

Annual Report

2021 - 2022



Lifeline

Macarthur and Western Sydney

Lifeline Macarthur was established in 1978 and in 2020 amalgamated with Lifeline Western Sydney to become Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney.

We are part of a national network providing all Australians experiencing emotional distress with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

We exist to ensure that no person in Australia has to face their darkest moments alone and are committed to empowering Australians to be suicide-safe through connection, compassion and hope.

We are available to listen, without judgment, to any person in Australia who is feeling overwhelmed, experiencing crisis or longs to be heard.

We are unique in having a national reach but a local approach, connecting people and delivering services in response to the immediate needs of the communities in which we operate.

Our centres are located on the traditional lands of the Tharawal and Darug people. We pay our respect to their elders past, present and emerging, and are grateful for their custodianship of the land over thousands of years.

The organisation stretches across 15 local government areas in the South West and Western Sydney corridor and provides vital support services to approximately 2.5 million Australians.

The local government areas in our catchment are Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury-Bankstown, Cumberland, Fairfield, Goulburn-Mulawaree, Hawkesbury, The Hills Shire, Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith, Wingecarribee Shire and Wollondilly.

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney is an entity of the Uniting Church in Australia Synod of NSW & ACT and its Board is appointed by the Parramatta Nepean Presbytery to govern its health and community service activities.

We are a Public Benevolent Institution, registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient.

Responsibility for this document lies with Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney.

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2021-22 highlights

139,950
calls to 13 11 14.
Record number of
calls in a 12-month
period

5,674
contacts made
via our Aftercare
program

178
new financial
counselling
clients

1,560
trained
community
members

150
free
courses

81,535
hours
donated by a
Lifeline Macarthur
& Western Sydney
Volunteers*.

495
volunteers

* Retail volunteer hours are calculated over a period of nine months due to COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions.

Board Report

Erin McKerral



From floods to bushfires, to COVID-19, the rising cost of living and everything in between, 2021-22 presented many challenges to our communities, and all at a time when we were already feeling the fatigue and impacts of previous years.

Throughout these experiences, Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney has been, and remains, a constant, compassionate and non-judgmental voice at the end of a phone, somewhere to go for support and a source of hope for Australians in times of darkness.

As we embarked upon the 2021-22 financial year, little did we know we'd be experiencing the longest lockdown to face New South Wales. Our stores were closed, training and events moved online, and calls from help seekers to 13 11 14 continued to rise.

Despite the changes to the way the organisation operated throughout lockdown, the vision and purpose of Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney were perhaps never more relevant. Regardless of the circumstances faced, volunteers and staff met every challenge with resilience, empathy and compassion, working to ensure no person in Australia had to face their darkest moments alone.

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney answered 139,950 calls from help seekers – an increase of 18.81 per cent on the year before – trained 1,560 individuals and provided financial counselling for 178 clients.

Many firsts were also achieved. The Lifeline Mobile Café pilot was launched, providing mobile crisis support within the community and reaching people who may not have traditionally reached out to Lifeline. The success of the initiative was recognised, with Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney awarded the NSW LiFE Award by Suicide Prevention Australia.

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney also launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, demonstrating our commitment to reconciliation with First Nations people and the championing of intentional inclusion and anti-racism across all aspects of the organisation.

Important collaboration

Sadly, around nine lives are still lost to suicide each day, which is higher than the national road toll. One in two people are affected by suicide by the time they are 25. Suicide remains the leading cause of death for Australians between 15 and 44.

A collective approach is needed to tackle an issue this large and this devastating. As we work towards our vision of an Australia free of suicide, we do so in partnership with many likeminded organisations. Our suicide prevention networks and suicide prevention forum showcase this important collaboration.

The South Western Sydney Public Health Network continues to provide invaluable support for our suicide prevention initiatives and training throughout the South West region. This year 5,674 contacts were made through our Aftercare Program thanks to this ongoing partnership.

The critical services we offer could not continue to be provided without the generous support we receive. To the Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney Reverend Alan Walker Fellows, thank you for your vital ongoing support. Thank you as well, to every organisation and individual that donated to our organisation this year. Your generosity helps save lives.

There are so many wonderful people associated with Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney, but a special acknowledgement must be given to the volunteers,

who are the heart of the organisation, and to the staff for their unrelenting passion and commitment to this important cause.

Thank you also to my fellow board members for your commitment while navigating such extended, unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances.

I am confident that, as we emerge from COVID-19 restrictions, we will be stronger and even better prepared to provide compassionate support for people in crisis.

OUR WORK



CRISIS SUPPORT

As a part of the Lifeline network, Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney provides support to people calling the 13 11 14 (thirteen, eleven, fourteen) national phone line.

We have one office in Smeaton Grange and another in Parramatta for team members who have completed the nationally recognised Lifeline Crisis Supporter Training program. When a help-seeker calls the national number they are connected to a team member, who will listen and provide a safe confidential space for them to talk about what is going on for them no matter what the issue is,

Our crisis supporters take a non-judgmental, compassionate approach to supporting people who are experiencing isolation, family violence, financial stress, grief, mental health issues and/or considering suicide. We help callers to explore their options and provide information on support services as required.

