



Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc.

Annual Report
2024/2025

Accredited at
Certificate Level of
the Australian Service
Excellence Standards



Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc
North West Sydney Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service
Nepean Blue Mountains 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 2024/2025 compiled by Kylie Tarasenko & Emma Wiecek

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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.



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 and Hills Shire LGA. Our peak body is Women's Health NSW, and we are part of a network of 20 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 health 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 diversity¹.

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 provision³.

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 Sydney², further increasing the demand for services.

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





Chairperson's Report | Dr Olayide Ogunsiji

2024-2025 Chairperson's report: Associate Professor Olayide Ogunsiji.



It is my privilege to present the Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre (BWGHC), Northwest Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS) and Nepean Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NBMWDVCAS) Annual Report covering the 2024-2025 financial year, to our many members, friends and stakeholders.

Much more than the previous years, I am here to boldly say that 2024-2025 has been a very busy but productive year, serving an increasing number of women and girls. The array of programs and services provided by the BWGHC and the WDVCSs, the trust we have built in the community are very important evidence of our excellent performance. We continue to build on our 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 Blacktown Local Government Area.

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre (BWGHC) was successful in numerous grant submissions. The Centre received donations, nominations and government funding. Without these diverse range of financial supports we would not be able to do the work of providing the much-needed extended services to women and girls in our area. I encourage you to go through our extensive range of programs as provided in the following pages of this report.

We recognise and express our gratitude to our community partners. This includes but is not limited to the Western Sydney Local Health District, Outer Western Domestic Violence Network, Legal Aid NSW, Family Planning NSW and the Department of Communities and Justice. We applaud all the 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. You are all highly appreciated.

A very big thank you to all the women and girls that we serve and reach, through our various individual and group programs. We appreciate your ongoing trust in the high-quality service we provide.

On behalf of the Management Committee, I thank our Executive Officer, Ms Jhan Leach and her senior team at BWGHC, NWSWDVCAS and NBMWDVCAS. I appreciate you all for going the extra miles to achieve more for our clients while professionally executing our strategic and operational goals effectively and efficiently.

I acknowledge and express my gratitude to all our employees and volunteers for their hard work, dedication and loyalty. Their passion and commitment to exceeding the client's needs are crucial to our success.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the Management Committee for being there during this particularly difficult year. Your very high level of leadership is appreciated.

It is with pleasure that I present this report for BWGHC, NWSWDVCAS and NBMWDVCAS 2024-2025 financial year.

Yours Sincerely,

Associate Professor Olayide Ogunsiji



General Manager's Report | Andrea Karwal

This year has been one of strong commitment and meaningful impact across our organisation. As a women's service, our work remains complex and often confronting, yet it is carried out every day with compassion, professionalism, and unwavering dedication.

Our WDVCS teams continue to work tirelessly at the frontline, supporting women navigating domestic and family violence, court processes, and crisis situations. Their hard work ensures that women receive timely, trauma-informed, and culturally safe support at some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

We also acknowledge the vital support provided through WSLHD funding, which enables our staff to deliver targeted health services and programs that address the physical, emotional, and social wellbeing of the women we serve. In addition, new DCJ funding has allowed us to introduce specialist Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFS) workers. These roles strengthen our capacity to provide comprehensive services including domestic and family violence support, sexual violence services, assistance to access safe housing and accommodation, legal and court-based advocacy, and referrals to perpetrator interventions and other specialist supports for victim-survivors.

Our work has further benefited from generous small-program grants, including support from NSW Clubs for our Women's and Girls Emergency Fund, a Community Partnerships grant enabling enhanced program management, and funding from Women's Health NSW that has expanded our ability to deliver direct women's health programs. These contributions help ensure women in crisis can access immediate assistance, tailored programs, and pathways to longer-term stability.

Despite the pressures and complexity inherent in our sector, our teams have remained focused, resilient, and deeply committed to the communities we serve. Their efforts continue to create safety, dignity, and hope for women and families across our region.

Thank you to our staff, partners, funders, and supporters. Your belief in our mission ensures we can continue this essential work.



***Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre
Reception Entrance***



Staff and Personnel

BWGHC employs permanent and sessional and casual staff as required and also provides students with placement opportunities. BWGHC also receives invaluable assistance and support from our volunteers. All 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, Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program.
- Additional sources of funding are sought and provided via grant applications, community donations and strategic partnerships with other organisations.



Lander Toyota Proud Supporters



*Dr. Olayide Ogunsiji and Jhan Leach
2024 AGM*



Staff Christmas Party 2024

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. 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





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 West and Nepean Blue Mountains 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.

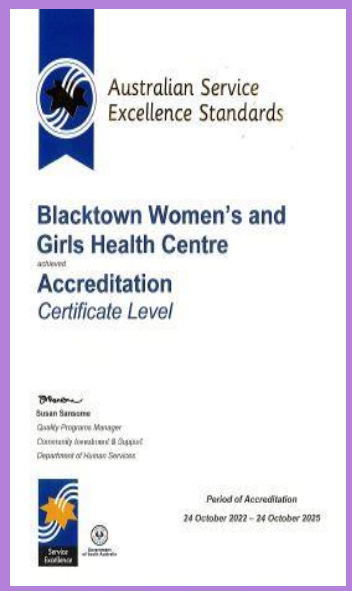
This year we have continued our work with Legal Aid NSW alongside North West and Nepean Blue Mountains Sydney Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service. We have a good working relationship with the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program at Legal Aid NSW. Achieving solid progress this year with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

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 Domestic Violence Women's, Girls' and Children's Emergency Fund** is able to respond to the growing needs of women, children and girls, fleeing domestic violence, sexual abuse, homelessness 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 girl 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.



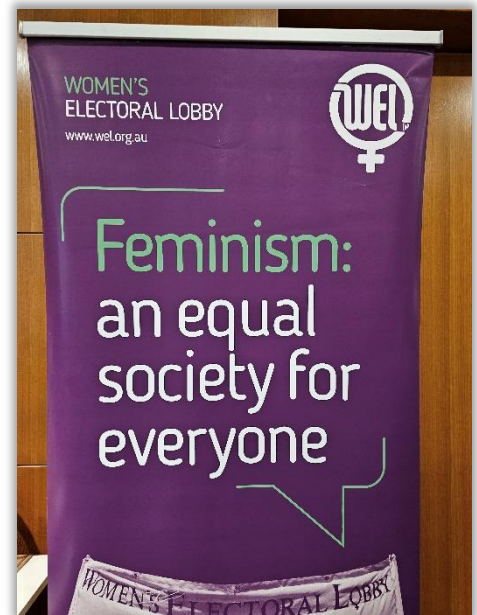
Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. provides affordable, accessible and multi-disciplinary services to girls and women across their lifespan, particularly focusing on vulnerable population groups.

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 West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS)
- **Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service:** Nepean Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NBMDVCAS)
- **Sexual Violence Hub** Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence services available for Communities of CALD and Disability.
- **Counselling** Domestic Violence, Sexual Abuse and General 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**



Women's Electoral Lobby – Feminism

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:

- **Family Planning NSW:** Sexual and Reproductive Health Doctor and Nurse Clinics.
- **North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS):** Domestic Violence Counselling.
- **Women's Legal Services NSW (WLSNSW) Solicitors & Western Sydney Community Legal Centre (WSCLC) Solicitors:** Legal Support.
- **Police Prosecutors Clinic:** (DV Clinics – Blacktown).
- **Blacktown Domestic Violence Forum:** Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre and NWSWDVCAS.
- **Indigenous Women's Legal Program (WLSNSW):** Indigenous Women's Legal Support.
- **African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO):** Regular outreach, meetings and information forums hosted by BWGHC.
- **WSLHD Multicultural Health:** Health programs for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women and Girls.
- **Australian Drug Foundation:** Blacktown Local Drug Action Team
- **Western Sydney Local Health District:** Health and wellbeing Programs
- **Department of Communities & Justice (DCJ):** Specialist domestic, family & sexual violence (DFS) support through casework and community education for women with disability and/or from CALD backgrounds.



