



# Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc.

Annual Report  
2019/2020

Accredited at  
Certificate Level of the  
Australian Service  
Excellence Standards





**Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc and North West Sydney Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service**

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Funded by NSW Department of Health, administered by Western Sydney Local Health District  
Funded by Legal Aid NSW

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. (BWGHC) is a Public Benevolent Institution with DGR Status. Donations of \$2.00 and above are tax deductible. The Centre holds **NSW Authority to fundraise: CFN/23808**.

All photos unless otherwise indicated are property of BWGHC. Thanks to the staff and students at BWGHC for their contribution of photographs to this report.

BWGHC Annual Report for 2019/2020 compiled by Sharon Labbett

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North West Sydney  
women's domestic violence  
court advocacy service

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We are committed to providing a professional, affordable and holistic gender informed service, promoting health, wellbeing and empowerment for women and girls, delivered in a caring, non-judgemental, respectful and safe environment.





# About Us

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. (BWGHC) is a community-based, non-profit women's health centre which provides accessible health and wellbeing services for women and girls in Blacktown LGA regardless of their income. Our peak body is Women's Health NSW and we are part of a network of 21 community based women's health centres in NSW which share a similar mission and ethos.

## OUR MISSION

We are committed to providing a professional, affordable and holistic gender informed service promoting health, wellbeing and empowerment for women, delivered in a caring, non-judgemental, respectful and safe environment.

### We achieve this by:

- Providing a holistic women's health service to the community.
- Educating women and children so they can make informed choices about healthcare and well-being.
- Empowering women and children to make informed choices throughout their lives.
- Providing a safe place for women and children.
- Advocating for and supporting women from a feminist perspective.

## OUR VALUES

We recognise that women's health encompasses the physical, spiritual, environmental, emotional and social wellbeing of women and girls. BWGHC offers a holistic approach to understanding, managing and supporting women, girls and the broader community in the Blacktown LGA to make informed decisions about their own health and wellbeing. This approach is based on feminist philosophy, with an emphasis on respect and empowerment for all women and girls. Our values are:

- **Dignity** – we treat all people in a way that is respectful of their diversity and as valued individuals.
- **Compassion** – in our interactions with people, we strive to be kind and empathic.
- **Optimism** – the unwavering belief in the positive potential inherent in people and society.

## OUR SERVICE PRINCIPLES

- We are a community based, non-government organisation run by, and for women.
- We are a public benevolent institution providing a direct service to disadvantaged women.
- We focus on prevention and early intervention.
- We work in partnership with other agencies.
- We are accessible to all women and girls.
- We strive to maintain ethical standards in all our activities.
- We are committed to best practice.
- Our work environment reflects our values.

## Our Community

BWGHC provides health and wellbeing services to women and girls in Blacktown LGA, a 'huge and diverse' area with high levels of cultural and linguistic diversity<sup>1</sup>.

Many areas of Blacktown LGA experience high levels of socio-economic disadvantage, poor health outcomes and high levels of unmet need when it comes to service provision<sup>3</sup>.

Our area is also experiencing rapid urban development and population growth and is now one of the most densely populated Local Government Areas in Western Sydney<sup>2</sup>, further increasing the demand for services.

BWGHC takes into account the unique needs of our local community. We provide accessible services that take into account the social, cultural and economic barriers that may exist for women and girls wishing to access health services and resources in our area.



*Local Drug Action Team  
Open Day November 2019*



# Report | From the Chairperson

Chairperson's Report

| Dr Olayide Ogunsiji



It is with great pleasure that I present the Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre's (BWGHC) annual report for 2019-2020 financial year, to our members, friends and stakeholders.

The highly impressive performance of BWGHC during the last twelve months, including dedicatedly working through the Covid-19 epidemic, following our Risk Management Plan and daily guidance from Health NSW, is clearly testified by the array of programs and services we provide. The Centre continues to build on its strong foundation and network at all levels of the organisation and consolidating a solid platform for ongoing growth and success in serving the many women and girls in our area.

I am very pleased to say that 2019-2020 has been a very active and successful year in so many areas. In the course of the year, the Centre was successful in several grant submissions. We continue to receive donations, nominations and club grants. All these nominations and financial supports are very important to us as they enable the provision of much needed extended services to young women and girls across the Blacktown LGA. The full details of our extensive range of programs are laid out in the following pages of this report, which I encourage you all to read in depth.

I would like to appreciate our community partners, including but not limited to the Outer Western Domestic Violence Network, Family Planning NSW, the Western Sydney Local Health District, NSW Legal Aid and the Department of Family and Community Services, as well as numerous grass-root services and their workers whom we closely work with on a daily basis to ensure that women and girls get the relevant support they need.

On behalf of the Management Committee, I wish to acknowledge and extend my gratitude to our amiable Executive Officer, Jhan Leach for her professionalism, tenacity and determination in executing our strategic and operational goals effectively and efficiently. Under her leadership and guidance, BWGHC is growing from strength to strength as evident from the variety of programs, services and partnerships established over the number of years she has been in the Centre.

Very importantly, I thank all the staff for their hard work, dedication and loyalty to BWGHC. Without their welcoming smiles, passion and commitment, it will be difficult (if not impossible) to make a difference to the health and well-being of our clients.

Furthermore, I acknowledge and thank the members of the Management Committee for their dedication, guidance and commitment to effective governance of the Centre. Your ability to promptly respond to the ongoing changing terrain that the sector is operating in is highly appreciated.

Finally, and more importantly, I wish to thank all the women and girls who use our services. Their ongoing trust in BWGHC to continue to be the Centre of excellence in women's health and domestic violence response in the Blacktown LGA, fuels all that we do.

I hereby present to you 2019-2020 Chairperson's annual report.

Yours Sincerely,

**Dr Olayide Ogunsiji**





# Report | From the Treasurer

## Treasurer's Report | Vaishali Parmar



It is with huge honour and pride I take on the responsibility of being Treasurer for BWGHC. The mix of diversity and experience that each member of our committee brings forward is inspiring and something we all should be proud of. When I first met Jhan and some of the ladies during a grant presentation, it was a pivotal moment for me to contribute on an ongoing basis and give something back to the community. Having worked in a frontline management role, I have interacted with many vulnerable members of our community who can use appropriate support and guidance.

“With this report I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the staff, volunteers & members for showing resiliency in adapting to rapid changes & challenges presented.

The centre remains committed in delivering the services that our community needs. It is also important for our employees and members to focus on their own safety & wellbeing, which is highly encouraged. Coming months will see us navigate the new normal & continue to deliver on our services"

**“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.” — Mother Teresa.**

Vaishali Parmar

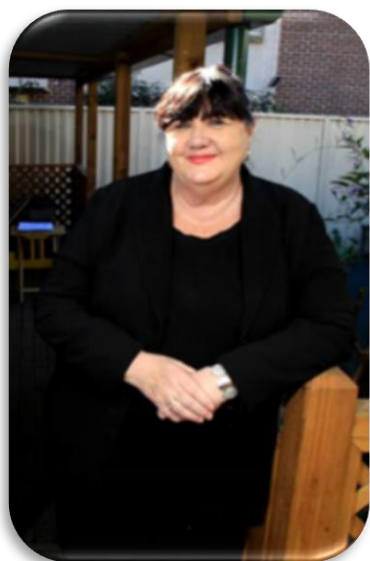


*Parliament of NSW - Community Recognition Statement, presented to Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre, by Jodi Mc Kay MP, NSW Opposition Leader and Stephen Bali MP, Member for Blacktown. As stated in the Legislative Assembly on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019.*



# Report | From the Executive Officer

## Executive Officer's Report | Jhan Leach



I would like to thank our Management Committee members, Acting Chairperson Dr Olayide Ogunsiji, our Treasurer Vaishali Parmar, Secretary Neena Sood, Helen Bulanadi, Karen Fernando and Mehreen Ahmed and our retired Chairperson Mariam Mourad, for their excellent guidance, good governance and support over the past twelve months.

This year has been a challenge for us all with the Covid-19 pandemic, our Teams have worked with dedication to the guidelines of our Covid-19 Risk Management plan and followed all required advice from Health NSW. I would like to thank our professional and dedicated staff, including our service partners, contracted and casual staff, our volunteers and students on placement. Their strong resolve has been to provide women and girls with a high standard and excellence in service delivery of health and domestic violence services and this has been achieved.

I'd like to acknowledge our new North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS), our Manager and Team and thank them for their dedication. I'd like to sincerely thank Kessel Ryes Corral for stepping into the Acting Manager role of the NWSWDVCAS and in receiving a Commendation from Legal Aid NSW WDVCAAP for her excellent work with me in transitioning our new NWSWDVCAS Tender. I would like to thank our NWSWDVCAS team, for the excellent work they're undertaking, which has received much praise from Legal Aid NSW over this past year

We were successful in receiving Grant funding from both State and Federal Governments that enabled us to upgrade our phones and our BWGHC server, provide emergency Covid-19 phones and computers to our staff working from home and to increase access to our Employees Assistance Program for our Teams. We're very grateful and sincerely thank our donors for the provision of funds for the Women's and Girl's Emergency Fund.

We received Club Grants funding from Blacktown RSL through the Clubs Grant program, and much needed storage donated by Storage King and maintenance support from Lander Toyota, for our vehicle and to all our sponsors and donors, who have assisted us materially, physically and financially this year, we're all very grateful and thank you.

We have achieved solid progress this year with staff recruitment and development, team building, strategic and business planning, enabling our continuing solid service growth.

We have succeeded in collaborating with a number of government and non-government organisations in the Blacktown, Mt Druitt and Hawkesbury Nepean Local Government Areas. I would like to thank them for their support and dedication to women, girls, children and families in our community.

I am very honoured and proud to represent our organisation because of these achievements.

Jhan Leach

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# Our Structure

## Staff and Personnel

BWGHC employs permanent and sessional/casual staff as required and also provides students with placement opportunities. BWGHC also receives invaluable assistance and support from our volunteers. Personnel are accountable to the Executive Officer, Jhan Leach, who reports to the Management Committee.

## Management Committee

BWGHC is an Incorporated Association, which is governed by a Management Committee made up of women committed to advancing the health priorities of women, girls, children and families living in our local community. The Management Committee is structured and operates according to the Rules of Association, and consists of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Ordinary Members.

## Funding

- NSW Department of Health, as administered by the Western Sydney Local Health District.
- Legal Aid New South Wales.
- Additional sources of funding are sought, and provided via grant applications, community donations and strategic partnerships with other organisations.



*Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre  
Open Day November 2019*



*Pink Ribbon Morning Tea  
September 2019*



*Yarn Bomb, BWGHC  
16 Days of Activism  
November 2019*

*Myer Blacktown  
2019/20  
Donation*

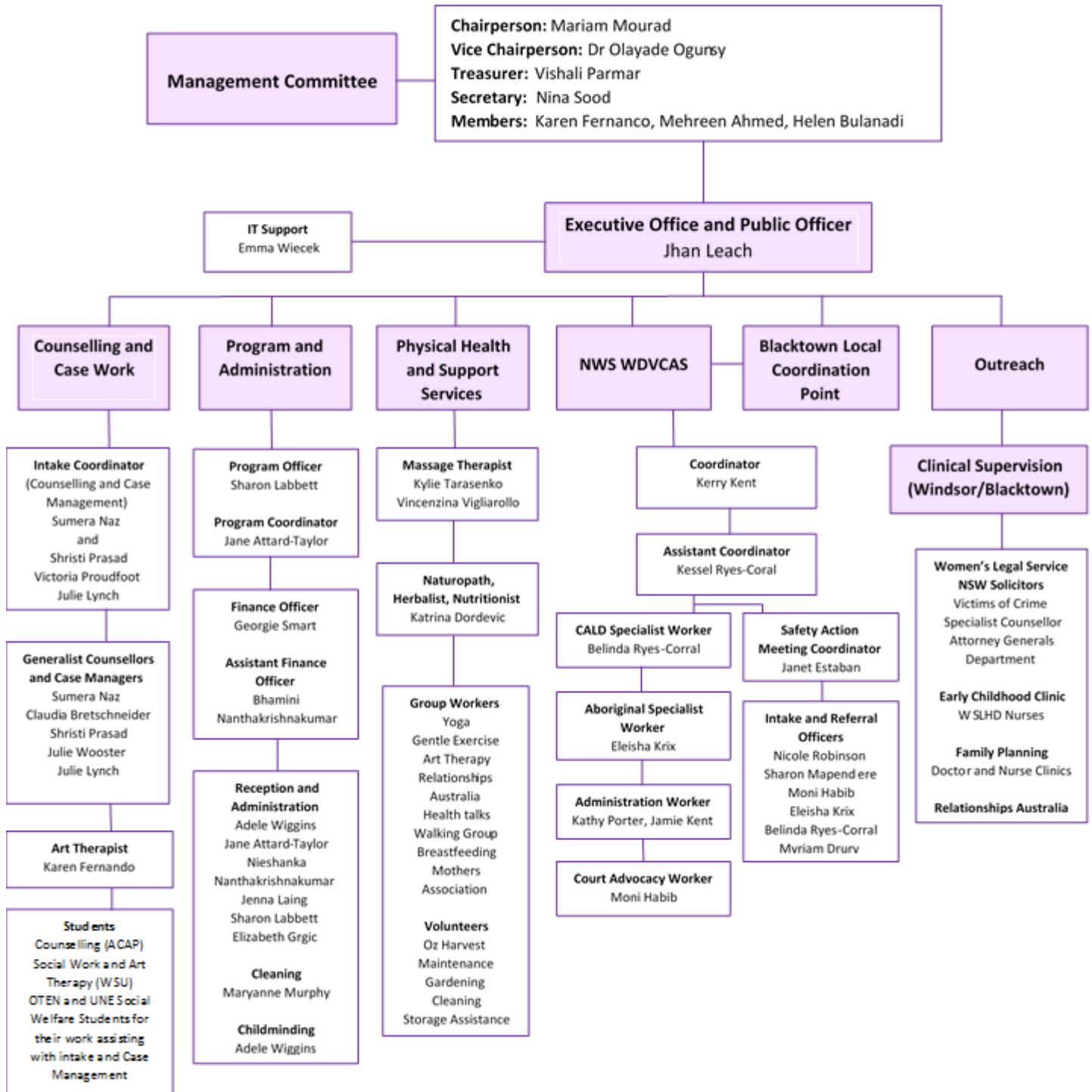






# Our Structure

## Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre and North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service





# Working in alignment with NSW Health Goals

BWGHC works in alignment with NSW Government Health Goals. The following is extracted from the NSW Health Framework for Women's Health:

## Women's health priorities across the life stages

### Goal

To deliver services and foster environments in NSW which help women to meet their physical, social and economic potential, by increasing opportunities for women to be healthy at every stage in their lives and preventing avoidable detrimental health outcomes such as chronic disease.

### Purpose

To identify health needs particular to women (whether biological or social); to deliver appropriate healthcare and health-promoting services; and to monitor the impact of interventions on groups of women at most risk of poor health.

### Approach

The framework focuses on issues where the detrimental health impact is disproportionately experienced by women, or where the response is different for women than for men. The framework places women at the centre of decision making for their own health and acknowledges women's health is impacted by many factors including housing, rural living, employment and access to services.

As health outcomes are influenced by the cumulative effect overtime of social determinants, a life stage approach is used to structure opportunities for enhanced delivery of services and programs.

### Values

NSW Health's CORE values are the guiding principles for implementation of women's health strategies.

The CORE values are:  
**Collaboration, Openness,  
Respect and Empowerment.**



### Priority populations

While the Women's Health Framework is for *all* women, it is recognised that there are certain population groups, which experience poorer health and/or due to their circumstances may require focused attention to better address their health needs. Examples of priority populations in women's health include:

- **Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women**
- **Women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, migrant and refugee women**
- **Women who are socio-economically disadvantaged**
- **Women with disability**
- **Women who are primary or secondary carers for other people**
- **Women who experience violence (sexual, domestic and family violence)**
- **Women living in rural and remote areas**
- **Lesbian, bisexual, trans-gender and inter-gender women.**

These priority populations are similarly identified by the National Women's Health Policy. Working to advance women's health also requires working with the communities in which women live.

### Partnerships

Improving health outcomes for all women will require an across-government and multi-sectoral approach. NSW Health has funded a range of community-based services supporting women's health and arrangements for evidence-based service delivery will remain important into the future. As well, agencies will need to build strategic partnerships with other organisations which are not funded by the health system. This framework identifies the partnerships between NSW Government agencies which contribute to the infrastructure, services and programs supporting women's good health.

*Source: NSW Health Framework for Women's Health, 2013*





# Working in Alignment with NSW Health Goals

## Quality, Innovation and Performance

BWGHC is accredited at Certificate Level of the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES). Since receiving accreditation, the Centre has continued to upgrade systems and processes in order to meet ongoing improvement targets for internal processes, and strengthening our operational policies and procedures, including recruitment, employment, financial and organisational management.

## Meeting High Demand

BWGHC has undergone important changes during this financial year. We have improved our Centre's facilities and continued to expand our capacity to meet high demand for services.

We have also employed additional staff to meet the continuing high demand for our counselling and case management services and for the North Western Sydney Domestic Violence Court Advocacy service.

## Improving Effectiveness

BWGHC has taken an efficient and consistent approach to managing the continuing high level of demand by new clients for counselling and case management, including the growing demand for domestic violence and crisis response.

This year we have continued our work with Legal Aid NSW alongside North Western Sydney Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. We have a good working relationship with the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program at Legal Aid NSW. Achieving solid progress this year with staff recruitment and development, team building, strategic and business planning and enabling our strong service growth.

Providing child minding for our Doctor and Nurse clinics has enabled many women to comfortably attend appointments. Our health promotions and early intervention group program has brought the Centre into new partnerships with local organisations and agencies, and provided women and girls with useful ways to address issues such as physical health, mental health and social wellbeing, regardless of age or cultural background.

The BWGHC **Women's Girls' and Children's Emergency Fund** is able to respond to the growing needs of women fleeing domestic violence, and has been supported with a NSW Clubs Grant from Blacktown Workers Club. During the next 12 months, this fund will continue to provide practical assistance for women, girls and children in crisis and at risk of homelessness.

The BWGHC Reception team, the first 'point of call' for clients, received between 20 – 40 calls a day.

Over 10% of the calls were complex or crisis related, requiring sound knowledge of referral pathways and appropriate services, internal and external, for the woman or girls calling.

## Meeting NSW Health Requirements

BWGHC continues to effectively, quantitatively record and measure our performance in all areas through our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which were developed in consultation with NSW Health to meet their requirements and provide a consistent framework for monitoring and evaluating performance.





## Our Services

**Blacktown Women and Girls Health Centre Inc. provides affordable, accessible and multi-disciplinary services to girls and women across their lifespan, particularly focusing on vulnerable population groups.**

Our services target key health issues impacting women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health, mental health and wellbeing, domestic and family violence, and chronic illness and disease.

As a community health organization, BWGHC aims to operate as a 'one-stop shop' delivering integrated care to women and girls with complex needs and those who do not readily engage with health services. Services are free or low-cost. No woman or girl is turned away due to inability to pay.

### BWGHC Services

- **Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service:** North Western Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS)
- **Counselling** (Counselling support for women and girls to assist in dealing with trauma, stress and personal issues both immediate and long-term)
- **Case Management** (Consistent co-ordinated support for women and girls with complex needs)
- **Women's Health Nurse Clinic** (Free education, information, breast checks and more)
- **Naturopathy and Nutrition**
- **Remedial Massage Therapy**
- **Art Therapy**
- **Health Promotion and Community Outreach**
- **Early Intervention and Health Promotion Group Program**
- **Yoga and Gentle Exercise**



*Blacktown Local Drug Action Team Stall  
BWGHC Open Day, November 2019*

### BWGHC Services: In-House Partnerships

Our strong partnerships with other organisations help us to provide relevant, appropriate and responsive services to women and girls in our local community. The following services are provided onsite at BWGHC through our community partnerships:

- **Sexual and Reproductive Health Doctor and Nurse Clinics:** Family Planning NSW
- **Domestic Violence Counselling:** North Western Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS)
- **Specialist Counsellor, Victims of Crime:** Ros Leahy, Specialist Counsellor Victims of Crime for the NSW Attorney General's Department
- **Early Childhood Health Clinic:** Early Childhood Nurses from the Western Sydney Local Health District
- **Legal Support:** Women's Legal Services NSW (WLSNSW) Solicitors
- **Indigenous Women's Legal Support:** Indigenous Women's Legal Program (WLSNSW)
- **African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO):** regular outreach, meetings and information forums hosted by BWGHC
- **Australian Breastfeeding Association:** regular information and support meetings held at BWGHC
- **Relationships Australia:** Women's Choice and Change Group Program
- **Australian Drug Foundation:** Blacktown Local Drug Action Team.





