



Annual Report

2019/20

We're with you.



CatholicCare
Social Services



**We're
with you.**



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We're with you.

As the social services agency of the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba, CatholicCare provides a range of services to promote individual, family and community wellbeing.

From humble beginnings in 1983 of lunchtime counselling sessions conducted by volunteer workers, CatholicCare now employs approximately 50 staff and over 170 volunteers that service an area of nearly 500,000km² in Southwest Queensland.

CatholicCare supports all clients in an inclusive environment that welcomes diversity. CatholicCare is welcoming of and support/work with clients from:

- All cultural backgrounds including refugees, migrants and new settlers to Toowoomba
- First Nations People
- All religious and spiritual beliefs
- All relationships and family's structures

Vision

A community of kindness and justice reflecting Christ's mission.

Mission

Our mission is to empower individuals, families and communities to meet the challenges of life and relationships.

Values

Our values inform the way that our people relate to the community, to those we serve and to each other.

Supporting families at the pressure points over their lifespan

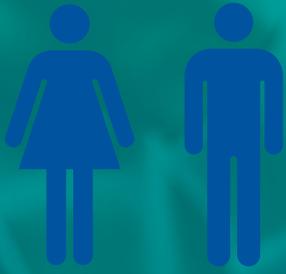
Our Services include:

- Family Support Program (Counselling, Education and Family Dispute Resolution)
- Toowoomba Refugee and Migrant Support (TRAMS)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Service
- Employee Assistance Program and
- Mental Health Services (including Partners in Recovery)

Our Team

Our staff are a diverse, eclectic group of caring individuals whose personal values align perfectly with CatholicCare's mission to 'empower individuals, families and communities'.

With a wide range of qualifications, expertise and life experience our staff have the perfect mix to go above and beyond a basic service and put great outcomes for our clients within an arm's reach.



THOSE WE'VE HELPED:

737

Individual Counselling
Sessions Delivered

823

Family's Assisted
Through Mediation



STAFF MEMBERS COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS:

Migrants

12

Indigenous

5

OFFICES:

Toowoomba

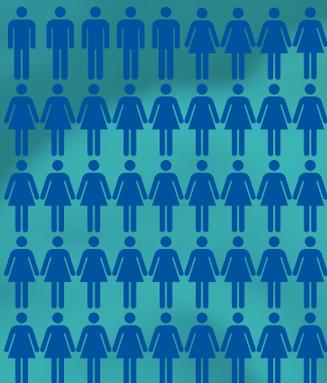
40

Roma

3

St George

1



STAFF MEMBERS:

Male

13

Female

32

Total

45

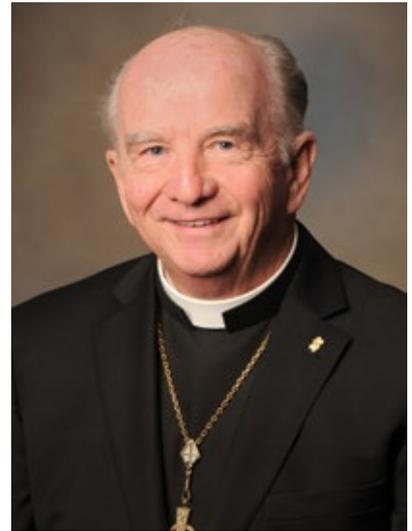
From the Bishop

CatholicCare is the social services agency of the Diocese of Toowoomba, whose mission is to empower individuals, families and communities to overcome the challenges of life - and in the 2019-2020 year it has once more supported hundreds of people throughout the Darling Downs and Southwest Queensland. Working from a strong values-base of compassion and justice, CatholicCare staff and volunteers have demonstrated these values as they made a difference in the lives of those they have journeyed with! This was particularly apparent during the COVID 19 crisis, bringing both challenges and opportunities that CatholicCare has responded to as they cared for people in new and creative ways.

Throughout these times of change, we rely upon CatholicCare to show leadership, humility and love, working every day with those who are vulnerable or in need and acting as a source of hope during times of struggle. May God continue to bless this work, those who serve and those who are served.



Bishop Robert McGuckin



“

Throughout these times of change, we rely upon CatholicCare to show leadership, humility and love...

”

Chairperson's Report

2019-2020 has certainly presented some unique and unexpected challenges locally and across the globe. Crippling drought, bushfires and a global Pandemic have tested even the strongest among us. Throughout all of this, the Board has proactively worked to support the continuation and effectiveness of all our key programs.

Our Strategic Plan for 2020-2023 focuses on strengthening a number of key areas: consultation and collaboration with our key stakeholders, with a particular emphasis on feedback; broadening our models of service delivery; and being outcomes focussed to ensure we continue in our deliberate pursuit of excellence.

The tyranny of distance and geographically dispersed population across our region has long been an issue for service providers. Improvements in technology have enabled us to rethink and transform our service delivery models, allowing us to improve efficiency while also reducing barriers to clients being able to participate i.e. time and cost of travel as well as impact of travel restrictions, lockdowns and border closures.

There is no question that our strong foundations and forward-thinking approach allowed CatholicCare to pivot and respond to the demand for services across our region, at a time when we were needed the most.

I sincerely thank all Board members for their commitment throughout the year and as this is my last Annual Report as Chair, welcome Andrea Frost to the role of Chair and Ken Avenell to the role of Deputy Chair. I also acknowledge the remarkable work of our Executive Director, Executive Leadership Team, and all staff in continuing to serve our community to such a high standard, despite the challenges of the year past.