Our office in Parramatta continues to grow and expand. When we first merged our two centres, Lifeline Western Sydney held five seats. Through consultation with Lifeline Australia, we were able to expand this to seat 10 crisis supporters answering the

phone across the 24-hour period – the same number as Lifeline Macarthur.

The impact of COVID-19 saw a reduction of people volunteering for our crisis support work on the phones. With fewer volunteers, shifts had to be filled by paid staff or left vacant. Promotion and training for crisis support volunteers is a priority for the coming year.

While, nationally, Lifeline saw a 40 per cent increase in calls for support, with roughly 50 per cent of callers expressing concerns about the pandemic, we were still able to provide extra assistance to meet the increased demand from people struggling across the country.

“
139,950
calls were
answered by
Lifeline Macarthur
and Western
Sydney on the
13 11 14 Crisis
Phone Line
”



CASE STUDY

AFTERCARE'S SUPPORT AND SAFETY PLANNING HELPS ELIZABETH COPE

Elizabeth* was referred to the Lifeline Crisis Support Aftercare program from the Way Back Support Service, which was seeing her following a suicide attempt and a lengthy hospital stay.

She had a history of suicidal ideation and had made several suicide attempts in the past. She left a domestic violence marriage three years earlier and began residing with a good friend who was like a sister to her and was very supportive.

Aftercare supported Elizabeth with crisis support and safety planning, with calls initially twice a week, then down to once a week. She also joined the Eclipse Support Group for suicide attempt survivors and was finding the group beneficial for learning new coping skills and gaining the support of others who had the common experience of surviving a suicide attempt.

During her time with Aftercare, Elizabeth had another stay in a mental health ward as her thoughts of suicide were increasing. Aftercare continued to support her with regular phone calls during.

Elizabeth still has thoughts of suicide, however she is using her new coping skills to deal with these thoughts. Her safety plan includes distractions such as journaling and seeking support from her friend. Aftercare reviews her safety plan with her at each phone call. Her GP only prescribes her the amount of medication she needs so that she can't stockpile it and use it to overdose. She has also developed a code word with her friend that lets her know if the thoughts of suicide are intense and she needs extra support.

* Real name not used

SUICIDE PREVENTION & BEREAVEMENT

Our vision is an Australia free of suicide and our commitment has been recognised by the South Western Sydney Primary Health Network (SWSPHN), which supports our suicide prevention services across the community.

Our Suicide Prevention program supports people living with suicide ideation and/or has had a previous suicide attempt. The program is tailored to the individual's needs and participants can receive up to three contacts per week.

AFTERCARE

Our team provides key activities such as the Suicide Support Aftercare Program, postvention (support conducted after the loss of a loved one from suicide) & initiatives to limit access to lethal methods used for suicide.

The Aftercare program offers short-term crisis support to people who have attempted suicide, are experiencing a crisis in their lives and/or who need someone to talk with. The program is designed to assist people in need via short-term telephone-based support. A total of 5,674 contacts were made through our Aftercare program in the 2021-22 financial year.

GROUPS

In conjunction with Aftercare, participants are also able to attend our Eclipse support group, specifically designed for suicide attempt survivors. Eclipse is a safe, non-judgmental support environment where participants can share their thoughts, feelings and experiences with others. It is a structured eight-week program to support participants' wellbeing, develop safety and coping skills/strategies, and provide connectedness. Eight Eclipse groups were conducted in the 2021-22 financial year.

We also facilitated eight suicide bereavement groups within the Macarthur region, to support people who had lost a loved one to suicide. The groups were run over eight weeks, with participants supported through group connection and sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences within a safe space and with others who might understand the enormity of loss and grief.

We received the following feedback from participants on our Aftercare and Eclipse programs:

- "I feel less alone in my journey."
- "Thank you so much for your support, you guys are worth your weight in gold and will never be forgotten in my world."

A total of
5,674
contacts were
made via our
Aftercare program

• "Thank goodness I've got you guys there to support me."

• "It has been good to talk to someone about my thoughts of suicide as I have never discussed it with anyone before."

MOBILE CAFÉ

The Lifeline Mobile Café provides support to people across South West and Western Sydney and fills a service gap of "connectable" crisis support and suicide prevention activities to at-risk communities. At Lifeline we understand that there are times when people just want to talk to someone who won't judge but will listen and help. The Mobile Café, staffed with caring and compassionate crisis supporters, it is a place for people to relax, have a cuppa, and talk about their concerns.

By being present in the community at times where it is needed most, such as during flood or bushfire, it empowers individuals and communities to be suicide safe and have access to services they would otherwise be unaware of.

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney won a 2022 Suicide Prevention Australia LiFE Award for the work our Suicide Prevention and Crisis Support teams do within the community with the Lifeline Mobile Café. The award recognises a business that demonstrates an active contribution to address, prevent or respond to suicidal behaviours and their impact within the community.

Thanks to Peugeot Australia and South Western Sydney PHN for their ongoing support to enable Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney to continue to provide crisis support and suicide prevention through the Lifeline Mobile Café across both regions.