## Early Intervention and Health Promotion Group Programs (2019/20FY)

- Art Therapy for Stress Relief
- Bollywood & Bellydance Class
- Massage Therapy
- Introduction to Art Therapy
- Financial Wellbeing for Women
- Strong, Bold and Courageous Women
- Australian Continence Foundation – Bladder and Bowel Health
- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Yoga Group
- The Heart Foundation - Women's Walking Group
- Family Planning NSW – Women's Health Clinic
- African Women's Health and Support Organisation Forum (AWHASO)
- Yarn In – Say NO to Domestic Violence
- Relationships Australia – Women, Choice & Change
- Oz Harvest/Food Bank
- Art Therapy for Self Confidence and Resilience
- Pink Ribbon Morning Tea
- Hepatology – Liver Health Checks
- Salvation Army Money Care Workshop
- Gut Health Talk
- Aromatherapy for Stress Relief
- Art Therapy – Discover Your Brave
- Women's Justice Network – Healing from Within
- NDIS Information Session
- Living Mindfully – Self Care Group for Women
- International Women's Day – Art Exhibition & Morning Tea
- Talking Health: Eat Well – Spend Less
- Talking Health: Bladder & Bowel Health
- Talking Health: Hep B & Hep C Information Sessions including Liver Scans with Storrs Liver Centre
- Talking Health: Aromatherapy for Stress Relief
- Talking Health: Gut Health Talk
- Talking Health: NDIS Information Session
- Talking Health: Money Care Workshop
- Art Therapy: Local Drug Action Team
- Courageous Conversations
- Naidoc Event – Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre
- Naidoc Event – Blacktown Showground
- Westpoint DV Stall
- NRMA High 5 Fundraising Event
- Multicultural Mum's Group
- International Women's Day & BLDAT



*Living Mindfully Self Care Group  
February 2020*



*Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre  
Open Day November 2019*



# Our Services

## Team Building Session

In November the staff from Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre and North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service participated in a team building session, facilitated by Erica Pittman (ARCAP Registered, PACFA Accredited Supervisor), at the Crowne Plaza, Hawkesbury Valley. It was a wonderful opportunity to have both centres come together and get to know each other better.



*BWGHC & NWSWDVCAS Team  
Building Session November, 2019*

## Work during Covid-19

In March 2020, BWGHC had to close for a 2 week period due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. During this 2 week period, staff members who were cleared of Covid-19 returned to the centre and focused on cleaning and sanitising the entire centre. We also needed to work out how we could still operate and provide this essential service to the women and girls in the area, while still maintaining Health NSW's restrictions and social distancing regulations. Thankfully we were able to offer our counselling services, legal appointments and some family planning appointments over the phone. Once we had set up our group room as our new waiting area, we reopened our Family Planning NSW, doctor and nurse clinics. As restrictions started to ease, we were able to begin offering, "face to face" client services including counselling, Oz Harvest and Food Bank. Our children's cottage was transformed into a counselling room where staff and clients could maintain the required social distancing. Oz Harvest and Foodbank services were modified and have since had feedback from clients that they feel the new system is working well, and they very much appreciate that we have been able to still supply them with much needed food. The centre appreciates the patience of all our clients during this unprecedented time, and we hope that we will return to normal in the not too distant future.



*Children's Cottage, set up for  
Covid-19 Face to Face Counselling*



*Two of our reception staff,  
Adele and Elizabeth*



## Accessible and Culturally Responsive Services

During the 2019-2020 Financial Period, BWGHC provided culturally responsive services to women and girls from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Clients were provided with a free interpreter when needed, either onsite or via the Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS).

BWGHC continued to develop and strengthen interagency and community partnerships. These partnerships allow BWGHC to benefit from the expertise of organisations which work closely with culturally diverse community groups to provide culturally responsive services including referrals, events and resources.

- Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre hosted regular outreach meetings by the African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO).
- We were members of an advisory committee that was led by SydWest Multicultural Services for the 'CALD Domestic Violence Prevention Project'. The aim of this project was to reduce violence against women and their children residing in the Blacktown LGA. The target groups were Afghan, South Sudanese and Indian Sub-Continent refugee and migrant communities.
- We delivered outreach programs for Indigenous women and girls onsite at Ngallu Wal Aboriginal Child and Family Centre and other community organisations.
- Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre participated in Refugee Week, delivering health information and service referrals to CALD communities.
- Staff attended several Naidoc events in the community.



*Kylie our Massage Therapist wearing her PPE for Massages during Covid-19*



*Clients at Jean Hailes Women's Health Week Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre 2019*



# Service Statistics

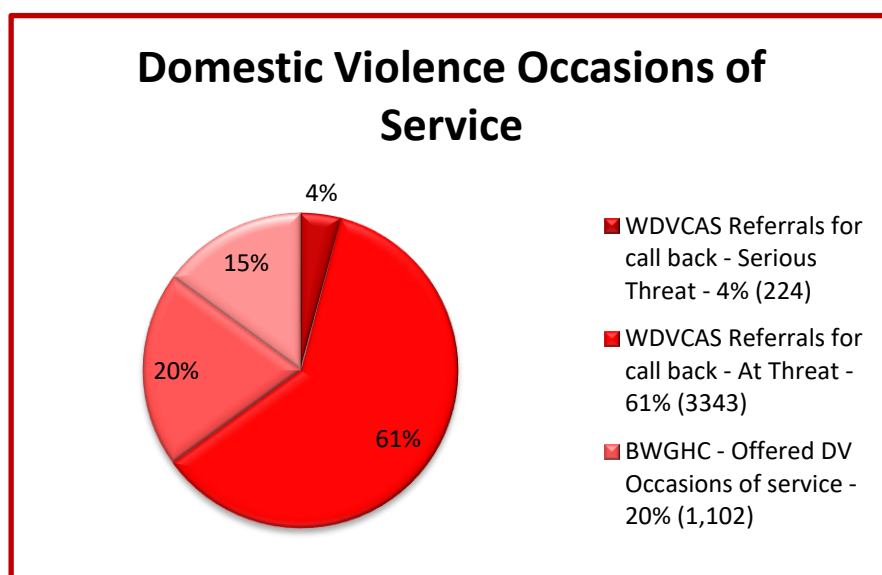
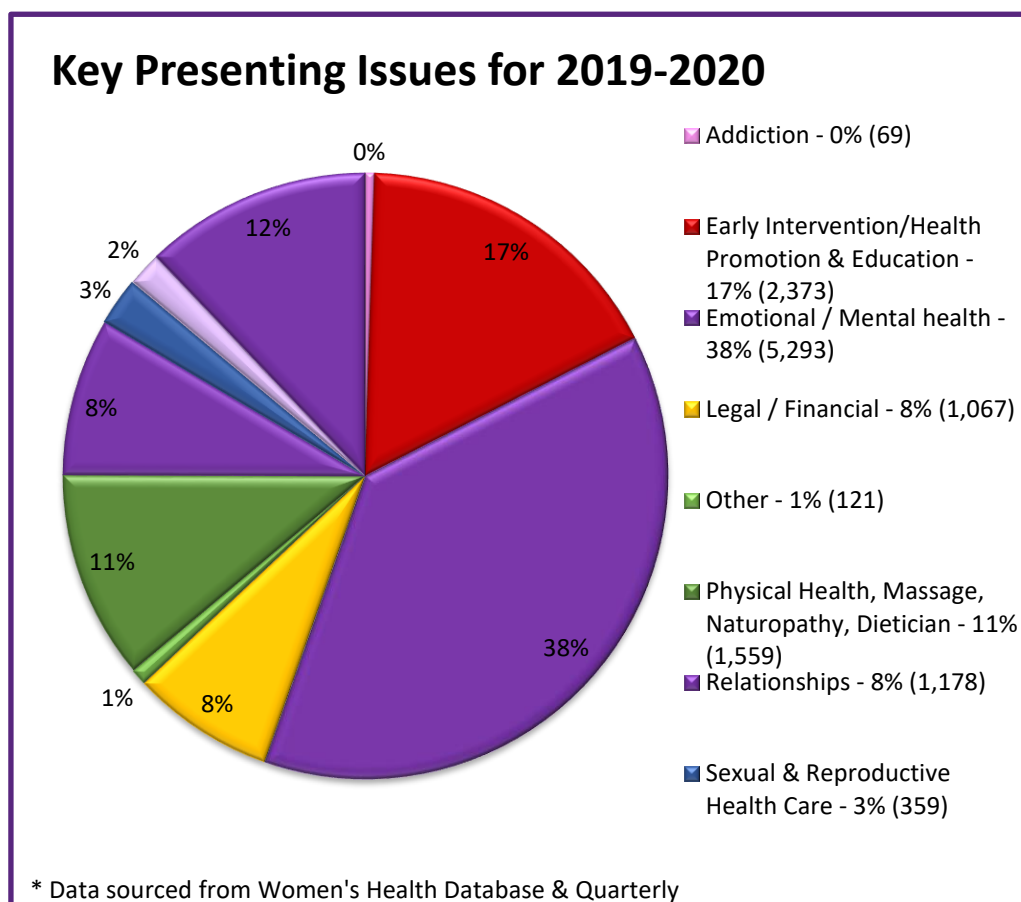
During the financial year **2019-2020**, 8934 women and girls contacted the centre for assistance

A total of **8875** women and girls contacted the centre for assistance.

**3673** women and girls attended appointments.

**2389** women and girls attended groups and activities.

**2813** women contacted the centre for referral, information and crisis support.







The North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS) is one of twenty-seven WDVCS's across the state which is funded by Legal Aid NSW through the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCP) Unit. This report will focus on NWSWDVCAS information, data and processes during this financial year.

## About Us

NWSWDVCAS provide women experiencing domestic and family violence with: threat assessment and safety planning; case coordination; information; and court advocacy. NWSWDVCAS provide advocacy to women going through the court process in relation to domestic and family violence matters at Blacktown and Windsor Local Court. In particular, NWSWDVCAS help women obtain legal protection through Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs), tailored to meet the client's individual needs.

The Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform ('the Blueprint') 2016-2021 is the overarching policy framework for domestic and family violence reform activity in NSW. The Blueprint sets out the direction for a domestic and family violence system that will prevent violence, intervene early with vulnerable communities, support victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and deliver evidence-based, quality services to make victims safer and support their recovery. WDVCSs play a key role under the 'supporting victims' pillar of the Blueprint.

A key component of the Reforms is a new model of service delivery for domestic violence victims, Safer Pathway. Local Coordination Points (LCPs) and Safety Action Meetings (SAMs) are key elements of this model. NWSWDVCAS has hosted the Blacktown LCP and Blacktown SAM since November 2016. As part of the NSW Government Safer Pathway initiative, NWSWDVCAS receive referrals for women experiencing domestic and family violence in the Blacktown and Quakers Hills Police Area Commands (PACs) from: NSW Police Force and Local Courts; other service providers, such as health services; and victims themselves.

