment and reconnecting with the digital world - all essential skills in today's world.



OzHarvest - CEO Cook-Off

Recently WHOS was very pleased to be a part of the OzHarvest CEO Cook-Off for our good friends at OzHarvest

It was Australia's largest restaurant, as 50 well known chefs including the WHOS team led by Jevan, fed 1,700 people. WHOS had a group of 50 people involved including residents and the event raised in excess of \$3 million for OzHarvest.

Larry Emdur was MC and entertainment was provided by Darryl Braithwaite.

Here are some photos of the event, including WHOS hobnobbing with celebrity chefs, and the final dessert picture was the much loved WHOS contribution to the event.







Caring for Broughton Hall - 2020

Fundraising Initiative



Our goal is 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.

WHOS has always set the highest example of custodianship of Broughton Hall and the Therapeutic Gardens are being re-established as a safe space to connect with positive personal rhythms. Quite simply 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 and the installation of water tanks for our new kitchen garden. 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.

Royal Thai Consul Visit to WHOS Rozelle

The new Royal Thai Consul General, Mr Chakkrid Krachaiwong and his team visited (pictured below) WHOS Rozelle to see our facilities and to also mark the occasion of the Queen's Birthday with a generous donation to WHOS. On behalf of the staff and residents of WHOS we thank Mr Krachaiwong and the Thai Government and are looking forward to working with our colleagues in Thailand at the Princess Mother National Institute on Drug Abuse Treatment, the Thailand Therapeutic Communities Association and the Thai Ministry of Public Health again in 2020.



Solidarity Lunch Our Response to the New Zealand Shootings

WHOS welcomes people of all races, cultures, faiths and sexuality - it is a trademark of our program to accept all that wish to address any substance dependency issues and make positive changes to their lives. Many of our clients also have experienced the severe trauma of conflict and tragedy. In response to the horrific shootings in New Zealand earlier this year our residents organised a special lunch to remember those that had lost their lives and to hope for healing in the community.



Cessnock Bushfires

The recent bush fire emergency in NSW hit close to home with some staff at our WHOS Hunter service in Cessnock seeing their homes come under threat. Fortunately, due to the tireless and heroic efforts of the local rural fire service no-one associated with WHOS suffered any loss, however our hearts go out to those in our local community that did suffer losses and we hope that they can get back on their feet as soon as possible.



NSW Club Grants

WHOS was very pleased to recently receive two generous donations from the NSW Club Grants program - both grants were to assist in our efforts to upgrade all the bedding at our services. We can assure others wishing to help us in this project of updating our bedding that all our residents enjoy their sleep after being in programs, work or study all day and nothing helps more than a comfortable bed.

Client Stories



NAJARA CLIENT STORY

Female Client story.

I came to WHOS Najara in September 2018, desperate to change my life after years of drug dependence and mental health breakdowns. Before I came to Najara, I had been couch surfing in friends houses, in and out of hospitals and treatment. Physically I was very unwell from my alcohol and drug use and mentally and emotionally I was a nervous wreck. I had very low self worth and confidence and was having panic attacks daily if I didn't drink or use. I've been at Najara now for just under 6 months and thanks to this program and my willingness to change, my life looks very different. I've regained my physical health and no longer have a risk of seizures. My mental health is the most stable it has been in many years.

Through the groups we do here, like Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Mindfulness and Meditation, I've learnt to manage my anxiety disorder without the need of drugs to calm me down. I've learnt some valuable life skills, including how to communicate effectively and respond to situations without anger or the use of substances. My coping skills for life have improved so much that my confidence and goals for the future now seem bright and within my reach. I now have regular contact with my children and family and thanks to the parenting program 'Circle of Security', I can relate to them better. I have routine and balance and regularly attend aftercare meetings to continue my recovery from drugs and alcohol.

WHOS Najara has literally saved my life and given me a hope for the future I simply did not have 6 months ago. My future plans when I finish the program include living in the Exit house. The exit stage of the program offers help to gain entry into a community services course and I hope to gain work in this area whilst studying. I will continue to build the relationships with my children and hope to be in my own home looking after them by the end of the year.

I am grateful and humbled by how much this program has helped change my life and look forward to a brighter future free from the hell of addiction.

Male Client Story.

My addiction took hold of me at the age of 13. It was immediate, all consuming and life changing. Like many of us with this problem, my childhood was not the best and substances appeared to be the solution. This changed in the coming years as the cracks started to appear. I went from being the life of the party to someone that wanted to be alone and isolated. I managed to function in society for some time due to a combination of luck and determination. I guess the only time I have been genuinely authentic was when I was a young child. After that, I had to adapt to the demands of life.

First I was an aggressive young man trying to find my way on the hard streets of my country. I then started travelling and arrived in Australia. I felt it was time to get career minded and as I had spent most of my life supporting people, becoming a social worker seemed like an obvious career choice. At the age of 19 a friend suggested that I talk to someone about my drinking and partying. I was in complete denial and believed that I was fine. Twelve months later, I got my first life threatening warning. My stomach finally gave way after years of self medicating with alcohol and speed. I was rushed into surgery but this

did not stop my substance abuse. I was at a nightclub 7 days later with staples holding my stomach together. This madness carried on until I found my first sobriety in 2009. Life was great for a short while but I was focusing on my external influences and neglected my inner most needs.

I found myself back in rehab and now 3 months into it, my health and well being is on the mend. Having experienced drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres both personally and professionally over the years both here in Australia and overseas, I can honestly say that the program at WHOS Najara is strong and promotes individuals to find recovery. This is a structured program which I personally feel necessary after escaping in my chaotic ways. The consistent access to aftercare support meetings push me out of my comfort zone, a place which is foreign but necessary for me. I like the format of the TC program and feel it's balanced well. I feel that the different stages suit my recovery and hold me in good stead moving forward. So far I have been able to identify and address some of my core issues whilst finding acceptance for who I am. The stress management instructor at WHOS Najara makes me look at my physical health, while the meditation has given me the opportunity to get in touch with my inner self. I am a big fan of Mindfulness and the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy groups which allow me to take a holistic view of my thought process. I believe that having a rehabilitation centre that also employs professionals with similar backgrounds and life experiences makes communication easier. It is beneficial for me looking into the eyes of someone who has a sense of what you are going through.

I am a place of calm at the present moment, nil shame for my past or fears for tomorrow. I am right where I need to be.

Another Football Code Supports WHOS

WHOS was pleased to receive some great gear from Sydney Football Club as well as tickets to some games for our residents. This was complemented by similar generosity from the National Rugby League which also provided some signed memorabilia and tickets to recent international matches for residents. Keep a watch out for our fundraiser in 2020 where some of the signed memorabilia will be auctioned, along with similar donations from the Wests Tigers (our biggest sporting supporter) - we are hoping this news might filter through to the ARU and AFL who may also want to support WHOS.



WHOS Centres - [click for information](#)



2019 Australasian Therapeutic Communities Conference Update

Each year the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) hosts an international conference in the Alcohol and Drug (AOD) field and affiliated areas. Therapeutic Communities and other residential Rehabilitation Services are an integral element of a comprehensive response to alcohol and other drug issues in our community, nationally and internationally. The 2019 Conference is taking place in Adelaide and WHOS is proud to be a sponsor of this important event

<http://www.atca2019.com.au/#>



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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

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