As the pages that follow show, CatholicCare has much to be proud of as it continues to cement its position as a leading provider of social services in Toowoomba and Southwest Queensland.



John Olive



“

Improvements in technology have enabled us to rethink and transform our service delivery models...

”

Executive Director's Report



CatholicCare delivers a wide range of support for individuals, families and communities across the Darling Downs and Southwest Queensland, and we are passionate about making a difference at the pressure points of life for those we journey with.

Our staff and volunteers work hard to deliver high quality, respectful and tailored services to people from diverse backgrounds, beliefs and circumstances and I want to acknowledge and thank them for their care and commitment, that has shone throughout this very challenging year. The support of our funders, partners, and donors also enables us to respond to the needs of those we serve, and we continue to be very grateful for all their backing.

The challenges presented by COVID-19 in the second half of this financial year gave us an opportunity to demonstrate flexibility and creativity in delivering our services to so many, whether working remotely or on site via phone and video-conferencing as well as face to face support. On behalf of the Executive team, I want to say how very proud we are of our CatholicCare staff and how magnificently they responded to the many challenges that were placed before them.

It was almost on a moment's notice that staff were relocated from our offices and asked to work remotely from home. The pandemic resulted in

our entire team working from home for two months (and in many cases with the addition of home schooling duties!), where they continued to provide excellent services for our clients in their usual caring way. We worked incredibly hard to adapt during this time and ensure we continued to provide services that achieve our Mission and recognise that out of challenge has come some new learnings that have improved our service offering.

I would like to give my sincere gratitude and appreciation to John Olive who as Chair of our Board, has guided CatholicCare for the last four years. He has brought a deep commitment to ensuring that the most vulnerable in our communities are supported, as well as overseeing the continued growth of the organisation. Thank you John, for your guidance and grace.

Finally I wish to thank our amazing leadership team for their extraordinary commitment to the organisation, its clients and stakeholders – you each inspire and encourage me and confirm that I have the best job in the world!

This annual report is a whole-of-organisation summary of CatholicCare's work in 2019-20, a small snapshot of the ways in which we have made a difference to families, local businesses, First Nations people and those from refugee backgrounds. It shows the breadth and depth of the work we do, some of the interesting programs we have developed, the people we have connected with and the communities we serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Venables', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kate Venables
Executive Director

“

...we are passionate about making a difference at the pressure points of life for those we journey with.

”

Corporate Governance

CatholicCare Social Services is committed to delivering services that empower individuals, families and communities to meet the challenges of life and relationships while meeting the needs of our diverse community.

Throughout 2019/20, CatholicCare Social Services:

- Strengthened strategic partnerships to support service delivery
- Committed to building ongoing workforce capability and the development of workplace culture

This strengthened direction has led to the development of a number of new programs and increase in the accessibility of:

- Counselling and Education services
- Refugee and Migrant Support Services and
- Family Support Services

CatholicCare's Board initiated extensive community consultation with a number of organisations including Commonwealth Department of Social Services Queensland Health (Division of Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services), Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, Education Queensland, TAFE Qld, Toowoomba Regional Council, Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, Toowoomba International Multicultural Society, Refugee Talent, Heritage Bank and University of Southern Queensland, to identify service gaps and any unmet needs within the community.

Bishop Robert McGuckin

Catholic Diocese of
Toowoomba

CatholicCare Board

Executive Director



The CatholicCare Senior Leadership Team

Our Board

Ms Andrea Frost

Deputy Chairperson

Andrea has served on the CatholicCare Social Services board since 2015 and was appointed to the role of Deputy Chairperson late 2016.

She has enjoyed an extensive career in journalism, communication and stakeholder engagement and currently works co-ordinating media and communications for Toowoomba Catholic Schools.

Andrea holds a Bachelor of Education from USQ as well as a Master of Arts (Journalism and Mass Communication) from Griffith University.



Dr Ken Auenell

Member

Ken's passion for the Educational sector is clearly reflected within an exceptional career that started in 1979. He is currently employed as Assistant Director of Formation and Identity for Toowoomba Catholic Education.

Over the course of his career, Ken has been the recipient of many awards namely, Excellence in Educational Leadership, Excellence in Educational Administration, and Outstanding Leadership in Education, Educational Writing and Research.

Ken also recently held the role of President for SPELD Qld from 2014 – 2018.



Ms Wendy Agar

Member

Wendy has served on the CatholicCare Social Services Board since 2018 and currently holds the role of CEO at Magenta Community Services.

She holds a Diploma of Teaching (Primary), a Graduate Diploma of Human Resources Management, a diploma of tourism management and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company directors. She has extensive leadership experience across education, agriculture, banking and regional development sectors and was CEO of Toowoomba's Sunrise Way Rehab when it was named the 2018 national OPTUS 'Not For Profit Business of the Year'.



Mr Andrew Ward

Member

Andrew is a respected accountant, specialising in finance and risk management. He is currently employed as a Senior Chartered Accountant for the Horizon Accounting Group. Andrew brings a wealth of financial expertise, not just on a local level but on an international level. He has international experience in financial professionalism from 11 years of corporate finance experience within multiple industry-leading multibillion-dollar companies, across the banking and agricultural industries. Andrew is known for his knowledgeable financial insight and control and analysis skillset. His experience extends to risk management, policy development and evolving controls & efficiencies within businesses and organisations, making him a valuable talent to our CatholicCare board.



Father Ray Crowley

Member

Father Ray Crowley has served on the CatholicCare Social Services board since 2016. Originally a student of St Joseph's and St Mary's in Toowoomba, Father Ray was ordained in 1972 and served in Parishes in Warwick, South Toowoomba and Roma.