OUT OF THE SHADOWS

Out of the Shadows raises awareness for suicide prevention and bereavement. In 2019, we tragically lost 3,318 Australians to suicide. For each person lost, the effects are felt by up to 135 people. This year we would have taken 3,318 steps for the 3,318 lives lost to suicide in 2019. Sadly, due to COVID, we were not able to join together in a walk; instead we held the virtual event online.

BUSH FEST

The Suicide Prevention team held the Lifeline Bush Fest in Bargo on Sunday 24 April 2022. The 2019-20 bushfires had a huge impact on the Wollondilly, Wingecarribee, Camden and Goulburn regions. The fires caused tragic injuries and, very sadly, even death within the local volunteer fire brigade. Fires caused the loss and damage of homes, and extensive decimation of our natural environment.

Strong community spirit, resilience and mateship has been significant in helping many people throughout the affected communities navigate numerous challenges, from bushfires and COVID to floods in rapid succession.



The Bush Fest provided the community with a fun and interactive day out and the coming together of community members, local services, and businesses, in collaboration with South Western Sydney Primary Health Network. Our thanks to Resilience NSW, Rural Fire Service, South West Sydney Local Health District and Wollondilly Council.



Former CEO Brad Hannagan presents a message of hope during the 2021 online 'Out of the Shadows' event.

SUICIDE PREVENTION FORUM

Our annual Suicide Prevention Forum, "Tools to Talk", brought together the community, suicide prevention and mental health services to discuss one of the biggest issues facing today's society: men's suicide.

Speakers and organisations represented included Hugo Toovey (Founder of 25 STAY ALIVE Podcast) from Gotcha4Life Foundation, Tania Tuckerman from StandBy Support After Suicide, lived experience speaker Billy Tuckerman, Glenn Cossar from Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney, Neil Fraser from Towards Zero Suicides/Safe Haven Café, Zac Nix and Stephen Smith from Thirrili Indigenous Suicide Postvention Service, and John Ogier from Mentoring Men.

Special thanks to South Western Sydney Local Health District.

SUICIDE PREVENTION AUSTRALIA STANDARDS ACCREDITATION

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney successfully completed the Suicide Prevention Australia Standard Accreditation through Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) for the Suicide Bereavement, Aftercare and Eclipse Support Groups. The achievement for accreditation is measured against the Suicide Prevention Australia Standards that have been set as a minimum benchmark that an organisation must meet to ensure suicide prevention services are suicide safe, effective and support clients who are at risk. The accreditation period is for three years and is a wonderful achievement by all involved.



CASE STUDY

INTERVENTION SAVES BLIND MAN FROM BANKRUPTCY

Reynold has cognitive disability, is blind, and is receiving NDIS support. Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney financial counsellors worked with his Disability Advocate to assess his finances because there was concern Reynold was sending money from his disability support pension overseas to a scammer, in the belief that a woman would come to Australia to marry him.

Reynold was vulnerable and had been well groomed. He was reluctant to reveal details of his finances, denied he was sending money overseas, and was angry when it was talked about. He did, however, acknowledge that he was expecting an overseas woman to come to Australia to marry him and establish a life with him here.

Bank statements revealed consistent withdrawals of most of his disability support pension and that bills were not being paid. His strata managers began legal proceedings and Reynold was at risk of being sent bankrupt and forced to sell his home.

We negotiated payment plans with creditors. In the process of clarifying what was happening, local taxi drivers confessed to helping him buy gift cards and sending them to an overseas bank account. The Disability Advocate sought an urgent hearing in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to prevent Reynold from selling his home, which we discovered he had put on the market, and to stop legal action regarding his strata fee debt.

We liaised with Reynold's brother (a corporate financial manager), and Reynold eventually agreed to consider the possibility of support and, later, the idea of his brother managing his finances in lieu of the Public Trustee.

We provided a lengthy report regarding our communication with Reynold, and our knowledge of his income, expenses and debts and gave evidence at the hearing.

A Financial Management Order was made with Reynold's brother agreeing to manage his finances.

* Real name not used

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

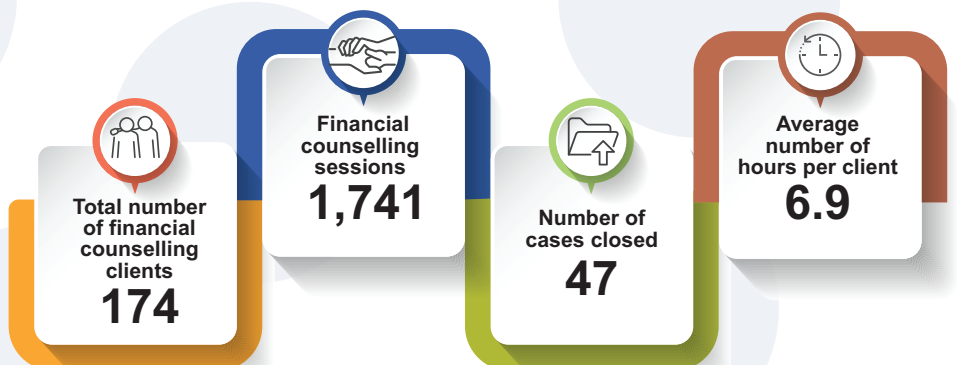


Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney provides a free, professional & confidential financial counselling service for those experiencing financial challenges.