### **NWSWDVCAS facts & highlights at a glance**

- Provided services at two Local courts until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020: Blacktown and Windsor
- Provided 8550 service events to 1925 clients
- 161 clients identified as Aboriginal
- 732 clients assisted were from CALD backgrounds
- Assisted 510 clients to obtain final Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders

## **NWSWDVCAS & Blacktown LCP is funded by Legal Aid NSW**



## Our Team (prior to 30/06/2020)

The NWSWDVCAS team consists of:

**Program Coordinator**  
**Assistant Coordinator**

**Administrative Assistant**

**Administrative Assistant / Intake & Referral Officer**

**Administrative Assistant / Intake & Referral Officer**

**Intake & Referral Officer / Multicultural Specialist Worker**

**Intake & Referral Officer / Aboriginal Specialist Worker**

**Intake & Referral Officer / Aboriginal Specialist Worker**

**Intake & Referral Officer / Court Advocacy Worker**

**Blacktown Safety Action Meeting Coordinator**

**Intake & Referral Officer**

**Intake & Referral Officer**

**Mt Druitt Safety Action Meeting Coordinator**

**Domestic & Family Specialist Worker**

Kerry Kent

Kessel Ryes-Corral

Katherine Porter

Jaime Kent

Vanessa Earl

Belinda Ryes-Corral

Eleisha Krix

Nicole Robinson

Moni Habib

Janet Esteban

Sharon Mapendere

Myriam Drury

Barbara Gosche

Natasha Muhammedi



*Belinda, Eleisha, Janet, Sharon, Kath, Kerry, Nicole, Moni, Jaime and Kessel*



## Manager's Report |

We would like to acknowledge NNSWDVCAS Manager – Kerry Kent, who left our service at the end of the Tender period and wish her all the very best for her future and acknowledge Kessel Ryes-Corral, Acting Manager, who received a “Commendation”, from the Legal AID NSW, WDVCS and the Management Committee of Blacktown Women’s and Girls Health Centre (BWGHC). We would like to thank the Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program – Legal Aid NSW for their support throughout the year.

We are proud to report that our staff and key stakeholders have maintained a strong service delivery and a high standard of support to our clients while working, during the impacts, of working remotely due to COVID-19.

Our New Tender for the NNSWDVCAS, from 2020 – 2024, includes a change in our service delivery as we now operate the Mt Druiitt Court Safe Room and SAMS. We have developed relationships with key stakeholders in the Mt Druiitt LGA.

With our Court Support Service, being reduced to no attendance for staff or clients for a lengthy period, thankfully we are now permitted to provide Court Support to our clients.

In the current working environment, our staff have been limited to training and development; however, staff were successful in completing the following:

- Fire Safety Awareness Training
- Complex Case Management
- Property – Family Law
- Understanding the Role of Law & Cultural in ATSI Communities
- Working Together – Your Story Disability Legal Support
- WDVCS – Training/Information Court Processes

We would like to thank our key partners NSW Police Area Commands, Domestic Violence Liaison Officers (DVLO’s) of Blacktown, Quakers Hill, Mount Druiitt and previously Windsor for their ongoing dedication and support to work collaboratively in partnership and NSW Court Service and Staff of Blacktown, Mount Druiitt and Windsor Courts.

We greatly value, our partners who have worked with us tirelessly throughout the year, to provide support to woman and children across our service and we thank them.

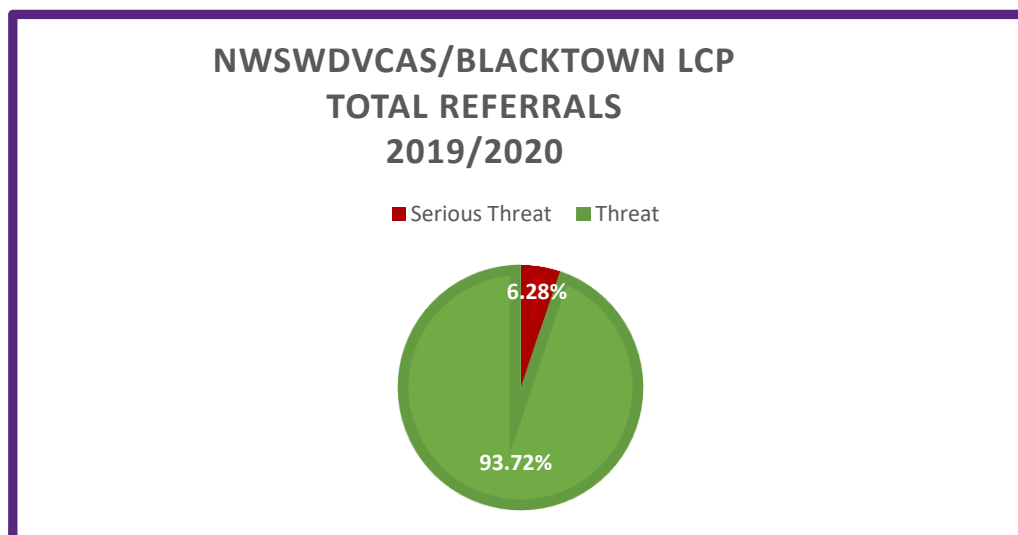
On behalf of NNSWDVCAS, we thank everyone for all your ongoing support.

### Eligibility criteria and target groups

WDVCASs will assist any women who:

- Are experiencing or has experienced domestic and family violence, and
- Are aged 16 years or older.

WDVCASs also support the children of clients wherever possible.



### Principles guiding NSW DVCAS service delivery

- The safety of each woman and other persons with whom she is in a domestic relationship (including children) and of workers has priority;
- Women are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity;
- Women are supported and assisted to receive services on an equitable basis;
- Women are able to identify and express their needs and make decisions in a supportive and non-judgemental environment. This includes the right to refuse a service and not have this decision prejudice their future access to services;
- Women have the right to confidentiality and are informed of situations where that confidentiality may be limited e.g. in relation to child protection issues;
- Services will work co-operatively, collaboratively and in a co-ordinated way to ensure the best possible services are delivered to women and children experiencing domestic violence;
- Women experiencing domestic violence are provided with appropriate advocacy;
- A culture of intolerance about domestic violence is promoted amongst communities and individuals;
- Women receive quality services from appropriately skilled workers;
- Services are accessible to all women and children who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence.



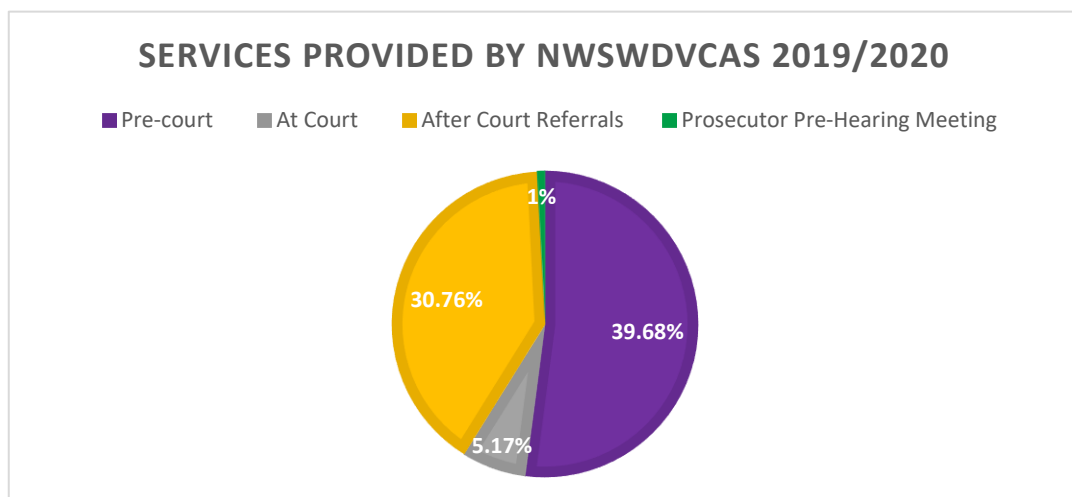


## Our Services

NWSWDVCAS provide women experiencing domestic and family violence with:

- **Threat assessment and safety planning** – The Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT) is a standard means that we use when assessing the level of threat to people experiencing domestic and family violence. The use of the DVSAT allows us to offer clients appropriate and tailored support, prioritise clients at greater risk of harm and target action to prevent violence from escalating. A person may be assessed as either 'at threat' or 'at serious threat' due to domestic and family violence through completion of the DVSAT. We seek to address clients' immediate safety needs and we offer clients safety planning where possible.
- **Case coordination** – We offer warm referrals to local services for women's key needs (e.g. housing, counselling, legal advice). We arrange and follow up on the delivery of services and supports to women and their children.
- **Information** – We provide legal information which involves describing legal procedures or processes and can include providing basic information about: making an application for an AVO; making a statement to the NSW Police Force regarding an AVO and/or a criminal offence; court proceedings; the effectiveness of an AVO, including reporting of AVO breaches; the role of the NSW Police Force; the role of legal representatives, including individual legal practitioners, representatives from Legal Aid NSW including the Domestic Violence Duty Service (DVDS), Police Prosecutors and community legal centres; and domestic and family violence legislation.
- **Court advocacy** – We provide advocacy to women going through the court process in relation to domestic and family violence matters. In particular, we help women obtain legal protection through Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs), tailored to meet the client's individual needs. This may involve advocating on the client's behalf with other organisations.