Early Intervention and Trauma-Informed Therapeutic Groups

- Art Therapy - Doonside Technology High School
- Art Therapy - Evans High School
- Art Therapy with Gina
- Confidence Building and Self-Esteem
- Empower Her - Doonside Technical High School
- Gardening
- Massage & Meditation for Wellbeing
- Mindful Aromatherapy for the Home
- Mindful Meditation
- Mindfulness for the Holiday Season
- My Feelings Matter - Art as Therapy
- Scrap Journaling
- Sound Therapy
- Stress Less



My Feelings Matter: Art As Therapy 2025

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre has offered women and children, Creative Art Therapy groups, both at our Centre and in High Schools. Our Mindfulness Art Therapy 8-week group program and our new Empower Her – Girls' Art Therapy Group, focus on safety, they were delivered in two different Schools, Doonside High School and Blacktown Girls' High School and these wonderful programs were funded by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation and we'd like to thank them, as this enables our continuing work, with our Blacktown Local Drug Action Team.



AWHASO Group Belly Dance Session 2024

Physical Exercise Groups

- Belly Dancing
- Chair Yoga
- Dance, Stretch & Tone
- Self Defence
- Tai Chi
- Women's Walking Group
- Yoga



Health Education Groups

- Australia's Biggest Morning Tea
- AWHASO Group (FGMC)
- Beauty Therapy Tips
- Cancer Screening Information
- Centrelink Appointments
- Christmas Workshop
- Dress for Success
- Eggcellent Easter Workshop
- Family Planning - screening & education
- Food Labels Demystified
- Gut Health
- Health Education with Family Planning - National Women's Week
- Health Education with Family Planning - Parent Information



Christmas Workshop 2024



Springtime Gardening Workshop 2024

"The various sessions offered at the centre are good for the mind and body which is wonderful for me at this point of life".

***Community Member**

- International Women's Week - Mural Creation & Morning Tea
- Let's Find the Right Job for You
- Mediterranean Diet
- Mindful Aromatherapy for Natural Skin Care
- Natural Skincare for Summer
- OZ Harvest Nutrition Support Group
- Police Prosecutors Clinic
- Scams Workshop
- Services NSW
- Sleep Better
- Spring Time Gardening Workshop
- Storing Food Safely
- Super Snacks
- Support the Girls - Bra Gifting
- Vitamins and Minerals in Food



During the 2024-2025 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 outreach meetings by the African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO).
- We are members of an advisory committee that was led by SydWest Multicultural Services for the 'CALD Domestic Violence Prevention Project'. This project is aimed at reducing 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.
- Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre participated in Naidoc Week, delivering health information and service referrals to CALD communities.



African Women's Health and Support Organisation (AWHASO) Health Group 2025



Greetings from the DCJ team: Susanna and Trudy

The DCJ team actively engages with local high schools throughout the year to deliver educational sessions on healthy relationships to students from diverse cultural backgrounds. These sessions cover key topics such as the different forms of abuse, consent, red flags, Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs), and strategies for fostering respectful communication. The workshops aim to raise awareness, strengthen understanding, and help young women recognise their rights and responsibilities within relationships. Through this proactive outreach, the team provides culturally sensitive and accessible education that empowers girls from all backgrounds to identify unhealthy dynamics, set personal boundaries, and seek appropriate support safely and confidently.

In addition to school-based programs, the team also facilitates community workshops at the centre that provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for women from diverse cultural communities. These sessions promote connection, understanding, and personal growth by encouraging open dialogue and peer support. Participants are given opportunities to build confidence, enhance their sense of self-worth, and strengthen their overall wellbeing. The workshops also help to bridge cultural and language gaps, ensuring that every woman feels heard, valued, and supported in her journey toward safety and empowerment.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate our ongoing commitment to delivering accessible, inclusive, and culturally responsive services that foster safety, wellbeing, and empowerment across the Blacktown community. Through both outreach and centre-based programs, the team continues to make a meaningful difference by building awareness, promoting equality, and supporting individuals to lead safer, healthier lives.

Susanna Lee
Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence Counsellor

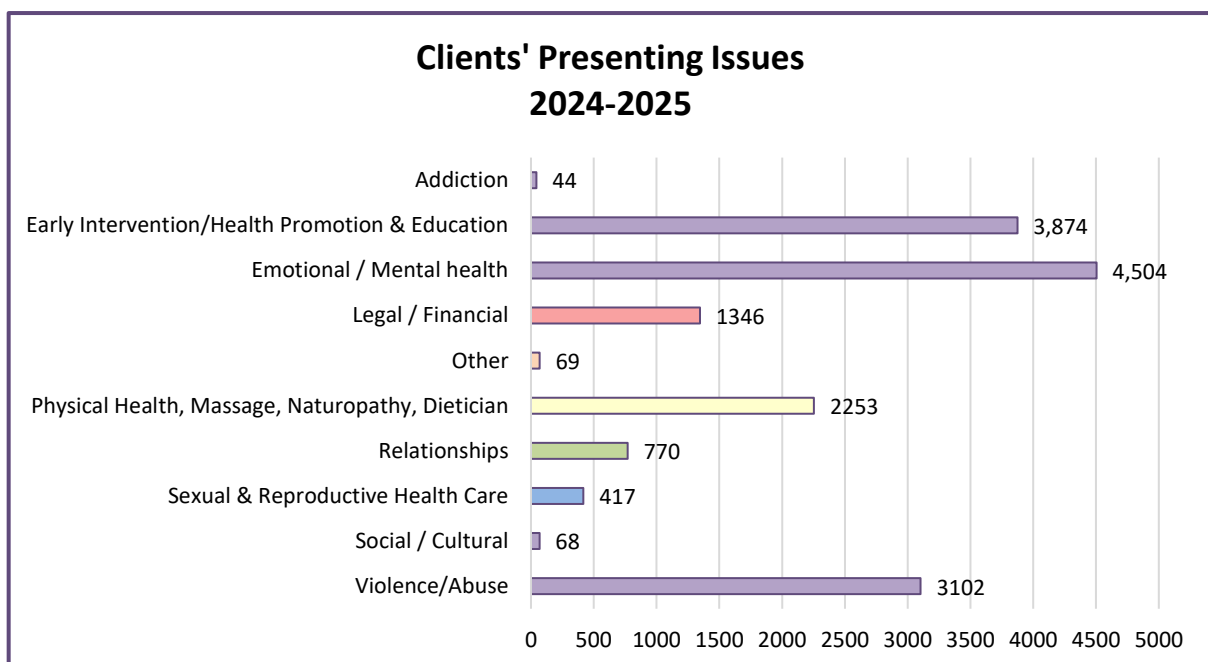
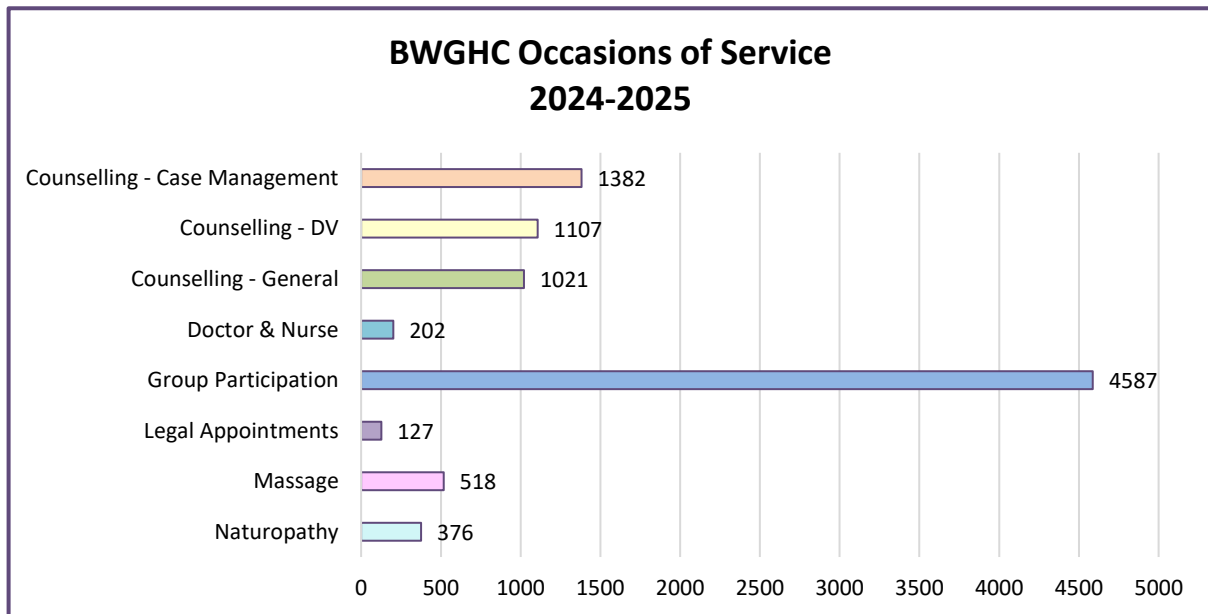


*Department of Communities & Justice (DCJ) Program
Susanna & Trudy*



During the financial year 2024-2025:

- We provided **3105** internal and external referrals and of those referrals **811** were for sexual & reproductive health.
- We also welcomed **178** new clients to our centre.