In 1982, Father Ray was entrusted to initiate the Counselling Departments in two of our Diocesan Colleges, building and supporting the departments of Counsellors and Chaplains across the Catholic Framework.

Today Father Ray provides support to Chaplains in Catholic Education and has a wider involvement in the community, particularly facilitating groups for those affected by grief and walking with those who are dying.

Ms Carla Canning

Member

Carla is an enthusiastic people-focused leader who has extensive experience in working within a not-for-profit organisation. She currently works at Toowoomba Clubhouse, a registered NDIS provider of mental health services.



Carla holds a Certificate in Counselling (Drugs & Alcohol), a Bachelor in Human Services (Counselling), a Certification for Nicotine Addiction and Smoking Cessation and a Cert IV Training & Assessment.

Carla brings an abundance of experience in drug and alcohol rehabilitation, counselling, mentoring, project management, training design and delivery, event coordination, human resources and public speaking.

Mr Patrick Nunan

Member

Pat has an accomplished legal career with extensive experience across personal injury, aviation and commercial litigation and is a qualified Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland and High Court of Australia.



He has a strong affiliation for community, dedicating more than 40 years of service to various Not for Profit organisations. His career experiences support invaluable contributions to corporate governance, breaking down isolation and providing a voice to communities, while supporting sustainability and development of organisational objectives.

Dr Lachlan Rathie

Member

Dr Lachlan Rathie currently works as Senior Staff Anaesthetist at the Toowoomba Base Hospital, and has spent the last ten years serving tenures as Departmental Director and Deputy Director as well as the Supervisor of Training.



Lachlan has a proven track record in providing high-quality services in regional areas within a cross cultural environment and strong leadership of multidisciplinary teams within a consultative environment.

Ms Ariane deRoy

Member

Ariane is a versatile, commercially focused business advisor with extensive experience partnering with business leaders to achieve commercial and operational success.



Her experience extends to strategic reviews and planning, governance advisory, forecasting and budget management, management accounts, risk management, investment cases and contracts management. She is well known for her collaborative nature and providing fresh ideas.

Our Supporters

Commonwealth Government Funding

CatholicCare has been successful in gaining status as an NDIS provider which enables us to deliver support coordination and counselling.

The Department of Social Services provides funding for CatholicCare Social Services:

- Family Relationship Centre
- Future Families
- Family and Relationship Services
- Rural Mediation services
- Separated Parental support
- BLESS
- Which Way
- Settlement Grant Program & SETS (Settlement Engagement Transition Support)

The Department of Health (via SW QLD Psychosocial Support Program), provide funding for:

- Western QLD PHN

State Government Funding

The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability provides funding for CatholicCare Social Services:

- Youth Bail Support Service

The Department of Justice provides funding for CatholicCare Social Services:

- Community Justice Service

Donations

A number of generous donors provided much needed financial support for our TRAMS & WHADDUP programs..

Partnerships and Collaboration

Throughout 2019/20, CatholicCare Social Services partnered with or worked collaboratively with a number of organisations, including:

- Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce
- Catholic Agencies including:
St Vincent's Hospital,
Toowoomba Catholic Schools
- University of Southern Queensland
- TAFE Qld
- Education Queensland
- Community & Private Family Law Firms
- Toowoomba International Multicultural Society (TIMS)
- Carbal
- Goolburri
- Lives Lived Well
- Murri Court





Families & individuals

We know at times we all need some additional support; particularly during pressure points of life, where adjustments may be needed as a result of:

- separation or new relationships
- the move to parenthood
- dealing with career changes or living locations; drought or retirement

We provide a safe environment where a highly trained therapist will listen and assist people dealing with their situation, whatever that may be.

We provide a number of family and

relationship services, designed to empower families to strengthen relationships or to assist families through separation.

We offer workshops to support parents:

- in Bringing Up Great Kids
- in post-separation parenting education with our SPARK Program

- As well as offering individual and family counselling, and facilitating access to legal advice

Our team of fully qualified counsellors, Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners and Nationally Accredited Mediators assist with mediation for family disputes and workplace conflicts via our Employee Assistance Programs.

727

Families helped through separation

135

SPARK Workshops

81

Clients attended at least 1 SPARK (Separated Parents are Raising Kids) workshop

Counselling for families and individuals

We provide a range of family and relationship education programs and personalised, professional and ethically-based counselling services to assist with:

- Forming new relationships
- Overcoming relationship difficulties
- Dealing with separation
- Parenting and the care of children
- Changes in career or living locations
- The transition to retirement and
- Dealing with drought

991

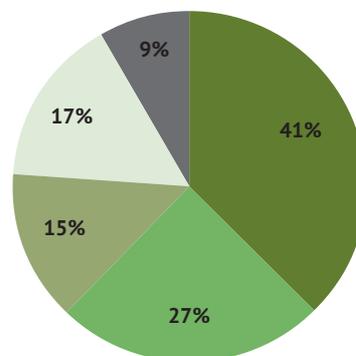
Counselling Clients

2994

Counselling Sessions

PRESENTING ISSUES:

- Family and relationships
- Separation and family breakdown
- Children and young people
- Health and well-being
- Work issues



Toowoomba Family and Relationship Centre

CatholicCare delivers personalised family and relationship services through The Toowoomba Family Relationship Centre.

We work with separated or separating parents to help them develop a Parenting Plan. We journey with parents to help them work out what is the best for their children and then make it work.