**NWSWDVCAS can work with women before court proceedings, at court and after court.**





## Our Key Partners

NWSWDVCAS maintain strong and effective working relationships with key partners in order to gain specialist knowledge about the systems and services available to assist women and children experiencing domestic and family violence within the justice system. We use this knowledge in a respectful and collaborative way to assist women to negotiate these systems effectively. We work co-operatively and in collaboration with the following partners:

- NSW Police Force from Blacktown and Quakers Hill Police Area Commands, including the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers (DVLOs) and NSW Police Prosecutors
- NSW Local Courts, including Blacktown and Windsor Local Court staff
- Legal practitioners including solicitors on the Domestic Violence Duty Scheme (DVDS)

Non-government and government organisations such as:

### Our key partners include:

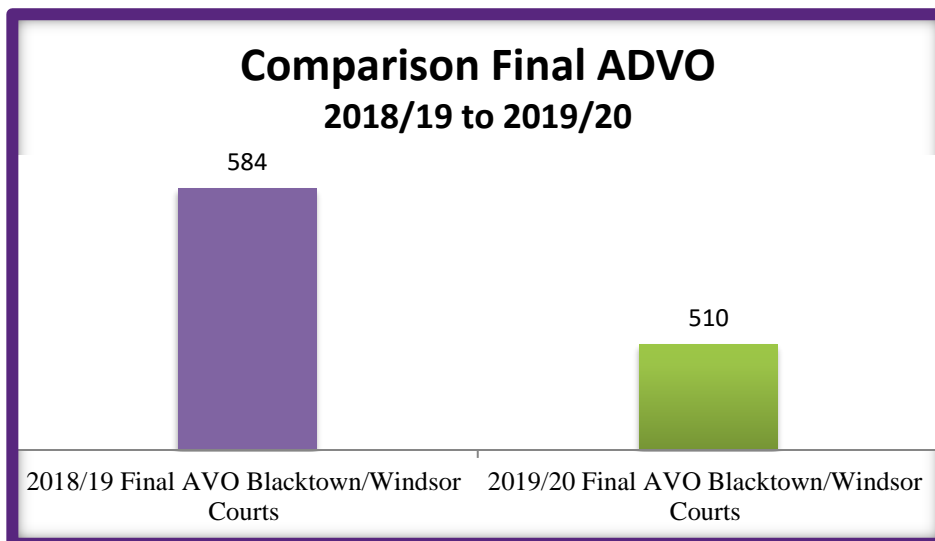
- 1800 RESPECT
- Aboriginal Client & Community Support Officer at Blacktown Local Court
- Act for Kids
- Alice's Support Services
- Anglicare
- Bernados
- Blacktown Women's & Girls' Health Centre
- Blacktown/Mount Druitt Sexual Assault Service (Yarra Place)
- Bonnie's Support Services
- Brighter Futures
- Community Health Centres – Doonside and Blacktown
- Community Resource Network
- Corrective Services NSW
- Department of Education
- Domestic Violence Line
- Domestic Violence Service Management
- Elder Abuse Helpline & Resource Unit
- FaCS Child Protection
- FaCS Housing
- Family Advocacy and Support Services
- Family Referral Service
- Hawkesbury District Health Service
- Housing NSW
- Integrated Violence & Prevention Response Service
- Intellectual Disability Rights Service
- Legal Aid NSW
- Link2Home
- Marrin Weejali Aboriginal Corporation
- Mission Australia
- Ngallu Wal Aboriginal Child & Family Centre – Doonside
- NSW Court Service Centre
- NSW Health
- NSW Police Force Child Well-being Unit
- Odyssey House NSW
- Relationships Australia
- Rosies Place
- Salvation Army
- Services Australia, Centrelink
- Staying Home Leaving Violence
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- Syd West Multicultural Service
- The Harman Foundation
- The Hills Community Aid
- The Sanctuary – The Hills Women's Shelter
- The Translating and Interpreting Service
- The WASH House
- The Women's Cottage
- Uniting
- Victims and Witnesses of Crime Court Support
- Victim Services
- Wentworth Community Housing – Nurreen
- WESNET
- West Connect Domestic Violence Services
- Western Sydney Community Legal Centre
- Warringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre
- Women's Legal Services NSW



## Local Courts Blacktown and Windsor

NWSWDVCAS has excellent working relationships with the Domestic Violence Liaison Officers (DVLO's) at Blacktown, Quakers Hill and Hawkesbury PACs; and Court staff at both Blacktown and Windsor Local Court. These positive partnerships have been developed and strengthened over the years, and have ensured the effective and efficient operation of the court process and positive outcomes for our clients.

**We would like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the DVLO's, Court staff and Sheriffs for their ongoing dedication and support.**



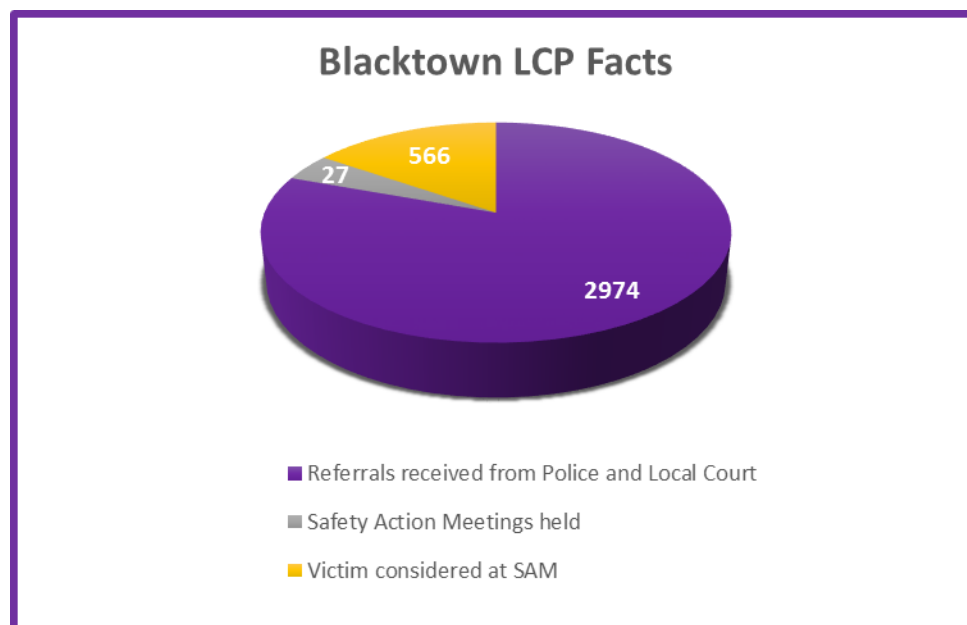
**WDVCAS Multicultural Workers meeting with NSW Attorney-General and the State's Domestic Violence Prevention Minister**



Upon receiving a referral for a woman, Blacktown LCP contact the woman to offer support; assess her level of threat using the Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT); address her immediate safety needs; provide case coordination, which includes warm referrals to local services for the victim's key needs (e.g. housing, counselling, legal advice); and place the woman on the agenda for the next SAM if she is assessed as 'at serious threat'. NWSWDVCAS also provide victim liaison and secretariat support for Blacktown SAMs, in partnership with NSW Police Force.

SAMs are regular meetings of local service providers that aim to prevent or lessen serious threats to the life, health or safety of domestic violence victims and their children through targeted information sharing. SAMs are chaired by a senior police officer and attended by key government and non-government service providers working with domestic violence victims and perpetrators in the local area. Members share information to develop tailored, time-specific Safety Action Plans to reduce threat. A Safety Action Plan is a list of actions that service providers can take to reduce the threat to a victim's safety.

The guiding idea behind SAMs is that, generally, no single service provider has a complete picture of a victim's situation, but all may have information or insights that are crucial to determining the victim's safety. By sharing information to build a comprehensive understanding of each victim's situation, SAMs enable service providers to take more effective action by putting together a comprehensive picture of each victim's situation and developing a Safety Action Plan based on this picture. Victims and perpetrators do not attend SAMs.





## Outreach Services at Blacktown and Windsor Local Court Outreach



Outreach services are provided on AVO List days - on Wednesdays at Blacktown Local Court and Thursdays at Windsor Local Court.

**Western Sydney Community Legal Centre (WSCLC)** – Each week a representative from WSCLC attends Blacktown Local Court to offer assistance to NWSWDVCAS clients in the safe room regarding the Victims Support Scheme

**Services Australia, Centrelink** – Once a month the Community Engagement Officer from Services Australia (Centrelink) attends Blacktown Court Safe room to assist NWSWDVCAS clients with:

- Enquiries regarding Centrelink, Medicare and child support
- Access to payments, programs and services provided by Services Australia
- Referrals and other support to assist clients and where appropriate, referrals to Services Australia's Social Workers

NWSWDVCAS have developed and maintained collaborative relationships with these key partners. These working relationships are important not only in ensuring NWSWDVCAS receive and are able to make effective client referrals, but also by ensuring essential strategies are developed in delivering and providing services for our clients.

## Seconded Workers

On AVO list days the NWSWDVCAS work with a roster of around 15 seconded workers drawn from local community agencies who provide assistance to women seeking protection at Blacktown and Windsor Local Court. All seconded workers receive WDV CAP training through Legal Aid NSW. We wish to acknowledge and thank the following services who provide Seconded Workers to assist clients on AVO list days:

- Staying Home Leaving Violence
- Women's Legal Service NSW
- Family & Community Services (FACS) Housing Services- Blacktown
- Family & Community Services (FACS) Housing Services- Mount Druitt
- Swinson Cottage Family Centre Inc
- Western Sydney Family Referral Service
- Hawkesbury District Health Service
- Wentworth Community Housing – Nurreen Women's Accommodation and Support Service
- The Women's Cottage



The Domestic Violence Duty Service (DVDS) provide legal practitioners to the NWSWDVCAS at Blacktown and Windsor Local Court on AVO lists days. DVDS practitioners provide legal advice and representation to our clients including: legal advice, assistance and referrals for individuals experiencing domestic and family violence (including protected persons in police-initiated AVOs). The areas of law which our clients have received advice from DVDS practitioners include: family law, care and protection, housing, social security, credit/debt, immigration, victims support and criminal law. DVDS practitioners also provide legal advice and representation for individuals who are seeking a private AVO (including cross applications); and legal advice and representation for defendants to applications for AVOs where the client is also a protected person in an associated AVO (cross application) or is considered the victim in a domestic and family violence matter.

This is an invaluable service for our clients and we would like to acknowledge the hard work and commitment by the legal practitioners and thank: Chamindri Veitch, Jacqueline Griffin, Nazira Sowaid, Eman Kassab, Joselyn Kishore, Ya Fei Xu, Women's Legal Services, Mona Neuhaus, Silvia Genovese, Uzma Abbas, Lang Goodsell, Uchenna Okereke-Fisher, Christopher Haseldine, Pinar Elve, and Marina Voncina.

### Police Prosecutors Clinic

#### **NWSWDVCAS is involved in the Police Prosecutors Clinic at Blacktown Court in partnership with the Blacktown/Quakers Hill Police Prosecutors.**

The NSW Police Force in conjunction with NWSWDVCAS jointly run the Domestic Violence Prosecutor Clinics to provide an opportunity to prepare clients for defended hearings. The Prosecutor Clinics are held once a month at Blacktown Local Court in the victim safe room. The Prosecutor Clinics assist clients to eliminate any concerns they may have about giving evidence at Court by educating them about the Court procedure, and providing them with information necessary to prepare them for giving evidence at Court at the hearing of their Court matter held at either Blacktown or Windsor Local Court. NWSWDVCAS would like to thank the Blacktown and Quakers Hill Police Prosecutors for their dedication; and we would like to praise NSW Police Prosecutor, William Jarboue for his endless commitment and support in assisting clients to have an enhanced understanding of the Court process and giving evidence.