North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NWSWDVCAS)



About Us

The North West Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service is one of 27 services of the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program across NSW. Our service provides support for women experiencing domestic and family violence across the community. This support includes threat assessment, information, referrals, case co-ordination, case management, safety planning and Court advocacy at Blacktown and Mt Druitt Local Courts. NWSWDVCAS assist women to obtain effective legal protection from NSW Courts through the application of Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs). Support is provided before, during and after the Court process.

The Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program (WDVCAP) mission and aims guide NWSWDVCAS. We recognise the disproportionate and negative impact of domestic and family violence on women and provide a respectful service where women are treated with dignity, respect and sensitivity. Women can freely express their needs and make decisions in a supported and non-judgemental environment.

Our highly skilled WDVCS Workers provide a trauma informed model of service delivery and an integrated response to women assessed as 'threat' and 'serious threat' of injury or death due to domestic and family violence. NWSWDVCAS is funded by Legal Aid NSW

The NWSWDVCAS team consists of:

Acting Manager	Vanessa Almeida
Acting Assistant Manager	Sodalis Keo
Blacktown Safety Action Meeting Coordinator	Marian Asiegbu
Mt Druitt Safety Action Meeting Coordinator	Nicole Robinson
Case Management Worker/ Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Cynthia Ferrer
Case Management Worker/ Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Lauren Valdes
Hearing Support Worker/Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Moni Habib
Hearing Support Worker/Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Silvana Benditti
Hearing Support Worker/Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Ukay Mbabie
Hearing Support Worker/Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Chelsea Stables
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker (Aboriginal Focus)	Daniella Kennedy
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker (Multicultural Focus)	Belinda Ryes-Corral
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Angela Bautista
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Ann Kalo
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Danica Maladinovic
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Kristie Burnette
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Katherine Porter
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Nadia Sosa
Domestic & Family Violence Specialist Worker	Nazdana Shirifi
Blacktown Co-Location Worker	Sharon Notenboom
Cleaner and Administration Support	Kayla Anthony



Acknowledgement to Country

Nepean Blue Mountains Court Advocacy Service respectfully acknowledges the Dharug and Gundungurra Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we gather and conduct our work. We pay our deepest respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging, and recognise their enduring spiritual connection to Country and their continuing cultural, social, and historical ties to this land.

We honour their stewardship of Country and the valuable contributions they continue to make to our communities. Nepean Blue Mountains Court Advocacy Service remains committed to upholding respectful relationships, promoting understanding, and working collaboratively towards reconciliation and shared progress.

Our Service

The Nepean Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NBMWDVCAS) is one of twenty-seven Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS) operating across New South Wales. The Service is administered under the auspices of the Blacktown Women's and Girl's Health Centre, Blacktown.

NBMWDVCAS provides essential, evidence-informed support to women and their dependent children who are experiencing, or at risk of, domestic and family violence within the Nepean, Blue Mountains, and Hawkesbury regions. The Service delivers a comprehensive suite of interventions and supports, including:

- Domestic and family violence-specific threat and risk assessments.
- The provision of information, referrals, and coordinated case management.
- Individualised safety planning; and
- Specialist court advocacy services at the Penrith, Katoomba, and Windsor Local Courts.

NBMWDVCAS plays a critical role in facilitating timely and effective access to justice, safety, and protection for women and their children through Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) applications. The Service works collaboratively with key stakeholders, including NSW Police, Local Courts, government agencies, and community organisations, to ensure a coordinated, victim-centred response to domestic and family violence across the region.

NBMWDVCAS FIGURES AT A GLANCE:

Service Locations: Katoomba, Penrith, and Windsor Local Courts

Service Delivery: 12547 service events

Court Advocacy: 2700 service events

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients: 1449

Multicultural Clients: 692



Managers Report: Kim King

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the incredible work of the NBMWDVCAS team. Every day, they demonstrate extraordinary dedication to supporting women experiencing domestic and family violence. The work they do is not easy, it can be emotionally and mentally challenging, but their resilience, compassion, and commitment remain strong.

Their efforts make a real difference in the lives of the women and communities we serve, providing safety, guidance, and hope when it is needed most. It's inspiring to witness how each member of this team goes above and beyond, not just to meet the demands of the role, but to create an environment of care, understanding, and empowerment.

Thank you for their tireless work, their strength, and their unwavering dedication. The impact they make every day is immeasurable, and I am truly humble and proud to work alongside such an extraordinary team of women. Each day, our team focuses on delivering consistent, high-quality work that keeps and our clients supported. Below is an example of the work and feedback received.

Good News Story provided by Team member: *** Names have been changed ***

I met Tracey at Court a while ago, she was there for a drink driving charge, but I could see she looked quite vulnerable as she was in a relationship with a repeat DV offender.

I built a rapport with her over time when I saw her at court. She eventually ended up on the portal; another team member spent a lot of time assisting her as she was on the SAM multiple times. Both her and her mother Samantha were the victims of escalating abuse and violence from Tracey's short-term partner Luke.

With the encouragement and support from a team member, Tracey and Samantha made several statements to police in March this year and Luke was charged with a litany of serious DV offences and was bail refused. I have been supporting Tracey and Samantha throughout the court process, and they both attended the Hearing Clinic last month.

There were two hearings over the last two weeks, the first resulted in a not guilty verdict, and the second in a favourable plea deal and amended facts that was extensively negotiated.

I received this text from Tracey yesterday after court, as I sent her a text to let her know the outcome.

Response from Client:

*"Great news Team Member! 🍷 Thank you for letting me know the outcome of today 🙌
I ALSO wanted to thank you for your overall support in court this past week. YOU made all the difference in me having a positive experience throughout the process.
I appreciate that you are completely across all the details while always showing compassion. You're amazing & thank goodness we have you looking after us in Court!"*

Tracey

This good news story is a credit to this team member, but it also reflects the high standard of work from NBM Staff and their commitment to the women we assist.



The NBM team would like to thank all the services we work closely with, we appreciate their willingness to collaborate regarding shared clients.

As this will be my final report with Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the entire BWGHC team and the Management Committee.

It has been an absolute privilege to work alongside such a passionate, dedicated, and caring group of people. I am truly grateful for the trust, encouragement, and ongoing support that you have shown me throughout my time here. Your commitment to empowering women and girls in our community has been inspiring, and I'm so proud to have been part of this mission.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity and trusting me to manage and lead my team. You are all a group of talented individuals who consistently go above and beyond to make a difference every day. The collaboration, compassion, and strength within this organisation are what make BWGHC such a special place to work and be part of. xx

SERVICE PROVISION

The Nepean Blue Mountains Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NBMWDVCAS) is committed to supporting women, children, and young people who have experienced domestic and family violence.

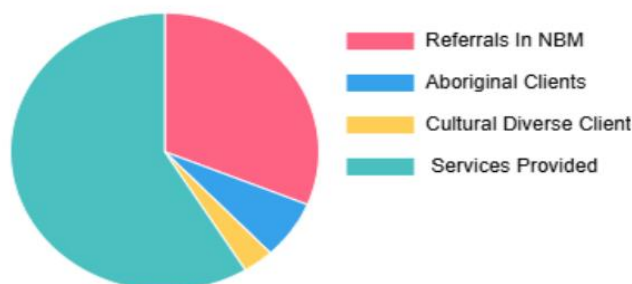
Operating across the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, and Nepean regions, our service provides advocacy, information, referrals, and practical support to help clients achieve safety, healing, and empowerment.