For some parents we have extra supports we can put in place, including working with lawyers to help the conversation. We have the option of using our Child Consultant, not so that the children can be the decision-makers but so that the parents can hear their voice. We also offer property mediation for those clients who need it.

Our Family Relationship Centre staff come from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures, so we are able to work with all families in ways that are tailored to their needs.

121

Joint Sessions delivered

126

group and individual pre mediation information sessions delivered to clients

937

phone and video sessions provided

322

outreach information sessions delivered

144

free Individual Legal Advice Sessions offered to clients via our partnering community and private Family Lawyers

85%

of joint sessions reached some form of agreement

Property Mediation

In 2019, CatholicCare introduced a property mediation service supporting separated partners to negotiate and agree on financial matters without litigation. Our mediators work with both parties separately and then together to help confirm what assets and debts each party has. We then facilitate respectful discussions about how those assets and debts will be shared.

6

separated couples have utilised the Joint Property Mediation Service.

“Thanks so much. I really felt we achieved a lot today and it was so much easier to communicate with another person helping... I look forward to our next session in a few weeks.”

Rural Family Dispute Resolution

Property Mediation, Mediation and Dispute Resolution services to families managing conflict and developing parenting plans across the Southwest Queensland region.

47

Joint Sessions delivered

435

phone and video sessions provided



Legally Assisted Family Dispute Resolution

Our clients' lack of legal advice was often inhibiting agreements in family law disputes, resulting in families (including children) unnecessarily experiencing the significant ill-effects of protracted parental conflict.

Since 2017, CatholicCare has been committed to improving our working relationships with our private and community legal partners, with the aim of making individual legal advice and support during a Joint Family Dispute Resolution Session available to vulnerable clients.

These relationships with family law professionals have grown to the point that we now have MOUs in place with 12 private law firms in Toowoomba. These MOUs include a commitment from the law firms to provide quality legal advice to our clients during the mediation process, a service that is generally delivered to our clients at no cost.

We have seen great value in having the option to provide clients this service. Between July 2019 and June 2020 there were 18 Legally Assisted Joint Session, and 144 free individual legal advice appointments.

The decision to use lawyers in these Joint Sessions is based on an assessment where there is potentially a higher risk to the clients and/or the child and potentially a reduced ability of one client to be able to negotiate with the other. Without the support of lawyers in these session it is likely the case would have been deemed inappropriate to proceed, or there would have been no agreement or potentially a greater risk of harm to a client or a child.

Our current MOU partners have either one or two MOUs: for the future needs of children (parenting) and/or final property settlement (property). Our current MOU partners are:

Kennedy Spanner Lawyers
– Parenting

ATSILS

– Parenting

Brises Lawyers

– Parenting

Best Wilson Buckley

– Parenting and Property

Clewett Lawyers

– Parenting and Property

Dean Kath Kohler Solicitors

– Parenting and Property

Donaldson Law

– Parenting and Property

Hede Burne and Hall

– Parenting

MacDonald Law

– Parenting and Property

Murdoch Lawyers

– Parenting

TASC

– Parenting

Wonderley and Hall Solicitors

– Parenting and Property

18

Legally Assisted Mediations completed.

144

Free individual legal advice appointments.

12

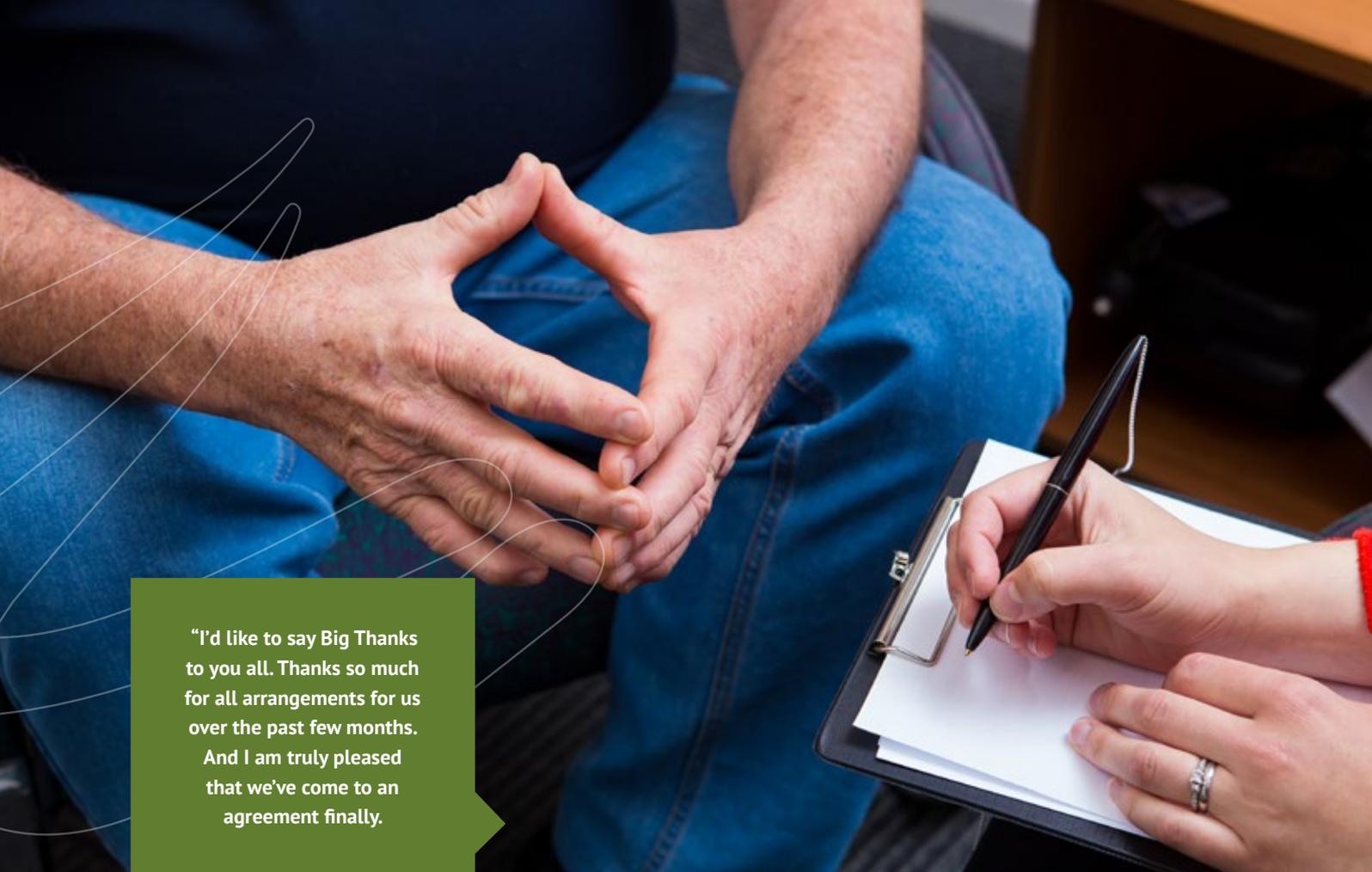
MOUs in place with community and private legal firms regarding LAFDR options for clients.