## Community Development Engagement

NWSWDVCAS is involved in community education to raise awareness of the issues involved in domestic violence and its impacts on individuals and the wider community.

NWSWDVCAS has attended the following community and interagency events during this financial year

- **Outer West Domestic Violence Network (OWDVN)**
- **Hawkesbury Action Network Against Domestic Violence (HANADV)**
- **Police Prosecutor Meetings (Blacktown)**
- **Riverstone Koori Interagency**
- **Blacktown Combined Interagency – Multiculturalism and Social Cohesion – Blacktown Council**
- **Blacktown Domestic Violence Interagency Forum (Chaired by Coordinator/Assistant Coordinator NWSWDVCAS)**

### Events Attended:

- Western Sydney Forums – Boosting understanding, enhancing communication, supporting change: Cultural Diversity and Substance use issues. – Mt Druitt Hub.
- Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child and Family Centre - Sorry Day and the anniversary of the referendum Event – High Tea
- Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program Forum
- Strategic Planning – Lily's Function Centre Seven Hills
- WDVCAAP Coordinators/Assistant Coordinators Day – Legal Aid
- Blacktown One Stop Shop
- Blacktown NAIDOC Event – Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre
- Blacktown Court NAIDOC Lunch
- Blacktown Showground NAIDOC Event
- WDVCAAS NSW Inc. Forum
- Strategic Planning – Lily's Function Centre Seven Hills
- Tender Information Session – Teachers Federation
- WDVCAAS Inc. Information session - Tender
- WDVCAAP Coordinators/Assistant Coordinators Day – Legal Aid
- Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre AGM
- Merana Aboriginal Community Association for the Hawkesbury - AGM Health & Wellbeing Forum SydWest Multicultural Services
- White Ribbon Distribution – Stanhope Gardens Mall – Quakers Hill Police
- WDVCAAS service provision for the Aboriginal community in Western Sydney
- Safer Pathway Referral Expansion Working Group (REWG) pilot Review
- Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child and Family Centre – Meeting with Aboriginal Specialist Workers from NWSWDVCAS, WSDVCAS and PWDVCAS.



**Orange Ribbon Card**  
**16 Days of Activism, November 2019**



NWSWDVCAS maintain effective working relationships with relevant local services that can support women and children affected by domestic and family violence. We remain up to date and develop effective relationships with local services by attending local interagency meetings and other networking opportunities.

NWSWDVCAS is involved in community education to raise awareness of the issues involved in domestic violence and its impacts on individuals and the wider community. NWSWDVCAS have participated in the following meetings, networks and forums during this financial year:

- Blacktown Domestic Violence Forum (BDVF) - chaired by NWSWDVCAS
- Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre AGM
- Outer West Domestic Violence Network (OWDVN)
- Hawkesbury Action Network Against Domestic Violence (HANADV)
- Police Prosecutor Clinics – Blacktown Local Court
- Koori Interagency - Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre
- NAIDOC Event – Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre
- NAIDOC Event – Emerton
- Blacktown LGA Multicultural Interagency (BMI) - chaired by Syd West Multicultural Services
- BMI Access to Services Working Group - chaired by Syd West Multicultural Services
- BMI Health Working Group - chaired by Multicultural Health Service, Blacktown/ Mt DrUITT Health, Western Sydney Local Health District
- African community leaders and elders meeting: NWSWDVCAS Multicultural Specialist Worker was invited to be a guest speaker/present on the subject of Domestic Violence and COVID-19
- Meeting with Australian Red Cross – organised by Women's Safety NSW
- Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program Forum
- WDV CAS Coordinators/ Assistant Coordinators Meeting – at Legal Aid NSW
- WDV CAS Online Forum's - organised by Women's Safety NSW



*WDV CAS Aboriginal Specialist Workers –  
Delegation to Parliament House*





WDVCAS boundaries were realigned with NSW Police Force boundaries from 1 July 2020. Due to two WDVCAS amalgamations, there are now 27 WDVCASs across the state, compared to 29 WDVCASs prior to 30 June 2020. This meant that from 1 July 2020, NWSWDVCAS covers three Police Area Commands (PACs) - Blacktown, Quakers Hill and Mt Druiitt.

In doing so, NWSWDVCAS provides support to women going through the court process in relation to domestic and family violence matters at Blacktown and Mt Druiitt Local Court. NWSWDVCAS receive referrals for women experiencing domestic and family violence in the Blacktown, Quakers Hill and Mt Druiitt Police Area Commands (PACs) from: NSW Police Force and Local Courts; other service providers, such as health services; and victims themselves.

The boundary realignment has led to a more streamlined WDVCAS service delivery and has ensured women experiencing domestic and family violence do not have to engage with multiple WDVCASs unnecessarily. NWSWDVCAS look forward to continuing to foster and strengthen existing and emerging working relationships with key partners and local services in the Blacktown, Quakers Hill and Mt Druiitt areas.



**Mt Druiitt Local Court House**



**Blacktown Local Court House**

**Windsor Local Court House**



# Achieving | NSW Health Priorities

During the financial year we worked in partnership with peer agencies and funders to deliver specialist services in alignment with NSW Health priorities. We also delivered a range of presentations and activities on priority health and wellbeing topics.

## NSW Health Priority: Violence

Our trauma-informed case management and generalist counselling services worked primarily with local women whose health, wellbeing and safety was being negatively affected by issues associated with domestic and family violence. Women were provided with support and practical assistance to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and their children, and linked as relevant to our wellbeing activities and local services.

## NSW Health Priority: Lifestyle-related chronic disease

During the year the Centre worked with a Bilingual Community Educator from the Western Sydney Local Health District to run a popular Diabetes group for women from CALD communities.

Our registered women's health nurse and naturopath/nutritionist worked to support women with lifestyle related chronic disease, including issues associated with obesity.

Our exercise and movement groups, such as yoga, have also given women and girls the opportunity to address chronic illness through exercise, as well as become linked with other services offered by the Centre's multidisciplinary team.

*I am Very happy and appreciative with the well organised Oz Harvest. The staff who pack, sort and distribute the food are always courteous and giving of their time.*

*Anna*



***Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre: Republic of Vanuatu, Cultural Exchange Afternoon, August 2019***



## NSW Health Priority: Nutrition and physical activity / healthy weight

This year the Centre has worked with qualified local fitness trainers to introduce two exercises classes during which clients can obtain personalised attention.

These classes are suitable for women of all ages and levels of fitness and ability, whether they have undertaken an exercise program previously or not. Our registered women's health nurse and naturopath have also instituted a series of free health talks, which include diet, and nutrition related topics, including healthy weight.

Through our new partnership with Oz Harvest, the Centre has also been able to provide clients with access to fresh fruit and vegetables on a weekly basis, assisting between 20 to 30 families each week with food support.

## NSW Health Priority: Reproductive and sexual health

The Centre works with Family Planning NSW to run two clinics every Wednesday where women and girls can attend for a full range of reproductive health care, including pap tests, breast checks, hormonal treatment, menopause care, contraceptive advice and prescription.

This year the Centre worked with WentWest (Medicare Local) and Pap Text to run a very successful "Paps for Pashminas" promotion, during which women who had a pap test at one of the regular Family Planning NSW Clinics.

## NSW Health Priority: Mental health and social wellbeing

Our generalist and specialist domestic violence counselling services worked collaboratively with caseworkers and other members of the interdisciplinary team within a biopsychosocial framework to support women, girls and children with experiences of domestic and family violence including childhood trauma, to heal and recover from loss, grief and interrelation trauma.

As part of our ongoing health promotion and early intervention groups program, members of the Centre's interdisciplinary team also developed groups, which focussed on using mindfulness as a tool for dealing with anxiety and for developing healthy and empowering behaviours.



*Domestic Violence Stall, Westpoint Blacktown, November 2019*

*"I am very happy and appreciative with the well organised Oz Harvest. The staff who pack, sort and distribute the food are always courteous and giving of their time."*

**\*Anna**





## NSW Health Priority: Screening

Weekly women's health clinics were provided by our contracted clinicians, Family Planning NSW, to provide pap tests, breast screenings and checks for sexually transmitted diseases. With cervical cancer an issue for local women at a higher level than in other regions, our registered women's health nurse worked with WentWest (Medicare Local) and Pap Text to develop the popular Paps for Pashminas program, which offered incentives for women having a pap test at one of the Centre's Family Planning clinics.



## NSW Health Priority: Tobacco, drugs and alcohol

Among our range of services, the Centre's Art Therapy program has long been an integral part of our communities informed and responsive group program. This year, Art Therapists, including graduate placement students, have worked with women and young people to use creative expression as a therapeutic tool for developing safe and healthy emotional expression.

Art therapy has proven a popular and useful part of groups providing support and health promotion for women and girls in the Blacktown LGA. This year we received a small grant from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) to develop and deliver a program called Blacktown Local Drug Action Team, which can prevent or minimise harm from alcohol and other drugs. The program focuses on young culturally and linguistically diverse women and girls who may be negatively impacted by substance abuse, particularly ice (crystal methamphetamines). The program will use a combination of art therapy and narrative therapy to decrease the risk of developing addictive behaviours.

*Salvation Army Money Care Group  
November 2019*

*Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre  
Open Day, November 2019  
Jenna, Jordan and Kylie*



*Jenna, Maria, Shristi, Sharon and Jane at  
NRMA's Hi5 for Blacktown Fundraiser  
November 2019*





During the financial year the Centre has worked in partnership with peer agencies, local police and community services and funders to deliver specialist services in alignment with priorities identified within our community, including domestic violence.

## Community Priority: Promoting empowerment and resilience in girls and children

Working with other local agencies including Blacktown City Council Youth Library Services, the Centre was involved in an art exhibition for girls at the Library from the Mitchel High School. Successfully engaging the community in an art as therapy exhibition of their artworks.

Staff members and placement students have received in-service training from agencies such as the NSW Department of Community Services, the Family Referral Service and ACT for Kids to enable the development of solid referral pathways.

A multidisciplinary team from the Centre developed two programs for high school age girls which focussed in age appropriate ways on building healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health issues, self-empowerment, protective behaviours, personal growth and development and the healthy expression of feelings. Girls attended these popular programs from a range of ages and cultural backgrounds.

Graduate placement students worked with members of our multi-disciplinary team to offer groups utilising creative expression therapy to

students at primary and secondary school level, as well as younger post-school girls.