We recognise that experiences of violence and barriers to support are not the same for everyone. NBMWDVCAS is dedicated to delivering accessible, inclusive, and culturally responsive services, with regard for the needs of:

- Aboriginal women
- Women from multicultural communities
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) women
- Women living with disability
- Young women (under 25 years of age)
- Older women (over 65 years of age)
- Women who have been incorrectly identified as the person using violence in court proceedings



Through our work, NBMWDVCAS strives to ensure that all women – regardless of background, identity, or circumstance – have access to the safety, justice, and support they deserve.



Label	Value	Percentage
Referrals Into NBMWDVCAS	6665	31.2%
Aboriginal Clients Served	1449	6.8%
Culturally Diverse Clients Served	692	3.2%
Total Number of services provided	12547	58.8%

Nepean Blue Mountains Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (NBMWDVCAS) for women experiencing domestic and family violence is made up of the following:

1. Threat Assessment and Safety Planning

- Tool Used: Domestic Violence Safety Assessment Tool (DVSAT)
- Purpose: Assess the level of threat faced by individuals.
- Risk Levels: Clients are categorised as “*at threat*” or “*at serious threat*”.
- Support Provided:
 - Immediate safety interventions
 - Tailored safety planning to manage potential risks

2. Case Coordination

- Objective: Connect clients with local services to address essential needs.
- Services Coordinated:
 - Housing support
 - Counselling
 - Referrals for Legal advice
 - Provide court process information
- Follow-up: Ensure women and children receive ongoing care and support



3. Legal Information

- Purpose: Empower clients to navigate legal processes related to domestic and family violence.
- Support Includes Guidance On:
 - Applying for an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO)
 - Making statements to NSW Police regarding an AVO or criminal offence
 - Court proceedings and understanding their processes
 - Effectiveness and assisting women to report breaches of AVOs
 - Roles of police, legal representatives, Legal Aid NSW, and community legal centres

4. Court Advocacy

- Objective: Support women through court processes in domestic and family violence matters.
- Key Focus:
 - Securing Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) tailored to individual needs
 - Advocating with other organisations to ensure clients' protection and support

5. Case Management

- Scope: Short- to long-term case management for eligible clients
- Approach: Trauma-informed, strengths-based, person-centred
- Process:
 - Develop individual case plans identifying safety concerns, needs, and goals
 - Explore options to address issues while respecting client autonomy

6. Hearing Support

- Service: Specialist support for clients involved in hearings at Penrith, Katoomba, and Windsor Local Courts
- Purpose: Reduce stress and trauma of court attendance and giving evidence
- Includes: Helping clients navigate court barriers and procedures

7. Police Prosecutor Clinics

- Collaboration: NSW Police Force
- Frequency: Monthly at Penrith, Katoomba, and Windsor Local Courts
- Purpose: Prepare clients for defended hearings and provide guidance on giving evidence
- Acknowledgment: Clinics are supported by Police Prosecutors to educate clients and reduce anxiety

8. Domestic Violence Duty Solicitor Scheme (DVDS) and Legal Support

- Provides additional legal assistance and representation for clients navigating domestic and family violence matters in court.



NBMWDVCAS thanks all legal practitioners in the Domestic Violence Duty Scheme (funded by Legal Aid NSW) and the Central Tablelands & Blue Mountains Community Legal Centre. Your dedication on ADVO list days at Katoomba, Penrith, and Windsor Local Courts makes a real difference.

DVDS	Firm
Alicia Catron	Catron Simmons Lawyers
Michelle Simmons	Catron Simmons Lawyers
Thomas Skinner	Thomas Skinner
Rebecca Frost	Frost Legal and Mediation Solutions
David Cleverly	Hammond Nguyen Turnbull Legal
Lang Goodsell	LANG GOODSELL
Sione Breust	SCB Legal
Karen Mifsud & Team	Women's Legal Service NSW
Nazira Sowaid	Choice Law Group
Katoomba Local Court	
Renna	Central Tablelands

Thank you to the following services for the dedication and collaboration with the NBM Team in supporting our clients.

- NSW Police Force (Blue Mountains, Nepean and Windsor Police Area Commands)
- Women's Legal Services
- The Richmond Women's Cottage
- Corrective Services
- Department of Communities and Justice
- Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre
- Penrith Women's Health Centre
- DV West
- The Haven
- Department of Education
- NSW Health
- Domestic Violence Service Management
- Community Restorative Centre
- Family Violence Service
- DCJ Housing
- Centrelink
- IVPRS
- Springfield Cottage
- Victims Services
- Court Registry
- The Central Tablelands Community Legal Centre
- Sydney Regional Aboriginal Cooperation
- Merana Aboriginal Service
- Aboriginal Health
- Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child & Family Corporation
- Women's Shelters - Currawong Connect
- University Of Western Sydney
- TAFE





NBM WDVCS and Penrith Women's Health Centre

Training and Development undertaken by NBMWDVCAS staff include:

- Safety Action Meeting
- Professional Development - Gunnedah Hill Business Solutions
- Domestic Violence Electronic Monitoring Scheme
- WDVCAP DFV Connect Training
- ADVO and Court information sessions
- Fire Evacuation & Warden Training - Wormald
- New Workers Training WDVCAP
- WDVCAP Case Management Training
- HR-Work place relation for Manager - Jobs Australia
- Introduction to AFCA FOR Family Violence advocacy - Amplify Alliance
- DV Alert training - Domestic & Family Response Training-Life Line
- Black Dog Institute training - Managing Team Well Being



NBM WDVCS Team & Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre Management Committee –
Dr Olayide Ogunsiji and Susan Baxter



The Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre continued to strengthen its commitment to improving women's health and wellbeing through evidence-based, trauma-informed, and community-based approaches. This year, two major projects were implemented to address critical gaps in care and improve early intervention outcomes:

The Non-Fatal Strangulation (NFS) Project aimed to improve recognition, response, and support for women affected by strangulation in domestic and family violence.

The Bowel Cancer Screening and Referral Pathway Project is designed to increase screening uptake and streamline referral processes for early detection and treatment.

Non-Fatal Strangulation Project

Non-fatal strangulation is a serious indicator of escalating domestic and family violence and a significant predictor of future homicide. Despite its severity, it is often under-recognised and under-reported in health and community settings.

Recognising this gap, BWGHC undertook the Non-Fatal Strangulation Project to build staff capability, strengthen referral pathways, and enhance safety planning for women experiencing violence. This project provided staff and partner agencies awareness of the signs, symptoms, and risks associated with non-fatal strangulation.

We developed a clear, trauma-informed referral pathway to medical and forensic services. We strengthened collaboration between health, justice, and domestic violence sectors to improve coordinated responses.

Our key activities we achieved through this project:

- Staff conducted specialised training for clinical and counselling staff on assessment, documentation, and referral of NFS cases.
- We developed and implemented a referral pathway protocol linking health services, hospitals, forensic units, and domestic violence support agencies.
- Created client education materials explaining the health risks and importance of medical review following strangulation.
- Also, we established data collection processes to monitor incidence, response times, and outcomes.
- Improved interagency collaboration, resulting in faster medical assessments and safer case management.
- Increased awareness among clients about the seriousness of strangulation and the importance of seeking timely care.





Bowel Cancer Screening and Referral Pathway Project

Bowel cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, yet screening participation remains low among multicultural women due to language barriers, limited health literacy, cultural stigma, and lack of understanding of the screening process. Recognising these challenges, Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre developed the Bowel Cancer Screening and Referral Pathway Project to improve screening rates, early detection, and follow-up care among women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Both projects show the impact of targeted, partnership-based approaches in improving women's health and safety. The structured referral pathways have strengthened service coordination, accessibility, and early intervention, ensuring timely and appropriate care. They have also enhanced our centre's overall capacity to respond to critical issues. We will continue refining these pathways, gathering outcome data, and advocating for sustained funding to extend these models to other priority health areas.