“The Bear has turned around now.”

The 11 year old girl chose the Bear card for dad where the bear was sitting with his back to everyone. She explained that she didn't like going to Dad's because he ignored her and she felt invisible.

When Dad heard this feedback, he cried. He said he had been so busy with his work and his new family unit with two toddlers that he hadn't realised. He said he was going to make some changes.

When I called the girl some weeks later to check in how things were going I asked her what was happening with the bear with his back to us? The little girl sounded happy when she said the bear had turned around to face her. He had asked what she wanted for dinner and she had said burritos and he had made them. She said things had changed and it was better.



“I’d like to say Big Thanks to you all. Thanks so much for all arrangements for us over the past few months. And I am truly pleased that we’ve come to an agreement finally.”

Family Law Pathways Network

As the centre point for Family Law Pathways Network, we are also connected with allied professionals in the family law space and can refer clients to external support services.

The Court Kiosk

CatholicCare established The Court Kiosk in partnership with Family Law Pathways Network and The Toowoomba Federal Circuit Court. CatholicCare’s Family Relationship Centre team operates the Court Kiosk and focuses on supporting Culturally & Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

The Court Kiosk is set up on sitting dates to:

- Assist separated parties, lawyers and Federal Circuit Court staff with

brochures and information regarding local family law services

- Offer written materials covering general information on topics relevant to family law e.g. child development information
- Discuss the individual needs of interested participants to determine what local services or information may be of benefit to the participant or their family
- Provide a hub for volunteers representing local family law services. These volunteers may complete internal referrals for services offered by their organisation (with the participant’s consent) or provide contact information for other local family law services

Community Action Dinners

In conjunction with the Future Families program, CatholicCare hosted 4 Community Action Dinners

throughout the year. The aim of these dinners is to engage with CaLD (Culturally & Linguistically Diverse) communities with the Toowoomba region and support connections to local resources, reducing barriers people in these communities may experience. CatholicCare staff, together with key cultural advisors and leaders share information, encouraging community engagement and connectedness. Guest speakers at the dinners covered a number of topics including:

- Interpreting support, 3 different employment opportunities and skilling for QLD work project
- tenancy skills institute to support understanding of rights and responsibilities
- personal and in-home care services

Each of the dinners was well supported with between 22 – 40 participants attending each dinner.

“You’re the fairy Godmother.”

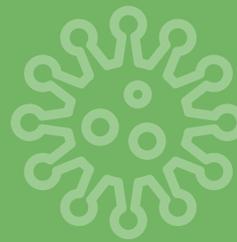
Mum and dad regularly use our service. Mum has considerable mental health issues and therefore often finds it difficult to resolve disputes without a third party. On this occasion, Mum had moved and could not understand why child 8 did not want to spend time with her, often calling Dad to pick him up of an afternoon.

I was able to do a child-focused session regarding what it might be like for the child in Mum’s new surroundings. The feedback from this allowed Mum to see that the child did not have his own space as his sibling, from a previous relationship occupied the only spare room. The older sibling was not able to share his space because of behavioural tendencies relating to autism.

After discussion, Mum was able to recognise that her younger son needed a special place for sleeping and his feeling of belonging and being welcome. Mum thought she would be able to use the downstairs lounge area and make it a more permanent sleeping and recreational area for the child. She was going to save up to buy a 2nd hand TV and place some family photos on the wall and create a cozy environment. After this discussion Mum said to me, ‘I know who you are, you’re the fairy godmother’.

This was such a powerful reminder of the importance of our child-focused work towards allowing the parents to see a situation from the child’s perspective.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC Our response



TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICE DELIVERY

During 2019-20, CatholicCare committed to transforming service delivery and utilising technology to better service clients in rural and remote areas. The work that had been done in this area meant that we were able to quickly pivot and adapt our service delivery, ensuring minimal disruption to our clients and an overall increase in flexibility for clients to access our services.