This service is delivered by our financial counsellors, accredited by the Financial Counsellors' Association of NSW (FCAN), who support clients with a range of financial issues, including mortgage stress, fines, credit card debt and loss of income. Our financial counsellors increase clients' financial literacy, provide advocacy, help to explore options and resources, support

clients to develop skills to manage their own finances, and improve their financial and emotional wellbeing.

Over the 2021-22 financial year, the Financial Counselling team supported clients in financial distress through face-to-face appointments at South Western Sydney, Southern Highlands and Western Sydney locations as well by telephone appointments, including after-hours. Our office locations are registered as COVID-19 safe businesses to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers and visiting clients.



TRAINING



Our training team delivers industry-leading training programs on domestic violence, mental health first aid and crisis support, targeting at-risk groups, culturally and linguistically diverse, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as corporate entities across the region.

Our training has transitioned to cater for the changing COVID-19 environment and is able to move from face-to-face training to a blended or online only model as required. The Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney training team has trained 1,560 community members and facilitated 150 courses in the 2021-22 period.

We continue to provide training with the intention of creating suicide safe and resilient communities, facilitating workshops in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills

Training (ASSIST), Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid (AMHFA), Mental Health First Aid for the Suicidal Person (MHFASP), SafeTALK, DV Alter, DV Aware, Read the Signs, and Accidental Counselling.

Our Crisis Support Workplace Training (CSWT) builds skills in becoming a Lifeline Crisis Supporter. It also supports tertiary students to complete their placements, which increases the capacity of our crisis support team, leading to more calls being answered.



RETAIL OPERATIONS

The 2021-22 financial year was a challenging one for the Retail, Transport and Distribution team, with COVID-19 having a significant impact on the overall operations. We made the difficult decision to close our retail stores network, due to declining foot traffic and to role model the importance of staying at home. For the first three months of the 2021-22 financial year all our Lifeline stores were closed. During this time we worked behind the scenes to establish an ecommerce site. The online store is still in its infancy and we are planning develop it further.

WHAT CUSTOMERS SAY ABOUT NARELLAN LIFELINE:

“Lovely place to shop. It’s always so clean and tidy with friendly staff.”

“It does not look like a op shop.”

“We love shopping at Lifeline as we feel like we are helping in our own way”

During the year we received 183,602 kg in donations, served more than 135,000 customers, and continued to work on our environmental footprint by reducing waste and redirecting donations to our stores.

Our retail stores all opened in October 2021 but foot traffic was slow. We implemented our COVID safe plans and control measures to ensure the safety of staff and customers.

We were overwhelmed by support from the public and business and are grateful for their ongoing contribution to Lifeline.

WHAT CUSTOMERS SAY ABOUT CAMDEN LIFELINE:

“Great little shop.
Never know what you can find.
Helpful staff.
Lifeline, keep up the great work!”

“Lovely shop, friendly staff and friendly patrons. Shop is well set out”

And we couldn’t get by without the dedication of the staff and volunteers in our retail, transport and distribution operations. They supported the many changes that were implemented to ensure the COVID-19 safety of our customers, volunteers and staff.

WHAT VOLUNTEERS SAY ABOUT WORKING IN RETAIL:

“My name is Alice and Lifeline is my wonderland. I love coming here. It’s my second home, my second family.”

“It gives me a chance to help others and mix with a variety of ladies and gents. It makes everyone feel better about themselves just o listen to others and help them if you can.”

“The reason why I volunteer is that it makes me feel like I’m giving back to the community I hope to be able to help more and more people through the work that Lifeline does.”



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Committed to inclusion and reconciliation, Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney developed a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in early 2021 to more intentionally engage and support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and consumers, and to strengthen our partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our Reflect RAP focuses on four key areas:

RELATIONSHIPS

Building strong and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is important to Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney, as we look to improve social and emotional wellbeing and work toward our vision of an Australia free of suicide.

In delivering our purpose to empower and support individuals and communities to be resilient and suicide safe, we must understand different perspectives and work in collaboration with community groups.

RESPECT

We understand that respect is central to developing relationships between Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. We aim to do this by building our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and practices through cultural learning and by observing cultural protocols.

OPPORTUNITIES

At Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney, we are actively working toward improving employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our organisation and looking to remove any possible barriers to recruitment, retention and professional development. We also look to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and organisations where possible.

GOVERNANCE

We will deliver our ongoing RAP commitment through best practice governance and ensure actions are incorporated into organisational processes where relevant. We will track and measure our RAP performance and work with Reconciliation Australia to deliver independent oversight of our RAP progress.

In 2021 Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney moved its planned NAIDOC Week event from a face-to-face event to an online platform due to COVID. The theme, “Heal Country”, called for all of us to continue to seek greater protections for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands, waters, sacred sites and cultural heritage from exploitation, desecration, and destruction. Our NAIDOC Week celebrations included education and discussion on what is NAIDOC Week, the difference between Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country and the importance of both, and links/resources.