We extend our gratitude to our staff, partner organisations, and funders, including partners like Women's Health NSW and Family Planning, for their expertise and collaboration. Most importantly, we acknowledge the women who have trusted us with their care.

Some of the key goals we achieved:

- Increase awareness and understanding of bowel cancer screening among multicultural women aged 45 – 74 and to develop and implement a culturally appropriate referral pathway to ensure timely access to screening, diagnostics, and treatment.
- We built partnerships with local GPs, multicultural organisations, and Primary Health Networks to improve coordination and accessibility.
- Our staff conducted community education sessions in partnership with multicultural associations and community leaders, delivered in multiple languages, and co-designed and translated educational resources with input from community representatives to ensure cultural sensitivity.
- We established a referral pathway linking general practitioners and local diagnostic and treatment services. As well as navigation support to help women complete screening kits and access follow-up care if required.

All while strengthening partnerships with multicultural community organisations, enhancing trust and engagement. Positive feedback from participants highlighted improved understanding of bowel health and confidence in using screening kits.





NSW Health Priority: Violence

Our trauma-informed case management and counselling services worked primarily with local women and girls 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 Bilingual Community Educators from the Western Sydney Local Health District to run health & wellbeing groups 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.

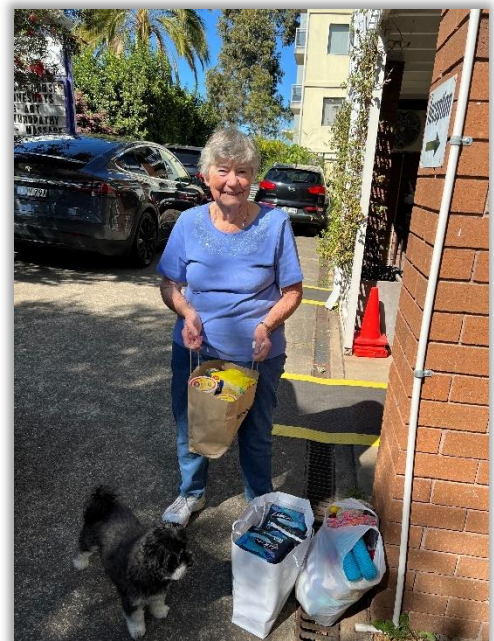
Our exercise and movement groups, such as yoga, dance stretch and tone, belly dancing and walking groups have also given women and girls the opportunity to address chronic illness through exercise, as well as become linked with other services offered by the Centre's multidisciplinary team.

"The centre has been a good, safe place for me".

***Community Member**



Cancer Council Biggest Morning Tea 2025



*Inner Wheel Donations
Elizabeth*



NSW Health Priority: Nutrition and physical activity / healthy weight

This year, the Centre has continued to work with qualified local fitness trainers to provide exercises classes during which clients can have 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 developed a series of free health talks, which include diet and nutrition-related topics, including healthy weight.

Through our partnership with Oz Harvest and Food Bank, the Centre has also been able to provide clients with access to fresh fruit and vegetables on a weekly basis, assisting between 40 to 50 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 with Family Planning NSW, ran a very successful Girls Group workshop, during which girls from local high schools were provided education around reproductive health, consent, contraception and healthy relationships.



Thanks to Lions for donations of healthy food items contributing to our weekly Friday food hampers/Oz Harvest, 2024

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.

"Everything was great. Thank you for the resources".

***Community Member**



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 Centre with Family Planning NSW continued the popular Paps for Pashminas program, which offered incentives for women having a pap test at one of the Centre's Family Planning clinics.

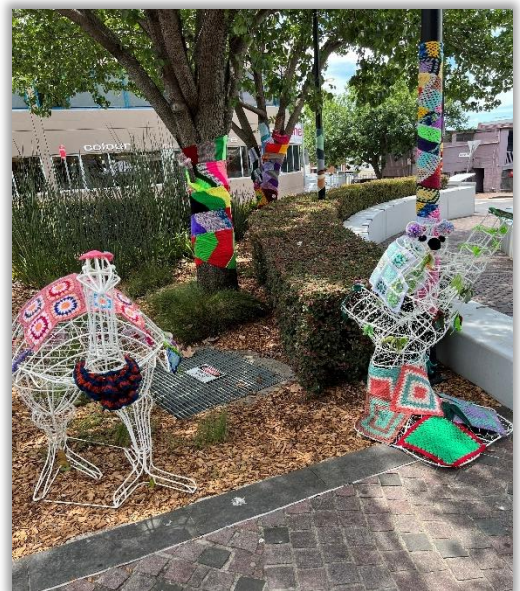
NSW Health Priority: Tobacco, drugs and alcohol

Our Centre is recognised as one of the Blacktown Local Drug Action Teams. The Centre's Art Therapy program has long been an integral part of our community's informed and responsive group program. This year, our art therapist has worked with women and young people to use creative expression as a therapeutic tool and protective factor for developing safe and healthy emotional expression.

Art therapy has proven to be a popular and useful part of groups providing support and health promotion for women and girls in the Blacktown LGA. This year we continued to receive grants from the Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) to develop and deliver programs, 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.



Blacktown Knit Bomb Project 2024
Zakhia



Blacktown Knit Bomb Project 2024



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 engaged the community in both those agencies' programs and our programs.

Staff members and placement students have received in-service training from agencies such as the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, 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.

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

"My counsellor was very supportive in all aspects. These counselling sessions have improved my mental health and make me feel settled".

***Community Member**

Community Priority: Emotional wellbeing

Our generalist counsellors worked with women and girls to address issues such as anxiety, depression, bullying, social isolation, emotional regulation, trauma, and much more by providing support and appropriate linking with specialist counsellors and agencies, after a thorough initial intake assessment. 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.





2024-2025 Art Therapist Report - Susan Baxter

Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre have had a productive year and has been able to work with children and their teachers in two different schools.

Our Art Therapy 'Empower Her' girls' group on safety continued for the second half of 2024 with Doonside Technology High and Blacktown Girls' High Schools and ended with an inaugural Art Exhibition.

We opened this exhibition up to include artworks from women and teens who attended the Art Therapy group in 2022 who participated in the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), funded by the Alcohol Drug Foundation. We warmly thank Barbara Hillman for her support in co-ordinating the exhibition at Max Webber Library Blacktown, and Kylie Tarensenko and Zakhia Beg who assisted me in setting up the exhibition space, which was a wonderful success, supported by the Alcohol Drug Foundation.

Thank you for Zakhia Beg and Shristi Singh Co-Facilitators.

In 2025, BWGHC was funded by the Alcohol Drug Foundation to hold consultations with students and teachers at Doonside Technology High and Evens High Schools. I would like to acknowledge and thank my co-facilitators Shristi Singh, and Susanna Lee, and our Master of Art Therapy Student on Placement at BWGHC, Eugenia Argiropoulos who co-facilitated with me at Evans High School.



BWGHC 2024: Students at Doonside Technology High School making their Tree of Life art for the exhibition.

When I make an Acknowledge of Country and say Warami, it's important to me and my co-facilitators that we ensure that this doesn't become tokenistic. We welcome everyone to our space by opening the circle to learn about other cultural languages. Some examples of CALD languages shared:

Warami: [Dharug], (Good to see you welcome)
Greek: Kalosorisma (welcome)
Spanish: Bienvenida (welcome)
Tagalog: [Negros Island Indigenous Peoples], Mabuhay (welcome)
Chinese [Mandarin], Huanying (welcome)
French: Bienvenue (welcome)
Cebuano [Southern Philippines], Maayong pag abot (welcome)

Art Therapist Report

Susan Baxter



Blacktown Women's
and Girls' Health
Centre Art Exhibition:

Women's, teens and
students Artwork
displayed at Max
Webber Library
Blacktown

October 2024



BWGHCA Art Exhibition October 2024: Women and Girls' Art Therapy Artworks 2022-2024 at Max Webber Library Blacktown.



'Self-Care &
Mindfulness'
Fetal Alcohol
and Disorder
(FASD) Art
Therapy Group
Artwork 2022



BWGHCA Art Exhibition October 2024: Women and Teens Artwork from the 2022 Self Care and Mindfulness Art Therapy Program, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).