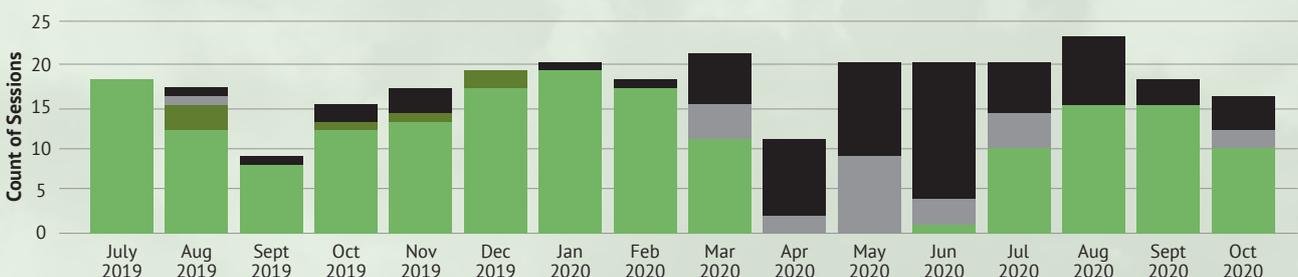
The increase in utilisation of video technology for counselling and mediations has significantly improved timeframes, as clients are able to avoid logistical challenges and sometimes lengthy travel times as they can simply attend counselling sessions and/or mediation from the comfort of their home. This has been especially helpful for clients where one partner lives in our region and the other partner lives

elsewhere in Australia (particularly considering border restrictions).

Overwhelmingly, more people are wanting flexible service arrangements to fit in with their busy lives. Consequently, we are now confidently offering a hybrid of different formats for family dispute resolution, allowing us to improve our reach in Rural and Remote areas.

Count of Sessions by Year, Month and Contact Method

Contact Method: ■ Centre based ■ Outreach ■ Telephone ■ Video conference





First Nations People

Yumbin means together/all of us and is CatholicCare's First Nations People team. Our team has built up strong relationships with many sectors over the past 16 years and are trusted within in the community.

Our team focuses on assisting youth and adults through the justice system and supporting those in the Murri Court System to make changes in their lives.

We work with young people and their families in the youth justice system and empower young people through our youth programs, encouraging them to strive to become future leaders of our community.

We offer opportunities for personal and professional development for our First Nations volunteer mentors.

We build our staff's awareness of First Nations culture through training with First Nations people and throughout 2019-20 we have continued to be actively seeking First Nations businesses who can provide products and services to our organisation.

In 2019-20 we sponsored Research into best practice for supporting First Nations youth through a PhD sponsorship with USQ. The research is titled 'Exploring Regional Youth Group Engagement and Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' and is due for completion in 2021.



Community Justice Group/Murri Court

Murri Court is about supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Justice System. The objective of Murri Court is to reduce the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being incarcerated. Since the Toowoomba re-instatement of Murri Court in August 2016, 166 clients have been sentenced. Out of the 166 there have been 0 clients sent to jail.

The Murri Court process has supported these clients to become better parents, reduce their drug or alcohol consumption and improve their health by having their Health 715 checks completed as part of their bail conditions.

A Respected Person on the Murri Court said "I am proud to be part of a process that keeps families together. Instead of sending offenders to jail we

are showing them the supports that are around for our men and women to make positive changes in their lives".

255

sessions with clients include court support and cultural meetings with Elders

24

referred to Lives Lived Well for drug and alcohol counselling

20

males referred to Carbal Medical Service for the Strong Father's mens group

44

Referrals to Murri Court

Youth Bail Support

Our Youth Bail Support program works with other agencies to help prevent crime, & act early in reconnecting young people to make healthy choices, support good behaviour and a positive future.

We support young people on bail with:

- Accommodation
- Education
- Life Skills
- Restorative Justice
- Court support
- Cultural activities
- Employment
- Centrelink payments
- Obtaining Identification
- Obtaining Learner Driver's License

YBS have received positive feedback from Youth Justice about the work they are doing with young people.

The Youth Bail Program - has had success with getting young people stable accommodation and job opportunities. In one week alone, the Youth Bail Support workers managed to get 3 young people off the streets and set them up with support services.

The Youth Bail Support team have been supporting a 15 year old girl for the past 12 months, she had no family support and was basically doing it on her own. She had been in trouble and had appeared in court a number of times. With the support of Youth Bail Support specialist youth worker, she attended a restorative justice session

with great outcomes. She is now on a better path and has confidence in herself.

34

referrals to Youth Bail Support

369

sessions with young people

"The young person is on a much better path thanks to all the support your team have given her. I'm sure she may falter many times but she is a strong girl especially with your team in her corner. I wish more people that work with young people had the depth of your team's commitment. So many workers jump in and out of young lives and there is no consistency. Consistency is the one thing they are missing - your team gives that to young people."

Whaddup Youth Group

Whaddup is a youth program exclusively for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth aged between 10-17 years. Whaddup is held on Friday nights during school term in Toowoomba.

Whaddup focuses on reinforcing healthy lifestyle choices and deterring youth from risk taking behaviours. Whaddup operates within a drug and alcohol-free environment and

provides a safe space for youths to be themselves, to celebrate and strengthen connection to country. CatholicCare facilitates transport to and from the venue for all participants.