The Centre also offered a no appointment needed approach to encouraging students to visit the women's health clinics on Wednesdays.

The Centre hosts an Early Childhood Clinic every Monday, with nurses from the NSW Health, Doonside Community Health Centre providing professional assessment and referral for children 0 – 5 years. The Australian Breastfeeding Association Blacktown group also meets at the Centre up to eight times per year, utilising the Children's Cottage and play area for their meetings.

## Community Priority: Emotional wellbeing

Our generalist counsellors worked with women and girls to identify addictive behaviours and associated issues such as anxiety, providing support and appropriate linking with specialist counsellors and agencies, after a thorough initial casework assessment. A counselling team member worked with ACAP post-graduate placement students to develop a group program supporting women with anxiety issues through acceptance based mindfulness techniques. Clients with addictive behaviours and associated issues were also able to receive support from our group program which offered relaxation, stress management and mindfulness as core elements.





# Students and Volunteers at the Centre

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health centre acknowledges the commitment and dedication shown by our students and volunteers. We really appreciate their support and assistance during their time at the centre.

Thank you so much for all your hard work and help!

## THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

- \* Senayt Atnafe
- \* Sussannah Lee
- \* Clasina Nel
- \* Lorraine Robertson
- \* My Lanh Tran



*Jenna and Yunn  
Oz Harvest/Food Bank*

## THANK YOU STUDENTS

### Counselling:

- \* Ann Coffey
- \* Maria Eisho
- \* Sussannah Lee
- \* Classina Nel
- \* Liz Prudom
- \* Jacklyn Skofic

### Social Work

- \* Rachel Yu
- \* Emma Sutherland

### Community Services:

- \* Caitlin Lambourne
- \* Karina Duran

### Art Therapy:

- \* Susan Baxter
- \* Vashti Taverner

### Institutions:

- \* Australian College of Applied Psychology
- \* Open Training Education Network
- \* TAFE Western Sydney Institute
- \* Western Sydney University
- \* University of Sydney



*Costco Marsden Park  
Donation to Family*





## Art Therapist Report – Susan Baxter



Blacktown Local Drug Action Team held an International Women’s Day art exhibition on March 8 2020. It was hosted by Blacktown Women’s and Girls Health Centre (BWGHC) and the invitation was extended to all local community members.

“The exhibition and International Women’s Day event was a fantastic opportunity for our community to learn more about the work we have undertaken to support local women and girls,” said Jhan Leach, LDAT spokesperson and Executive Officer at the Blacktown Women’s and Girl’s Health Centre.

The exhibition showcased artworks created by women and girls attending Blacktown LDAT’s art therapy workshops. Artists included local students, Wolkara Elders and women from African Women’s Health and Support Organisation.

“There was lots of laughter, chatting, women mingling and enjoying the day,” said Sylvia Tiet, Senior Community Development Officer for the LDAT program.

Entertainment at the event included a drumming band from a local high school, a student taking the stage to present her art and share what empowers her as a young woman, and a morning tea with freshly made pizzas.



*Blacktown Local Drug Action Team*



*Art Exhibition & Morning Tea, March 2020*





## Massage Therapist Report – Kylie Tarasenko



I have been a Massage Therapist for seven years and I started working at Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre in June 2019.

In February 2020, I was given the opportunity to run a living mindfully group for approximately 25 women. The group ran consecutively over three weeks – the women learnt how to perform reflexology on themselves, self-massaging techniques, and enjoyed a very relaxing foot spa. This group was so popular that we were going to make it an ongoing group each term, but unfortunately COVID-19 put everything on hold.

Due to government COVID-19 restrictions we had to cancel our hands-on massage therapy, but we were fortunate enough to be able to utilise our massage chair. This helped our clients to still be able to access some form of message therapy to enable them to deal with ongoing stresses, as well as those associated with the current pandemic.

We are currently offering hands-on massage, whilst still maintaining COVID-19 restrictions. These measures include me wearing a gown, gloves, masks and goggles, and requiring clients to have their temperatures checked and wear a face mask during their massage. After massaging each client, the room and equipment are cleaned and sanitised. It has been a pleasure to be able to provide this much needed services to our clients.

## Naturopath and Nutritionist Report – Katrina



Naturopathy is a holistic form of care, which takes into account the various aspects of women's lives, which impact on their health and wellbeing.

We focus on preventative health care and education, management and chronic diseases and nutritional advice and support. Often part of their treatment plan is to engage them with support services and appropriate resources specific to their needs. Suggested dietary and lifestyle changes are made in a way this is mindful of cultural practices, religion and the family/social situation. Women often report feeling comfortable and safe in the environment and many engage with other services such as counselling or attend groups and workshops.

*"I have been a client of BWGHC for many, many moons. Ten years ago, I was diagnosed with a neurological movement disorder. This causes me intense pain due to muscle contraction, tremors, poor posture, and other difficult dynamics including feeling embarrassment from people's reactions at times. The regular massage received through Blacktown Women's and Girl's Health Centre is beneficial for helping me stay connected to my body, relaxes the other muscles that overcompensate for the condition and serves as a buffer to depression. Kylie is an awesome massage therapist, I go home feeling joy from the relief in my body. Kylie is considerate in pressure and thorough in her chat at the beginning to ensure my needs are met. Kylie's easy going and caring nature along with Sharon and Adele makes it a peaceful experience to visit the service. Many would agree, this essential and uniquely reduced rate service is appreciated. If I could be massaged every week at the clinic I would be in heaven."*

**\*Heidi**



# Thank you to all of our Sponsors



Certificates of appreciation were presented by Mariam Maroud, Chairperson, Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre to our sponsors with great thanks.



*Sylvia Tiet, Alcohol and Drug Foundation*



*Rod Cullen, Lander Toyota Blacktown*



*Jrisi – Belly Dance Presenter*



*Matt Smith, Costco Marsden Park*



*Commonwealth Bank Westpoint Blacktown*

## Thank you to all of our Sponsors



*Fox Valley Seventh Day Adventist Church*



*Storage King Blacktown*

## Thank you to all of our Volunteers

A big thank you to all of our volunteers, we don't know what we would do without, the time you give to Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre is very much appreciated.



*My Lanh, Oz Harvest Volunteer*



*Lorraine, Walking Group Volunteer*





## Program Officer's Report



What an eventful year it has been for everyone here at BWGHC. In July we ran an information session on how you can eat healthy while on a budget. **Eat Well – Spend Less** taught the women money saving tips to plan nutritious meal and snacks for the family. In August we had the pleasure of hosting a cultural exchange afternoon with visitors from the Republic of Vanuatu. The afternoon involved learning traditional Vanuatu weaving, learning about the cultural traditions and enjoying their cultural dances. **Jean Haile's Women's Health Week, Strong, Bold and Courageous Women** in September, focussed on self-care for women's mental health. It combined Art Therapy and self-care for the mind, body and soul. Our **Pink Ribbon** morning tea was a big success, we raised money to help fund lifesaving research, prevention programs and support services for those who are affected by breast cancer. We had a special presentation by **Breast Screen NSW and The Cancer Council**, with prizes and giveaways, light lunch and entertainment.

The weather was spectacular for our **Open Day** at the end of November, with **Mr Stephen Bali**, the Member for Blacktown and **Ms Jodi McKay**, Leader of the Opposition and our sponsors, **Mr Rod Cullen**, Lander Toyota Blacktown, **Mr Mark Ravlich**, Storage King Blacktown and **Ms Sylvia Tiet**, Australian Drug Foundation where in attendance and received Certificates of Appreciation were, **Rod Cullen** from Lander Toyota, **Matt Smith**, Manager, Costco Marsden Park, minister, Fox Valley Seventh Day Adventist Church, Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Westpoint Blacktown. The wonderful ladies who attend our belly dance class on a Monday gave us a beautiful demonstration on what they have learned throughout the term, and the costumes they wore were amazing, a few of our staff members enjoyed joining in.

In December we said farewell to Jane Attard-Taylor, our Program Coordinator, her dedication and hard work at BWGHC was very much appreciated by staff and clients alike, we wish her well in her new role and all her future endeavours.

In February 2020 the **Living Mindfully Self Care Group**, ran over 3 consecutive weeks, and was presented by our Massage Therapist Kylie and our Naturopath Katrina. The women were encouraged to slow down, nourish their bodies and take time out for themselves to reconnect. The mornings were spent teaching the women relaxation, self-love and self-care and empowerment. They learnt to make some bath salts for a relaxing foot spa, self-reflexology techniques, mindfulness and other ways in which they could reconnect with themselves. This group proved to be very popular and we're planning on running it each term after Covid-19.

**Discover your Brave, Art Therapy Group** sponsored by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Local Drug Action Team, focussed on exploring creativity through the use of painting, drawing and collage, while also speaking and learning about the effects of Alcohol and Other Drugs on our bodies and how they also affect our relationships with our family and friends. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March we held an Art Exhibition displaying the work the women created over the 4 weeks.

Mid March, everything changed due to Covid-19 Pandemic and we followed the Health NSW and Western Sydney Local Health District guidelines. We have now adapted to our new normal, unfortunately due to changes how we provided groups, our groups are currently on hold. We look forward to stage 3 of reopening groups.

Overall, it's been an eventful year for Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre, the clients and myself. I have enjoyed all the highlights and challenges and appreciated all the positive feedback from clients attending the groups and events. I am looking forward to next 12 months and planning programs for our clients at Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre.

Sharon Labbett

# We would like to thank our following key partners:



- MOU with **Women's Health NSW** to manage the Women's Health Database.
- MOU with **the Western Women's Health Consortium** including sister centres **Penrith Women's Health Centre**, **Bathurst Women's Health Centre**, **Blue Mountains Women's Health and Resource Centre**, **Cumberland Women's Health Centre** and **Liverpool Women's Health Centre**.
- MOU with **Family Planning NSW** to provide Doctor and Nurses clinics in- centre.
- MOU with **Women's Legal Services NSW** who provide a Legal clinic for women and girls', focusing on family court matters specifically including domestic family and intimate partner violence.
- Service Agreement with the **Indigenous Women's Legal program** to provide an outreach worker to specifically service Indigenous women from the local area needing legal advice and referral.
- MOU with **Relationships Australia** who provide groups at our Centre for women who have or are experiencing Domestic Violence and other abuses.
- Service Agreement with the **Western Sydney Local Health District Early Childhood Nurses (Doonside Community Health Centre)** who provide an Early Childhood Clinic.
- Service Agreement with **Ros Leahy, Specialist Counsellor Victims of Crime funded by the Attorney General's Department** who works with victims accessing services at our Centre.
- Service Agreement with the **Australian Breastfeeding Association Blacktown Branch**, which meets at the Centre
- A relationship with the **National Share the Dignity Organisation** providing, a collection of donated sanitary and continence products for distribution to women and girls who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.