ADF brochures at the art exhibition were all taken by the end of exhibition Oct 2024.

Art Therapist Report

Susan Baxter



'Empower Her' girls'
group 2023-2024
Artwork from students,
at Doonside Technology
High School and
Blacktown Girls High
School

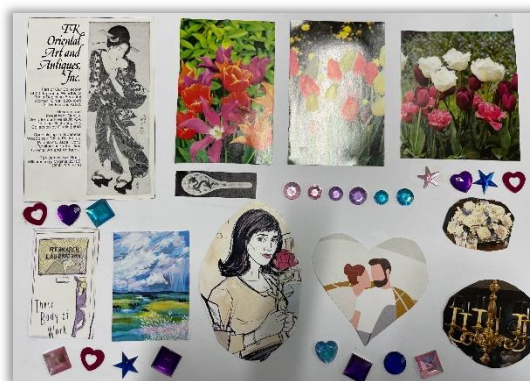
Exhibition October 2024



Facilitators: Shristi Singh, Susan Baxter and Zakhia Beg



BWGHG Art Exhibition October 2024: Student Artwork from the 2023-2024 'Empower Her' Girls group Art Therapy Programs at Blacktown Girls High School and Doonside Technology High School



BWGHG 2024: Students at Doonside Technology High School artworks on Identity and Peer Pressure topic incorporating values.

Art Therapist Report

Susan Baxter



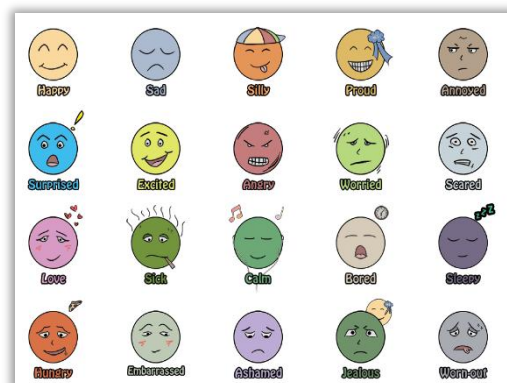
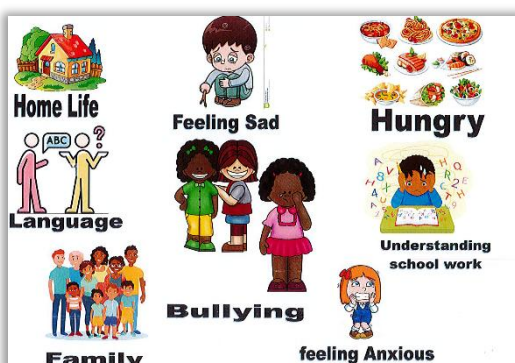
The first half of 2025, BWGHC was funded by the Alcohol Drug Foundation to carry out consultations with students and teachers at Doonside Technology High and Evans High Schools. The consultations aimed to gather 'teachers and students' insights on what matters most within their school community, and assisted BWGHC in identifying challenges students face, both in school and outside and any key issues of concern.

We met with students in the Learning Assistance Faculty (LAF) living with Autism and ADHD, First Nations Peoples, and CALD backgrounds and used picture accessible picture surveys to support students.

I would like to acknowledge my Co-facilitators Shristi Singh and Eugenia Argiropoulos, Master of Art Therapy Student on Placement at BWGHC.



BWGHC 2024: Student Artworks from March 2025 'Consultation' Art Therapy Program at Doonside Technology High School.



BWGHC 2025: Student Surveys May 2025 'Consultation' Art Therapy Program at Evans High School.



GLOW CREATIVE HEALTH



AGM Report

The Women's Art Therapy Group has continued to provide a supportive and creative space for women to explore personal growth, wellbeing, and connection through mindfulness, visual art and guided reflection. Sessions were held weekly throughout the year, facilitated by Art Therapist Jen, with participation from women representing a diverse range of backgrounds and life experiences.

Sessions run weekly in 10-week terms, and we cater for up to 12 participants. The sessions have garnered a following of regular participants whilst also welcoming new women and girls across the year.

Program Focus

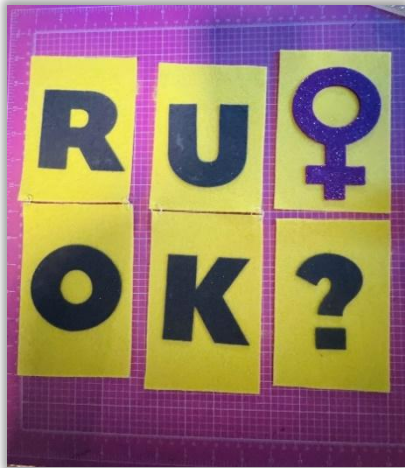
The group combined creative expression with therapeutic conversation, focusing on:

- Building emotional regulation, self-esteem and self-awareness through artmaking.
 - Developing connection and belonging through shared creative experiences.
 - Supporting stress management and mindfulness through breathing, sensory and grounding techniques.
- Themes explored included resilience, identity, growth, and healing after adversity.

Acknowledging and incorporating themes such as RUOK day, International Women's Day and Harmony Day to support and utilise the important messages and topics these days represent.

My Feelings Matter – Art as Therapy

Jennifer Wilson



Outcomes and Progress

Participant feedback and facilitator observation highlighted significant positive outcomes:

- Improved emotional wellbeing: Participants reported greater ability to express and manage emotions.
- Increased confidence: Many women noted improved self-esteem and pride in creative achievements.
- Enhanced social connection: Strong peer relationships developed, reducing isolation and promoting community engagement.
- A number of participants have since re-engaged with education, volunteer work, or other community programs, reflecting broader personal growth and empowerment.

The Women's Art Therapy Group continues to demonstrate the power of creative expression as a pathway to healing, resilience, and connection with others. Participants have shown meaningful emotional and social progress, and the group remains a valued part of our community wellbeing initiatives.



Counselling and Intake Manager

Sumera Naz



I am pleased to present this report outlining the progress and developments of the Counselling team over the past year. As the Manager of counselling and intake team my role focused on ensuring high quality service delivery, professional standards, students learning, compliance with regulatory frameworks and alignment with centre's strategic and community health goals.

We experienced increase referrals from GPs, schools, community partners and internal programs. This year has seen consistent growth in presentations related to family and domestic violence, homelessness, complex trauma, anxiety, depression and post-natal mental health. The complexity of

presentations continues to rise, and the team has worked diligently to meet these needs while maintaining a safe, respectful and empowering environment for clients.

Approx 4124 sessions were delivered, 102 new clients engaged, we reduced the waitlist times due to improved triage and scheduling processes. The counselling/ case management team consists of 6 counsellors (Part time) plus 3 students' placements.

Staff participated in ongoing training including trauma informed practise, domestic and violence response framework, record keeping and documentation compliance. Regular clinical and manager supervision, case reviews were also maintained to ensure consistent adherence to ethical practice. In the last financial year our team has consistent delivery of high quality safe and client centred counselling, strengthened referral pathways with external agencies and improved risk assessment processes and safety planning protocols. We also continued improving our internal systems, particularly in relation to record keeping, data reporting and client outcome tracking.

The Centre continued its commitment to supporting the next generation of counsellors through structured student placements. This year I supervised 3 counselling students from partner universities (ACAP & WSU) providing them with weekly supervision, reflective practise opportunities and hands on experience in delivering intake, assessments, counselling and case management. Students made valuable contributions especially during period of high demand and their placement feedback highlighted the centre as a supportive and enriching learning environment.

While the year has been productive several challenges were also noted. During the year we experience increased client demand exceeding available resources, workload pressures at peak times and growing complexity of client presentations requiring advanced interventions. Despite these pressures, the counselling team remained committed to providing high quality care and adapted their work to changing service needs.

The past year has been one of growth, learning and resilience. My gratitude goes to the team, who brought enthusiasm and new perspectives to our service. I would also like to acknowledge them for their professionalism and compassion. Despite challenges, the team delivered high quality, trauma informed, culturally safe and client centred services to women in our community. We remain committed to strengthening the mental health and wellbeing of women and girls, and to upholding the Centre's mission and values.