Whaddup activities included:

- Planting/gardening of seasonal vegetables and herbs for WW garden
- Valentines art activity for family
- Father's Day craft activity
- Photo collage from Which Way camp
- Cooking classes
- Tree of Life, painted on Whaddup wall
- Cancer Council Handmade Daffodil's
- Pottery
- Christmas craft activity
- Mother's Day craft activity
- Origami activity
- Halloween colour in posters
- Macrame hanging pot plant holder

16

Average number of youth per session

224

attendances during 2019-20

6

Whaddup Volunteers



“We had 2 murri youth with the same surname, which started conversation about whether or not they were related. After chatting with 1 of the youth’s parents asking about their family ties, it came to our attention that these 2 young people were 2nd cousins. They were so happy to find out that they were related and that they are cousins! Such a great outcome when Whaddup not only connects community together but family as well.”

Which Way

For 3 days every school holiday, children aged from 8 – 17 from Toowoomba's diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities are invited to attend CatholicCare's Which Way school holiday program.

The Which Way program strives to connect indigenous young people to self, family, community, culture and country through developing their skills to imagine, learn, lead, communicate and collaborate. Participants have the opportunity to grow through literacy & self expression with traditional practices, visual art, craft, music, dance, storytelling & multi-media.

We have continued in our purposes:

- To create more socially and culturally aware leaders and young people that will pave the way towards a brighter future
- To engage, inspire and empower Indigenous youth to grow proud and resilient, to pursue active and valued roles in the community
- Develop leaders and powerful voices through nurturing meaningful connection to kin, culture, community, country and opportunity
- Ensuring that all voices are heard, valued and recognised in consultation with key people such as elders, young people, community reps and families
- Provide knowledge, communication skills and trust building skills to young people and their current leaders
- For all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to have a strong sense of belonging and identity to family, community, culture and country
- Provide experiences that passes on cultural knowledge and information to create a sense of belonging and express themselves as individual and community representatives

CAMP COOBY WINTER CAMP JULY 2019

PARTICIPANTS Male: 9 Female: 16

- Astronomy University of Southern Queensland - Experience the wonders of the night sky and learn about astronomy
- NATJUL Indigenous Performing Arts - Using drama, story-telling and theatre elements working together exploring possible ways forward to support ideas, values and actions we can commit to around 'safer children' in our families and community
- Digital Story Tellers - Impact stories with positive narratives to make a difference in the world
- Runnin' Rebels Basketball Association (Pop Dickerson) - Sports and keeping active life style session
- Camp Cooby Activities - Onsite activities designed to stimulate your senses, body and mind including Mountain Bike Trail, Rock Climbing, Archery, Team building and problem solving exercises.

SPRING HOLIDAY PROGRAM SEPTEMBER 2019

PARTICIPANTS Male: 13 Female: 14

- Highfields Danish Flower Art - Prepare gourds, creative ideas and decoration with cultural symbols to illustrate a story the youth wrote themselves.
- Indigenous Dreamtime Games (Dusty Wilson) - Designed to get participants active and give an insight into both the past and present cultural heritage of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Vintage Food Gardens - Teaching ecological literacy and respect for the Earth, along with important food production skill.

Thank you to our Volunteers

Elders, parents and volunteers promote social connectedness and play a valuable role in helping shape relationships with each other and build a strong community for the future. Volunteers are vital to the success of CatholicCare's First Nations People Programs'.

Our volunteers are drawn from across the community:

- Police Aboriginal Liaison Officer - QPS
- Cultural Practice Advisor – Toowoomba
- CSSC
- Kulilia Kindergarten & NAIDOC board member
- Tracks to Success Mentor – Lifeline Darling Downs
- Skills Coach – Oz Child
- Qld Ambulance Service
- Univeristy of Southern Queensland

A special thank you to our parents/guardians and many more valuable community members.

STRADBROKE SUMMER CAMP JAN 2020

PARTICIPANTS Male: 14 Female: 16

- The Goompi Trail - Historical walk with a local Aboriginal guide, learning about Aboriginal artifacts, traditional hunting methods, bush tucker, medicines, traditional ochre's and see the remnants of an old rock fish traps
- Sand Boarding - Held on North Stradbroke Island's own sand desert
- Stradbroke Museum - Dedicated to highlighting the stories and history of North Stradbroke Island – Minjerribah
- Brown Lake Stand Up Paddle Boarding - Home to a large spirit snake referred to as Yuri Kabool. Explored the native bush lands.
- Fishing - 2 hours of sea fishing
- Salt Water Murris Quandamooka Art Gallery - An Aboriginal contemporary visual arts and craft centre
- Cockatoo-Collins Studio - Delvene is the designer of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018 Prizewinners Medals, Commemorative Medal and the large inflatable Migalu, which featured in the Opening Ceremony



COVID-19 PANDEMIC Our response



We've been able to prove that even through a pandemic, there is still a way to connect with people and offer support.

It was very challenging to maintain the services delivered through these programs during the COVID-19 lockdowns, as our supports work best face to face when we are able to walk with our clients on their journey.

This meant that during the 2 months whilst CatholicCare was in lockdown, our staff maintained phone contact, checking in with the young people and clients each week. Everyone delighted in being able to reconnect as soon as it was safe to do so!

Even though we worked off-site we were still able to hold Murri Court via phone link.

The Youth Bail Support team were still able to support young people by keeping in contact with them during COVID-19.

The Whaddup Youth Coordinator also kept in touch with families of young people during COVID-19.



Refugees & Migrants

TRAMS

Our goal is to empower our newly arrived to become independent and self-reliant as soon as possible.

Toowoomba has a long history of welcoming humanitarian refugees and migrants, and for more than 15 years, our TRAMS Program has supported the settlement of those new arrivals.