We also unveiled “Flourish”, an artwork commissioned from local artist Kirsten Gray, a proud Muruwari and Yuwaalaraay woman, in the foyer of our office in Smeaton Grange. It signifies the local lands in which we work and live, bringing together the unique connection between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their culture and connection to the land.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS

Community engagement plays an important role at Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney, helping us to raise awareness “of vital services, build connections with individuals and organisations, and raise funds to support the services we provide. While COVID-19 continued to have some impact throughout the 2021-22 financial year, it was great to be able to hold some of our face-to-face community and fundraising events again.

We are so grateful for the support we receive from the local community, many of whom are long-time supporters of our organisation. Our sponsors and partners are

vital to ensuring we can continue to provide our services, and our events volunteers are integral to making our community engagement initiatives happen.

Across fundraising, events and grants we raised \$608,516, which was a 62 per cent increase on 2020-21 and a 68 per cent increase on 2019-20.

We are very proud of this result. The incredible support demonstrated by the organisations and individuals in our region has been amazing at a time where our services have never been so needed.

“
\$295,000
donated by
organisations
and individuals
”

“
\$22,400
raised through
the Reverend Alan
Walker
Fellowship
”

BUBBLES AND BOWTIES ANNUAL DINNER

We were delighted to hold our biggest fundraising event of the year, the Annual Dinner, on Friday 25 March 2022. The theme was “Bubbles and Bowties”, and the event was held at Ottimo House in the historic grounds of Denham Court Estate. The spectacular event featured a delicious three-course meal, live band, memorable speeches, raffles with phenomenal prizes, and a silent auction.

The night was a resounding success, raising \$93,154 with just under 300 guests in attendance.

Many organisations and individuals generously contributed to night, including everyone who purchased a sponsorship package, donated a prize, bought a bowtie or raffle ticket, or made a pledge or bid on the silent auction. A big thank you to all the event volunteers who helped ensure the event ran smoothly.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 ANNUAL DINNER SPONSORS

BUBBLES SPONSOR: PERICH GROUP

BOWTIE SPONSORS: CAMERON BRAE, INVICTUS X, CAMPBELLTOWN MALL

BLACK TIE SPONSORS: MARSDENS LAW GROUP, SYDNEY TRUCKS & MACHINERY, WARD ACCOUNTING GROUP, BLUE TONGUE HOMES, MCDONALD'S IN MACARTHUR, GEM COMPLETE HEALTH SERVICES, CAMDEN COUNCIL AND CAMDEN GOLF CLUB.

GIFT WRAPPING

Christmas Gift Wrapping was bigger than ever in 2021, with four Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney Gift Wrapping Stalls held with the support of Narellan Town Centre, Campbelltown Mall, Westfield Penrith, and Westfield Liverpool.

We could not run the stalls without the support of our wonderful corporate and individual volunteers, who gave up hours (and often days) of their time to ensure our stalls were a great success. It was particularly special to have Dr Mike Frelander MP, players from the Premiership-winning Penrith Panthers, Ms Galaxy Australia, Lisa Craig, and the C91.3FM Road Crew all wrapping presents.

“
The total funds raised were \$17,071, which was a 49 per cent increase on the previous year.
”

Our Mother's Day Gift Wrapping Stall was held at the Narellan Town Centre from Thursday 5 May to Saturday 7 May 2022, again supported by a team of incredible volunteers.

“
Over the three days, \$1,581 was raised to help fund the vital services we provide to the community.
”

GRANT FUNDING

Securing grants was a significant component of our fundraising strategy in 2021-22. It provided funds to support the expansion of our Lifeline Mobile Café initiative, provide free financial counselling, crisis supporter paid shifts, training and recruitment, and Mental Health First Aid Training.

“
We were awarded \$175,526 corporate and community grant funding, a 35 per cent increase on the previous financial year.
”



A BIG THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS

TAFE NSW, BUILD YOUR BRAND, AFFORDABLE ROOFING AND GUTTERING, INSPIRE ENERGY, CAMERON BRAE GROUP, THE GREATER NARELLAN BUSINESS CHAMBER, AON, FOCUS CONNECT, CAMDEN COUNCIL, ACCESS LAW GROUP, C91.3FM, MARSDENS LAW GROUP, WISE EMPLOYMENT, MODTEC MODULAR, BUNNINGS NARELLAN, NARELLAN TOWN CENTRE, CAMPBELLTOWN MALL, WESTFIELD LIVERPOOL, AND WESTFIELD PENRITH.

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Our volunteers have been supportive and dedicated to Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney over the last 12 months. During this time our stores were forced to close due to COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions, which became quite isolating for some of our volunteers. It was apparent some had formed a support network for one another, and not having that regular contact was a huge adjustment. We did our best to stay connected through weekly videos that profiled staff members or volunteers, as well as tips and tricks to get through lockdown, such as a recipe to try or self-care strategies.

The volunteers who were still able to work, such as our crisis supporters, were very active during this difficult time. As expected, our call rates increased, as did the demand for active crisis supporters. Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney is lucky to have such dedicated and resilient volunteers.