Most importantly, I acknowledge the women and families who came to us seeking support. Their courage and trust remain at the heart of our work. I look forward to building on this progress in the coming year and continuing to strengthen our contribution to the well being of women in our community.

Sumera Naz



It is with great pride that I present the Program Manager's Report for 2025, highlighting another year of impactful service, community engagement, and meaningful outcomes for women and girls in our community. I was recently promoted to Project Manager after Shristi Singh moved on from Blacktown Women's and Girls' after 10 years of dedicated work with us. She will be sadly missed, but we wish her well in her journey ahead.

Throughout 2024-2025, Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre continued to deliver a comprehensive range of health, wellbeing, and empowering programs designed to meet the diverse needs of women and girls. Our focus remained on improving access to quality health care, promoting gender equity, and fostering a safe and supportive environment for all participants.

Our core program areas included:

Women's Health Services: Preventive health screening, sexual and reproductive health education, maternal health support, and mental well-being workshops.

Programs for Girls: Leadership development, body image and self-esteem workshops, and reproductive health education sessions in schools.

Community Outreach: Health promotion campaigns and collaboration with local organisations to reach the women and girls in the community.

Support Services: Counselling, domestic violence support, and referral pathways for women in crisis.

Feedback from participants consistently highlighted increased knowledge, confidence, and access to vital health services. Our programs have contributed to improved health literacy and increased uptake of preventive care. Greater awareness and reduced stigma around mental health and reproductive health. Enhanced community connection and empowerment among participants.

While strong achievements marked 2024 through to 2025, we also faced challenges, including increased demand for mental health services and the ongoing need for sustainable funding. In response, we plan to: Strengthen partnerships to expand service reach. Enhance data collection and evaluation to measure long-term outcomes. Continue advocacy for gender-responsive health policies and equitable funding.

I would also like to seize this opportunity to thank Zakhia Beg and Tailah Timewell for their wonderful support with the programmes and community engagements they have both significantly contributed to. Their dedication has enabled us to connect with many other community organisations.

I extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff, volunteers, partners, and funders whose commitment makes our work possible. Most importantly, we thank the women and girls who continue to inspire us with their strength and resilience. Together, we remain committed to creating a community where every woman and girl can achieve good health, safety, and empowerment.

Kylie Tarasenko

Massage Therapists

Nawal Challita & Joanna Francis



Massage Therapy



Since joining the clinic in January 2023, I've continued to dedicate myself to providing high-quality massage therapy. With 7 years of experience in the massage industry, my focus remains on Swedish massage, offered every Tuesday from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. This year, the positive feedback from clients has been truly rewarding, with many women reporting reduced muscular aches and pains, and a greater sense of relaxation and calm after their sessions. It's fulfilling to know that the clinic provides a safe and nurturing space for women to refocus and find clarity, alleviating stress and anxiety while improving mood, relaxation, confidence, and self-image.

Building on the success of last year, I continued to lead meditation classes, which have been instrumental in helping clients manage anxiety, stress, insomnia, and depression. Seeing the positive impact of these classes has inspired me to explore further training in mindfulness and holistic wellness practices.

As 2025 comes to a close, I am excited to see what the new year holds and continue contributing to the well-being of our clients. I am committed to expanding my skills and knowledge to provide even greater support and care.

Nawal Challita

"Massage helps relieve pain, make life easier & more pleasant. Massage is vital for my health + wellbeing".

***Community Member**

Hi, my name is Joanna, I'm one of the massage therapists at BWGHC. I have worked at the Centre since April 2022, but have been friends with BWGHC for many years prior.

In doing my job, I have felt the passion and self-fulfilment of knowing that my clients have felt much better physically and emotionally after their massage sessions. I also enjoy working together with some wonderful counsellors, a nutritionist and other professional colleagues at the Centre.

I think I am lucky to be able to work in this happy environment and thank BWGHC for the warm memories I have made over the years.

Joe Ten (Joanna) Francis.



Naturopath and Nutritionist Report

Katrina Dordevic



Naturopathy / Nutrition Clinic



Naturopathy is an evidence-based system of health care that helps to empower clients using a strength-based approach to improve women's health and wellbeing. The Naturopathic & Nutrition clinic compliments the many other services at Blacktown Women's & Girls' Centre.

Aims: Increasing women's awareness of healthy lifestyle behaviours and support women in adopting healthy lifestyles, while promoting healthy lifestyle behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity, and smoking and alcohol reduction.

Snapshot of 2024 - 2025

The Naturopathic clinic has had a successful year and has increased service delivery to 2 days per week from 1 day per week. Appointments are available each Tuesday and Friday at the centre. Throughout the year there were 378 client contacts.

Presenting issues in the Naturopathic clinic:

- * Stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness and social isolation
- * Trauma / PTSD
- * Insomnia and sleep issues
- * Chronic illness management, i.e. diabetes, cardiovascular disease
- * Chronic pain; including arthritis, chronic pain following injury or accident
- * Gastrointestinal issues; often present in people with stress, anxiety, depression
- * Assorted hormonal issues, thyroid, reproductive, menopause
- * Nutrition support; women wanting support to make healthier lifestyle and food choices.
- * Food insecurity and lack of resources

Referrals: Clients may also be referred to counselling, case work, Family Planning Women's Health Dr and Nurse, external GP's, massage therapy, group work, physical therapies such as gentle exercise and art therapy groups.

Health & Wellbeing Groups

This year we have run a wide variety of health & wellbeing workshops at the centre.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| * Gut Health | * Mindfulness of the holiday season |
| * Food labels de-mystified | * Natural skin care for summer |
| * Springtime gardening | * Sleep Better |
| * Mindful Aromatherapy | * Easter Workshop |
| * Aromatherapy for Wellbeing | * Gardening workshop |
| * Mediterranean Diet | * Self-massage for Wellbeing |
| * Stress Less | * Storing Food Safely |
| | * Vitamins & Minerals in Food |

Katrina Dordevic

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 to our VOLUNTEER Lorraine Robertson



*Our Walking Group Volunteer
Lorraine*

THANK YOU to our STUDENTS

Students from Institutions:

- * Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP)
- * Open Training Education Network
- * Western Sydney University (WSU)

Student Art Therapist - Eugenia Argiropoulos

During my student placement in art therapy at the Women's and Girls' Centre in Blacktown, I've had the privilege of witnessing the transformative power of art therapy and counselling. This experience deepened my understanding of how adaptable, inclusive, and culturally sensitive therapy can foster healing and empowerment.

Facilitating workshops on topics like boundaries, self-esteem, and emotional literacy has given me practical skills and insight into the therapeutic process. The shared laughter, cultural exchange, and artistic exploration have been profoundly enriching.

As my placement concludes, I'm inspired by the compassionate women who support this community. Their dedication has left a lasting impression, and I aspire to bring the same empathy and commitment to my future practice in art therapy.



*Art Therapy Student
Eugenia Argiropoulos*



ACAP Counselling Student – Emily McConochie

Beginning my placement at BWGHC has been one of the most formative experiences of my training so far. From the very first day, it became clear that counselling here exists alongside crisis intervention, case management, and community advocacy. The women who come through the centre are often navigating layers of domestic and family violence, poverty, trauma, and systemic disadvantage — and meeting them in those spaces has changed how I understand what it means to *hold space* for someone.

Early on, I was faced with my first crisis call — a young woman expressing suicidal intent. Conducting a risk assessment, calling emergency services, and following up with her the next day brought theory into sharp reality. It reminded me that ethical decision-making isn't just an abstract concept; it's a moment-to-moment practice of discernment, care, and courage. Through guidance from my supervisor Sumera, I learned that safety and containment are the first steps toward healing, and that sometimes the most compassionate thing we can do is connect a client with a service better equipped to meet their needs.

Supervision at BWGHC became a grounding and transformative part of this experience. Sumera's mentorship helped me unpack the complexity of risk, boundaries, and cultural safety in practice. Our discussions often returned to the importance of attunement — of slowing down enough to listen beyond words and recognise how trauma shows up in the body. Working alongside such a diverse and supportive team showed me that trauma-informed work is not just about knowledge, but about how we *show up* — with patience, humility, and authenticity.