*Christmas Hampers 2019, Donated by Fox Valley, Seventh Day Adventist*

- Agreement with **Oz Harvest and FoodBank** to provide fresh fruit, vegetables and other items as they become available, for collection by our disadvantaged clients.
- A Service Agreement with **the African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO)** who meet at our Centre to hold regular health promotion forums for women.
- A relationship with **Nova Disability Employment** providing a transition to work traineeship at the Centre to provide employment to women and girls.



*Food Bank Collection June 2020*





# Connecting with Our Community



Community events provide a valuable opportunity for BWGHC to educate and raise public awareness of health issues, and advocate for women's interests in the community.

Participating in local community events also helps BWGHC gain insight into local issues, respond to local needs and develop and strengthen our interagency partnerships.

The following is a list of some of the community and interagency events that BWGHC participated in during this financial year:

- Blacktown NAIDOC week event
- Emerton NAIDOC Week
- Doonside NAIDOC Week (Ngallu Wal)
- Rosie's Place outreach
- Welcoming the Babies
- DVNSW Conference
- Blacktown Girls High School – Information Talk
- Wet N Wild – Free Charity Open Day
- OWDVN Conference
- NOVA Lunch
- Central West Women's Health Centre AGM (Bathurst)
- BWGHC + NWSDFCAS AGM
- Blacktown Homelessness Hub
- Community Resources Network: Advocacy (Blacktown)
- Mental Health First Aid for Suicide Prevention (Orange Grove)
- Refugee Week Event
- Community Safety Precinct Meeting with Blacktown Police
- TAFE Industry Event Morning Tea
- Fairfield Women's Health Centre Opening Day
- Inner Wheel – Donation presentation
- Aboriginal Community Service Expo
- International Women's Day with Sydwest
- International Women's Day Breakfast with Blacktown City Council
- Harmony Day (Blacktown)
- Commonwealth Bank – Donation presentation
- Parenting & Wellness Education Program
- Blacktown Girls High School Year 7
- Art Gallery - NOVA
- Women's Legal Service Lunch
- Young Labour Mental Health Forum
- Mini Tots Soccer Program
- Jean Hailes Women's Health Week
- Courageous Conversations



*Belly Dancers  
Open Day 2019*



*Inner Wheel  
Knitted Teddies Donation 2020*



# Our Donors and Sponsors

## 2019/2020 - Donations from Individuals and Organisations

### We are thankfully indebted to our Major Donors and Sponsors:

- Blacktown Police Local Area Command
- Blacktown RSL Club
- Blacktown Workers Club
- Commonwealth Bank
- Lander Toyota Blacktown
- Myer Blacktown
- Storage King Blacktown

### Grateful thanks to our generous donors, including those who have made private and anonymous donations of goods and services:

- Blacktown Boys' High School
- Blacktown Girls' High School
- Blacktown RSL Club
- Anna Breust
- Bunnings Blacktown Superstore
- Costco Marsden park
- Isbister family
- KIDS Blacktown City Council Child Care Centre
- Lalor Park Waratah Slimmers
- Alexandra Lawton
- Ros Leahy and Geoffrey Judd
- McPhersons Health and Beauty
- Mantra Chatswood
- Mardon Meats Kings Langley
- MTO Shahmaghsoudi
- Lynn Muir
- Outback Steakhouse Parklea
- Bianca Pomponio
- Posh Hair Kings Langley
- Jani and Paul Said
- Second Life Stationery
- Share The Dignity NSW/ACT
- SydWest Outreach Group
- Two Good Co

- Urban Fringe Kings Langley
- Universal Pictures International Australasia
- Zonta Club of Cumberland West

**... And many others who have given donations large and small to assist the clients of the Centre**

BWGHC would like to thank **the Blacktown RSL** and other clubs participating in the **Blacktown City ClubGRANTS** for awarding BWGHC with a 2019-20 ClubGRANT.

BWGHC would also like to thank our sister services **Richmond Women's Cottage** and the **WASH House** for their support Throughout the year.

These services have partnered with BWGHC to deliver important services and to engage in joint fundraising activities to benefit local women and girls.



**Matt Smith, Manager, Costco Marsden Park,  
Food Donation for the  
Open Day, November 2019**

# Funders and Other Partners



Thank you to all our partners and funders for your collaboration and support during the financial year 2018-2019

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre is a member of Women's Health NSW. We are primarily funded by NSW Ministry of Health and Legal Aid NSW.



# Acknowledging Our Community



**BWGHC loves to work co-operatively with individuals, other organisations and agencies to improve the services we offer our clients. Together, we make a community of support! With thanks:**

- ACT For Kids
- Acute Care Mental Health Team (Blacktown Hospital)
- Aftercare Mental Health Services
- Alice's Cottages
- Blacktown Area Community Centres
- Blacktown City Council
- Blacktown Boys' High School
- Blacktown Girls' High School
- Blacktown Hospital Midwifery Department
- Blacktown Hospital Women's Health Clinics
- Blacktown Hospital Social Work Department
- Blacktown Lesbian Information and Support Service (BLISS)
- Blacktown North Public School
- Blacktown Police LAC and DVLOs
- Blacktown Pride In Diversity Network
- Bridges Alcohol and Drug Counselling Service
- Brighter Futures Blacktown/Baulkham Hills
- CALD Women's Health Groups (NSW Department of Health)
- CatholicCare Social Services
- Charmian Clift Cottages
- Community Resource Network (CRN) Inc
- Domestic Violence Services NSW (women's refuges)
- Doonside Community Health team
- Family Planning NSW
- Family Referral Service
- Harman Foundation
- Hawkesbury Race Club - Say No to Violence Against Women Race Day Event
- Headspace
- Hon John Robertson MP
- Hon Michelle Rowland MP
- Immigrant Women's Speakout
- Indigenous Women's Legal Program
- Junaya Family Development Services
- Karabi Youth Services
- Lalor Park Public School
- LGBTI Health Alliance
- Mackillop Family Services
- Marist Youth Services
- Mission Australia
- Mr Steven Bali the Mayor of Blacktown
- Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (NSW Health)
- Ngallu Wal Aboriginal Child & Family Centre
- Nova Employment
- NSW Department of FACS
- NSW Department of Health
- NSW Department of Juvenile Justice
- NSW Refugee Health
- Outer Western Domestic Violence Network
- PACS Blacktown Adolescent and Family Counselling
- Pecky's Disability Services (Blacktown)
- Police Citizens Youth Clubs
- Quakers Hill Police LAC and DVLOs
- Richmond Partners In Recovery
- Riverstone Neighbourhood Centre
- Rosie's Place (women's refuge)
- Share The Dignity (NSW/ACT)
- STARTTS Refugee Services
- Staying Home Leaving Violence (the WASH House)
- SydWest Multicultural Services
- The Australian College of Applied Psychology
- The Coreen School Blacktown
- The University of Sydney
- The Western Sydney University
- Transcultural Mental Health team
- Tri-Community Exchange
- Wesley Mission
- West Connect Domestic Violence Services (women's refuges)
- White Ribbon Australia
- Women's Assistance and Self Help (WASH) House
- Women's Legal Services NSW
- Women Partners of Bisexual Men Service
- Zonta Club of Cumberland West



# Blacktown Women and Girls Health Inc

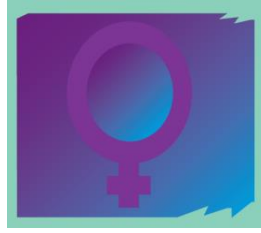


ABN 98 059 698 895

## Financial Statements - For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

### Detailed Profit or Loss Statement

	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>Income</b>		
Sale of goods	(4)	262
Fees	28,176	60,983
Interest Income	1,859	6,137
Grants	1,666,783	1,519,668
Donations	20,085	26,225
Sundry income	26,430	9,907
Other revenue	102,646	122,382
	<b>1,845,975</b>	<b>1,745,564</b>
<b>Less: Direct expenses</b>		
Audit fees	5,900	7,361
Advertising	34	5,409
Staff	7,299	-
Assessment rates & municipal charges	-	1,484
Bank charges	1,024	1,023
Cleaning	3,896	6,258
Legal , governance and accounting	45,908	5,927
Project management fees	38,082	46,698
Depreciation	7,110	23,019
Electricity & water	6,896	4,895
Equipment <\$5,000	34,915	10,331
Rent & hire	32,445	34,650
Insurance	-	2,683
Leave pay	102,551	140,635
Medical expenses	2,535	405
Motor vehicle expenses	7,886	6,874
Office equipment	-	19,292
Other employee costs	3,322	-
Other expenses	22,442	33,476
Repair and maintenance	10,521	33,727
Salaries	1,225,328	1,165,970
Security	-	3,428
Staff training	9,039	21,479
Subscription	13,276	5,996
Sundry expenses	-	501
Superannuation contribution	120,692	119,016
Telephone and fax	18,973	-
Workers compensation	14,740	21,940
Travel-local	1,433	9,324
Training	14,690	14
Monies carried forward	88,075	19,507
	<b>1,839,01</b>	<b>1,751,32</b>
<b>Net surplus/ (loss)</b>	<b>6,963</b>	<b>(5,758)</b>



## **Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. Annual Report for the 2019/20 Financial Year**

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. (BWGHC) is a Public Benevolent Institution with DGR Status. Donations of \$2 and above are tax deductible

BWGHC is funded by NSW Health, administered by Western Sydney Local Health District and Legal Aid NSW.

Our Peak Body is Women's Health NSW.

BWGHC is accredited at Certificate Level of the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES)

We are accountable to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) and NSW Fair Trading. The Centre holds NSW Authority to fundraise: CFN/23808.

### **Contact Us:**

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E: [info@womensandgirls.org.au](mailto:info@womensandgirls.org.au)

W: [www.womensandgirls.org.au](http://www.womensandgirls.org.au)

 BWGHC is on Facebook

© Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre

## **NOTES**

<sup>1&3</sup>Keynan, M., Hossain, M., & Hughes, R. 2013, *Blacktown LGA Community Health Needs Assessment Project Report*, Western Sydney Local Health District, Sydney.

<sup>2</sup>.id, the population experts, 2011, 'Community Profile: Blacktown City', compiled from 2006 and 2011 Census Data, accessed via:

\*Names changed to protect client privacy. Client comments from BWGHC Client Surveys 2019/20 FY.