When stores were able to re-open, our volunteers were there and ready to do whatever was needed to get us up and running again. That is a huge testament to their strength and commitment to supporting our goal of having an Australia free of suicide. Our managers and supervisors were overwhelmed with the support they received.

We are doing our best to strengthen our volunteer program and provide appropriate reward and recognition. We believe our volunteers are invaluable, and we are doing our best to make them feel that way. Our thank you morning and afternoon teas have started up once again, and these moments are a great opportunity to give back to the volunteers. We will continue to cherish and recognise our volunteers' hard work.

Many of our volunteers do not volunteer for praise or admiration, but for many other reasons: personal connection, sense of self or to help the wider community. Regardless of the reason, this past year has really magnified the role our volunteers play within the organisation, and how important they are.



OUR VOLUNTEERS SAY:

“ I love volunteering because both staff and customers give you the satisfaction of knowing that your input is well received. I love meeting new and returning customers. It is always a joy. ”

“ Not only am I helping others, but it also helps me. The interaction with my colleagues and customers keeps my mind occupied and away from the dark clouds. ”

“ I love to volunteer because it gives me a chance to help people and provide assistance. Also it gives me an opportunity to meet people and socialise in retirement. ”

“ Volunteering brings a sense of purpose to my life while increasing my self esteem and wellbeing. It connects me with other like-minded people and customers. ”

“ Helping others makes me happy, but I also have a lot of fun volunteering at the shop. Everyone is nice to one another, and always has a smile on their face. When I am unable to volunteer, I always miss my friends and cannot wait to see them again. ”

REVEREND ALAN WALKER FELLOWS

With increasing demand and limited government support available for our services in South Western and Western Sydney, financial support from the community is critical.

Our Reverend Alan Walker Fellows understand the need to support those in crisis. By providing an ongoing donation, their organisations support the provision

of crisis support services to our local community and help us to connect with those in need.

We stand committed in partnership to equipping our community with the skills, tools and understanding to help us work towards an Australia free of suicide.

For 2021-22, 39 Fellows supported us, providing \$22,400 through this fellowship program.

We thank each of our Fellows and encourage community members to support these organisations that provide valuable support for Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney.



OUR PEOPLE



OUR WORKFORCE

STAFF
191 paid

RETAIL
21 paid
155 volunteers

CRISIS SUPPORT
180 volunteers
88 paid staff
62 both paid and
volunteers

**SUICIDE
PREVENTION**
6 paid

TRAINING
11 paid

EVENTS
262 volunteers

**FINANCIAL
COUNSELLING**
3 paid



OUR BOARD FOR THE 2021-22 FINANCIAL YEAR

Anthony Ross
30/09/2013 – 10/05/2022

Salesh Nandan
30/09/2013 – 13/06/2022

Tom Traae
19/11/2018 – 01/11/2021

Erin McKerral
30/09/2013 – 29/08/2022

Anthony Quach
16/12/2021 – 13/09/2022

Sue Lei Hunt Mingay
16/12/2021 – 29/07/2022

Andy Carlisle
11/02/2019 – current

Madelyn Blackley
16/12/2021 – current

Warren Back
01/05/2022 – current

Peter Andrews
01/05/2022 – current

**Tina Rendell
Thornton**
01/05/2022 – current

OUR FINANCIALS



FINANCIAL RESULTS 2021-22

Financial results 2021-22

From a financial perspective, 2021-2022 proved to be a very challenging year.

Income from fundraising, events and grants increased, however income from Lifeline shops declined substantially due to the 2021 COVID-related lockdowns.

The pandemic also caused a fall in volunteer numbers – normally an important part of our workforce. As a consequence, it was necessary to utilise an increased number of paid staff in order to be able to respond to the unprecedented surge in demand for telephone-based crisis support.

The resulting impact of flat income but significantly increased labour costs was that Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney recorded a loss of \$986,985.

Income

Aggregate income from Operating activities amounted to \$6,938,153.

Revenue from government grants, provision of services & training increased by a little over 40 per cent, when compared to the previous year, to a total of \$4,301,345. Gratifyingly, in what was a difficult year, income from donations and events also increased. The Board records its appreciation of the generosity and continuing support of so many organisations and individuals in the local community.

However, despite the efforts of the Retail team, with most of our shops located in South West Sydney, the 107-day lockdown saw revenue from the sale of goods at Lifeline shops drop by more than \$1.1 million. Store operations are gradually returning to normal as society adjusts to living with the pandemic but the overall impact of reduced income from the stores in 2021-2022 has been significant.