On a personal level, this placement has also been a mirror. The fast-paced, high-demand environment surfaced my own challenges around Autism/ADHD, time management, and emotional energy. There were moments of doubt, fatigue, and self-criticism, but also moments of grace. Learning to offer myself the same compassion I extend to clients has been part of my growth as a practitioner. I've come to see that self-care is not separate from ethical practice — it is what allows us to stay present, empathic, and sustainable in this work.

Ultimately, the women I've worked with have shown me extraordinary courage and resilience, and I ended placement with a deeper respect for the strength it takes to rebuild one's life after violence. I'm profoundly grateful for the learning, the guidance, and the trust shared within this community.

What stands out most about BWGHC is the warmth and solidarity that underpins the workplace. The team operates with a genuine sense of care — not only for clients, but for one another. There is an unspoken culture of mutual support, where everyone's contribution matters and collective wellbeing is prioritised. I have felt encouraged, mentored, and included from the very beginning. The environment fosters both professional growth and human connection, reminding me that meaningful therapeutic work flourishes in spaces where practitioners themselves feel safe, valued, and connected. BWGHC embodies this ethos wholeheartedly, and I feel deeply grateful to have learned within such a compassionate and empowering organisation.



We would like to thank our following key partners:



A big thank you to all of our sponsors, we don't know what we would do without your generosity in supporting Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre, it is very much appreciated.



*Thank you to Service NSW
for your generous and ongoing donations*



*Thank you Good360 for your generous
donations*



*Thank You World Gym
for your generous donations*

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.
- 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 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.



NOVA 100 Jobs in 100 Days
Sumera and Kylie

- 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.



Oz Harvest Food Donation

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:

- 16 Days of Activism
- AWHASO Retreat
- Blacktown City Club Grant
- Blacktown Council Women's Forum
- Blacktown Domestic Violence Forum - BDVF
- Centrepay Event
- Chantilly's Velvet Rose
- Community Gathering /Laylor Park
- Community Safety Advisory Meeting
- Connect for Success
- Doonside Community Service Meeting
- DV West Forum
- Evans High School Event
- Sydney Zoo Glow Event
- Hawkesbury Suicide Awareness
- International Women's Day
- Knit Bomb Event
- Lead Gala dinner
- Legal Aid NSW - WDVCAP monthly meetings
- Local Business Awards
- Meeting with Local Member for Parliament Mr Stephen Bali
- Mission Australia event
- Nova 100 Jobs Event
- Nova Employment Annual Event
- Outer Western Domestic Violence Network - OWDVN
- Pride Flag Raising Event
- Probus Meeting
- RUOK Event @ Doonside High
- SDN Interagency
- Shelter Her
- Syd West Multicultural Community Service Meeting (included 10 Blacktown Local Government Area Community Organisations)
- Western Sydney Day of Action
- Western Sydney Community Forum
- Women's Health NSW (WHNSW) Forum
- Women's Health NSW Managers Meetings
- WSABE Awards
- Zest Awards



*Bill Crews Church Last One Event
Christmas Hamper Donations 2024*



*Sydney Zoo GLOW Event Presented by Workers
Lifestyle Group*

Donations from Individuals, Organisations and Sponsors



We are thankfully indebted to our Major Donors and Sponsors:

- Alcohol and Drug Foundation
- Blacktown Lifestyle Group
- Blacktown Lions Club
- Commonwealth Bank
- Lander Toyota Blacktown
- Storage King Blacktown

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

- Blacktown Area Community Centre
- Blacktown Lifestyle Group
- Baked and Co.
- Bunnings Blacktown Superstore
- Unilever
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- Costco Marsden park
- Foodbank
- Inner Wheel
- Ikea Marsden Park
- Oz Harvest
- Share the Dignity NSW/ACT
- Zonta Club of Cumberland West

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

"Loved the group and host. Very informative and inspiring".

*Community Member

BWGHC would like to thank the **Blacktown Lifestyle Group** and other clubs participating in the **Blacktown City ClubGRANTS** for awarding BWGHC with a 2024-2025 ClubGRANT.

BWGHC would also like to thank all our partners and donors for their support in our ability to provide professional, affordable and holistic services to women in a safe environment with an emphasis on promoting health, wellbeing and empowerment our vision 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.



Thank you to our Lion Club Members who organised a food drive for our families.



Susanna, Kylie & Sumera with Jodie Harrison - Minister of Women - at Western Sydney Community Forum 2025



Sumera, Myriam, Olayide, Jhan and Kylie at Blacktown City Local Business Awards 2025



Winner of the Most Inclusive Employee at the Blacktown City Local Business Awards 2025

Funders and Other Partners



Thank you to all our partners and funders for your collaboration and support during the financial year 2024-2025

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)
- Alice's Cottages
- Blacktown Area Community Centres (BACC)
- Blacktown City Council
- Blacktown Friendship Centre
- Blacktown Hospital Women's Health Clinic
- Blacktown Hospital Social Work Department
- Blacktown North Public School
- Blacktown Police LAC and DVLOs
- Blacktown Pride in Diversity Network
- Bonnies Support Services (Refuge)
- Brighter Futures Blacktown/Baulkham Hills
- CALD Women's Health Groups (NSW Department of Health)
- Catholic Care Social Services
- Charmian Clift Cottages
- Community Resource Network (CRN) Inc
- Domestic Violence Services NSW
- Doonside Community Health team
- DV Safe Phones
- Family Planning NSW
- Family Referral Service
- Harman Foundation
- Headspace
- Hon Stephen Bali MP
- Hon Michelle Rowland MP
- Horizon Family Law Centre
- Immigrant Women's Speakout
- Junaya Family Development Services
- LGBTI Health Alliance
- Mackillop Family Services
- Marist Youth Services
- Mission Australia
- Ngroo Aboriginal Education Corporation
- Nova Employment
- Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
- NSW Department of Health
- NSW Department of Juvenile Justice
- NSW Refugee Health
- Odyssey House NSW
- Outer Western Domestic Violence Network
- PACS Blacktown Adolescent and Family Counselling
- Police Citizens Youth Clubs
- Quakers Hill Police LAC and DVLOs
- Relationships Australia
- Rosie's Place (women's refuge)
- Safe Relationships Project
- Safe Space Blacktown
- Salvation Army
- Share the Dignity (NSW/ACT)
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- Staying Home Leaving Violence (the WASH House)
- SydWest Multicultural Services
- TAFE NSW
- The Australian College of Applied Psychology
- 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)
- Western Sydney Community Legal Centre
- Women's Cottage
- Women's Legal Services NSW
- Zonta Club of Cumberland West

"[Valued] all the beautiful ladies from all backgrounds. Learn something everyday".

***Community Member**



Blacktown Women and Girls Health Inc

ABN 98 059 698 895

Financial Statement - For the Year Ended 30 June 2025 Detailed Profit or Loss Statement

Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	8,283,312	6,473,150
Other Income	83,840	122,280
Total revenue	8,367,152	6,595,430
Employee benefit expenses	(5,219,067)	(4,743,136)
Administrative expenses	(806,224)	(384,394)
Occupancy costs	(11,603)	(5,482)
Depreciation expenses	(19,777)	(3,652)
Other expenses	(1,946,731)	(1,086,499)
Total expenses	(8,003,402)	(6,223,163)
Surplus / (deficit) before income tax	363,750	372,267
Income tax	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	363,750	372,267
Total comprehensive income for the year	363,750	372,267



NOTES

[illegible]



NOTES

[illegible]



Blacktown Women's and Girls' Health Centre Inc. Annual Report for the 2024/2025 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

W: www.womensandgirls.org.au



BWGHC is on Facebook

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NOTES

^{1&3}Keynan, M., Hossain, M., & Hughes, R. 2013, *Blacktown LGA Community Health Needs Assessment Project Report*, Western Sydney Local Health District, Sydney.

².id, the population experts, 2019, 'Community Profile: Blacktown City', compiled from 2011 and 2023 Census Data.

*Names changed to protect client privacy. Client comments from BWGHC Client Surveys 2024/2025 FY.