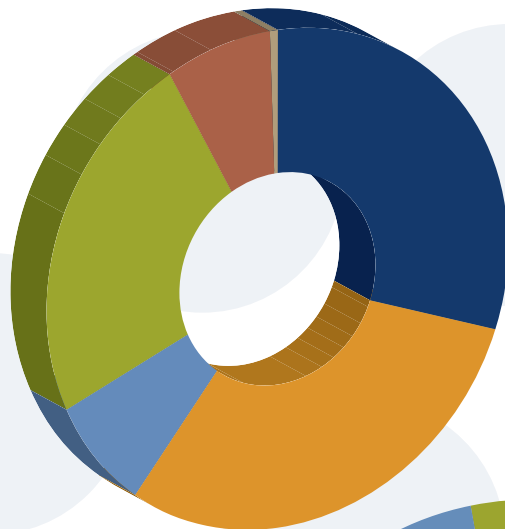
Expenditure

The growth in call demand during the COVID-19 pandemic on the Lifeline 13 11 14

phone service and the necessity to fill positions in the roster normally occupied by volunteers, whose numbers declined during the pandemic, resulted in labour costs increasing by 14.9 per cent. Because labour costs comprise more than 70 per cent of aggregate expenditure, the increase in 2021-2022 had a significant and negative impact on the overall financial results.

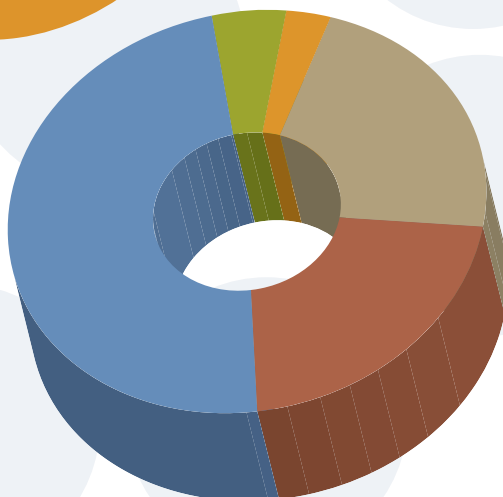
The Board has a focus, in 2022-2023, to endeavour to grow the volunteer workforce in order to increase the capacity of Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney to respond to crisis support calls and to operate sustainably.

While conscious of the impact of the financial results for 2021-2022, the Board expects to continue to be able to meet its debts as and when they fall due. It is implementing strategies to increase income and ensure the careful management of all operating costs so as to attain a more effective and sustainable organisation.



Where our funding came from

- Government Grants 30.4%
- Sale of Goods 30.4%
- Donations / Fundraising 7.7%
- Provision of Services 23.9%
- Training Revenue 7.2%
- Sundry Revenue 0.4%



Use of funds

- Training 5.2%
- Financial counselling 3%
- Retail distribution and transport 22.1%
- Fundraising marketing and admin 21.5%
- Crisis support and suicide prevention 48.3%

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For The Year Ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
REVENUE		
Operating Activities	6,938,153	6,992,764
Other income	11,629	(18,457)
Cost of goods sold	(198,718)	(129,169)
Gross surplus	6,751,063	6,845,138
EXPENSES		
Labour	(5,638,284)	(4,907,986)
Administration	(276,249)	(248,613)
Utilities & Telephone	(92,221)	(145,898)
Occupancy	(253,812)	(296,336)
Operating	(321,974)	(270,981)
Depreciation & Amortisation	(1,025,064)	(679,827)
Interest Expense	(130,445)	(107,092)
	(7,738,049)	(6,656,733)
Surplus for the year	(986,985)	188,405
Other comprehensive income		
Total comprehensive income for the year	(986,985)	188,405



LOOKING
FORWARD

Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney is committed to supporting those in crisis and is focusing on strong governance that can ensure an effective and viable organisation providing high quality services to the community.

Our Board has been reshaped with experienced members who bring expertise in governance, finance, community services and marketing.

In July 2022, CEO Brad Hannagan left Lifeline and moved to another organisation. We thank Brad for his time at Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney and the contribution he made to the organisation.

In September 2022 we appointed a new CEO, Veronica Macdonald, who brings significant experience in community services operational management. Veronica will be supported by our leadership team, which has demonstrated professionalism and resilience during this time of transition.

As always, our corporate and community partners are invaluable in providing financial and in-kind support and enthusiastic volunteers.

Volunteers have always been at the centre of making Lifeline an effective and community-connected service. In retail, crisis support and events we are indebted to the many volunteers that contribute their time and skills to supporting our Lifeline work.

COVID's impact on our Lifeline shops has affected our income for the last financial year. The Uniting Church NSW.ACT has assisted us to navigate these challenging times and ensure we are an effective and viable organisation.

We are grateful to Lifeline Australia for its continuing support and look forward to further opportunities for collaboration.

As we enter the new financial year we are creating and implementing new strategies to increase our income. Our competent staff team and Board are implementing a new collaborative governance model and working together to create a resilient and sustainable future.

Leadership Team 2022-23

CEO

Veronica Macdonald

**General Manager Crisis
Support and Suicide
Prevention**

Leesa Potter

**General Manager Retail and
Distribution**

Sandra Cartwright

Corporate Services Manager

Nitasha Prasad

Finance Manager

Nicole Cannon



Veronica Macdonald
CEO

Lives on Dharawal land.

**MBA, Dip Welfare/Community Mgt, Dip
Leadership, Cert Change Management.**

Veronica is an experienced leader who brings vision and change management methodology to supporting organisations and communities. A professional who brings both business acumen and a strong commitment to community welfare, Veronica has over 25 years' experience working in the non-profit sector, developing community services and leading, and managing teams. With demonstrated experience and skills in strategic planning, coaching, community development, cross-cultural engagement, finance, business and organisational change, she has worked in local community settings and with Uniting NSW/ACT in senior leadership roles, focusing on homelessness, multicultural and disability services.

Board Members



Peter Andrews OAM
DEPUTY CHAIR

B. Econ; Graduate Marketing Diploma

With qualifications in economics and marketing, Peter has a strong background in business, finance, marketing, strategy and governance. After nearly 40 years with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (where he held senior executive roles, including General Manager Victoria, and Australia-wide responsibilities for both retail sales performance and information technology) Peter commenced his own mentoring and consultancy practice focusing on providing independent business advice to the information technology and not-for-profit sectors as well as to owners and managers across a wide range of small business.

Among his numerous Board roles in both the secular world and within the Uniting Church, Peter is a past-Chair of Lifeline Macarthur. Other Uniting Church Board roles include Chairperson of each of the national Audit Finance & Risk and Safe Church Governance committees as well as Chair of the state Governance and Nominations committee and the Treasury and Investment function (Uniting Church (NSW) Trust Association).

He has a strong interest in providing personal mentoring to younger/emerging leaders and managers.



Rev Andy Carlisle

Degrees in Genetics, Church History and Masters Degree.

Andy has served on the Lifeline Macarthur & Western Sydney Board since 2018, and is currently in placement as the minister of Campbelltown Regional Mission. This follows placements in Wollongong and Canberra. Andy grew up in Scotland and was initially a minister of the Church of Scotland before transferring to the Uniting Church.



Tina Rendell-Thornton
CHAIR

M. Social Administration; Grad. Dip. Ed; B.A.; Assoc. Dip Community Services

Passionate about making a difference to those on the edge of the community, Tina Rendell-Thornton has spent the last 45 years working and volunteering in community and Church organisations. Tina has experience in managing community services, serving on numerous Boards and Management Committees, she was the Executive Director of the Uniting Church NSW.ACT Mission Dept for 11 years and Head of Operations for family and community services for Uniting in SW Sydney. Tina has been chair of the Governance and Finance Committee for UnitingWorld, the National Church Life Survey and the SW Sydney Forum of SHS Homelessness service providers and government representatives. Tina brings experience in developing services and strategies that creatively respond to emerging challenges with an inclusive and participatory culture and strong governance systems.



Madelyn Blackley

BComs, CA

Maddy is a Chartered Accountant who has over 15 years experience in the public sector and private firms. Maddy has worked at Kelly Partners South West Sydney for over seven years as a Manager, and has been closely involved with many local charity organisations during this time. Maddy joined the Board for Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney in late 2021, and is excited to offer her services and skills to this valuable organisation.



Martin Teulan

BA Dip Ed, MA Th. Std.

Martin Teulan has worked in health, education, social services, diocese, parish, electronic media and overseas Mission for the Catholic Church. He has also worked with the Uniting Church, the Bible Society and Indigenous and not-for-profit organisations, as a CEO, Senior Executive and Board Member. Martin was National Director of Catholic Mission and led international conferences at the Vatican in that role. Martin developed CathNews into the most read religious website in Australia and launched another seven e-news services. He was COO of Church Resources, the largest purchasing group worldwide for not-for-profits and currently is the Research Development Manager for NCLS Research and a consultant.



Warren Back

Bachelor of Science and Diploma of Veterinary Pharmacology.

Warren is the Asia Pacific Regulatory Affairs Lead for MSD, a multinational pharmaceutical company in Asia Pacific. He lives in Glen Alpine and for over 40 years has attended Campbelltown Regional Mission Uniting Church. He served CUC as Treasurer for 30 years and is a member of the Church Council and the Property Committee. He has a background in science and in medical research and development and he currently provides governance and support to Asia Pacific and global medicines policy, compliance, and manufacturing teams.

HELP US CREATE SUICIDE SAFER COMMUNITIES



Volunteer with Us

Do you want to make a difference to people's lives? You can learn new skills, meet new people and help us towards an Australia free of suicide by volunteering with Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney. We need volunteers who can help in our retail stores, provide telephone crisis support, pick up and sort donated items, and assist at events. We value your time and will make sure you are trained to fulfil your role. Become a part of our team and together we can support people in crisis, no matter where they are, 24 hours a day.

Visit
www.lifelinemws.org.au/volunteering
for more information and to register.

Partner with Us

Community and business partners have been critical to the success of Lifeline Macarthur and Western Sydney from its inception. Those partnerships have increased Lifeline's capacity to support people in crisis and educate communities.

You can support us through:

- Becoming a regular donor
- Donating in kind
- Introducing workplace giving
- Onsite Lifeline donation bins or corporate clothing collection points
- Event sponsorship

Contact us on (02) 4645 7200
to find out more

Train with Us

We deliver a wide range of training courses to corporate businesses and community groups across our region of 15 LGAs. Our dedicated training programs are facilitated by accredited trainers who work with participants to promote an inclusive culture or workplace that destigmatises mental health issues and encourages help-seeking.

Contact our Training Team on
(02) 4645 7200 to learn more.



Lifeline

Macarthur and Western Sydney

lifelinemacarthur.org.au