We work with people on eligible visas, usually former refugees, who have been in Australia for more than 6 months and less than 5 years.

We work closely with Government departments, businesses and other service providers to develop local solutions to local issues around settlement.

Our program is focussed on helping people to transition to life in Toowoomba as smoothly as possible and to provide support to families, helping them to navigate Australian systems and our way of life.

Our services focus on fostering social participation, economic wellbeing, independence, personal wellbeing and community connectedness and include:

- Case work support to learn to navigate Australian systems
- Referrals to other organisations and services

- Making Toowoomba Home an orientation class for new arrivals
- TRAMS Homework Club for the family delivered at a partner school
- CatholicCare Interpreting
- Working with local organisations to develop community responsiveness to Toowoomba's culturally diverse community members.

Volunteers form a vital part of our vibrant community and help with things from caring for young children while their parents learn English, through to providing transport for our clients and assisting school students with homework and assignments.

Interpreting Support

Part of TRAMS' strategy to support successful settlement in the Toowoomba area is to ensure local services and organisations have access to the resources and skills they need to effectively work with newly arrived families.

Access to professional qualified interpreters is essential to work with clients with limited English. TRAMS supported ten interpreting interns with in-demand languages in Toowoomba to work through a formal training program and other activities toward national certification as interpreters.

Certification with the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters

(NAATI) acknowledges their ability to meet the professional standards expected in Australia for translating and interpreting, ensuring quality service provision and providing an employment pathway for these individuals.

Since the program began, two Kurdish Kurmanji interpreters have been recognised by NAATI, a significant achievement as there are only three recognised Kurdish Kurmanji interpreters in Queensland.

Feedback from local services and government departments accessing these interpreters has been very positive.

BLESS (Building Linkages to Empower South Sudanese)

The BLESS program came to completion on the 30th of June 2020. BLESS focused on supporting family harmony within the South Sudanese community of Toowoomba. The South Sudanese were the first migrant group in recent times to arrive in Queensland from 1996 to 2006. This program worked with diverse cultural values and norms of individuals and families to identify triggers and devise strategies to support people impacted by violence and to foster family harmony.

Program Focus:

- Relationship issues
- Parenting in Australia
- Acceptable forms of discipline & basic human rights
- Family budgeting
- The Australian educational system
- Abuse education - Australian rules & laws
- Lifestyle choices & healthy eating

Key Program Achievements:

- 97% of participants felt that the service providers understood and respected their cultural values and practices
- 90% of participants felt they built trust with the community and services through the program
- 93% of participants enjoyed meeting the service providers face to face at events
- Improved education around domestic violence referral support services, including DVAC & Qld Police
- Successful referral pathways were developed for the housing hub, migrant kindergarten & driving lessons support services

Through these activities trust developed between community members & service providers, and as a result there was an increase in understanding of Australian cultural values & practices. These are long-lasting achievements that will continue to empower the Southern Sudanese community.



A background image showing several pairs of hands, some clasped and some open, belonging to people of diverse ethnicities. The hands are positioned in a way that suggests a group activity or a shared experience. The lighting is soft, and the colors are muted, creating a calm and supportive atmosphere.

529

Clients engaged in
TRAMS Program

1075

referrals to other
programs

1600

sessions delivered
including casework and
group activities

78%

of those accessing
TRAMS Services were
from Iraq and Syria

80+

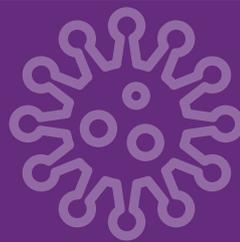
Toowoomba locals
volunteered each week

2750

volunteer hours before
group activities were
paused due to COVID-19

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Our response



INFORMING OUR COMMUNITY DURING COVID-19

In the initial confusion of COVID-19 Pandemic, there were many messages going out to the Australian community about new restrictions, quarantine measures, and social distancing practices. The limited English of the newly arrived families TRAMS supports, meant this time was very confusing and scary.

CatholicCare quickly mobilised, working with their in-house TRAMS Interpreters to translate these public safety messages into audio recordings for the Ezidi/Yazidi community to easily share and access. CatholicCare shared these audio resources with other organisations and the TRAMS Interpreters were engaged by other organisations, including Darling Downs Health Services, empowering them to create their own recordings targeted at the Ezidi/Yazidi community.

A large part of the success in the utilisation of the audio recordings was that reliable and correct information could be easily shared and accessed on demand.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL AND LANGUAGE DIVIDE

COVID-19 presented challenges to the delivery of the TRAMS services. All group work activities, like orientation classes, were put on hold. Casework continued to be delivered over the phone. The biggest challenge was that clients lacked the digital resources and often skills to engage easily via email and other electronic forms of communication. This issue was further confounded as most other services went online. Clients who had learnt to resolve many daily issues in a face-to-face format, once again required support from TRAMS Caseworkers. Caseworkers problem solved how they could help clients to complete online forms, upload documents and resolve issues over the phone. Many newly arrived families learnt new digital skills during this time.

The ability of clients to learn to utilise various digital platforms, during COVID-19, is a skill that will continue to be of benefit in the modern world. Life continues to move "online" and it is important

all families are able to navigate this world with competence and confidence. TRAMS has developed new basic digital literacy course that will then connect clients with other organisations delivering more advanced digital literacy classes to continue to develop their skills and competence.

DEVELOPING A LIBRARY OF AUDIO RESOURCES

While COVID-19 presented many challenges, there have been some unexpected learnings which will inform our ongoing practice. One of these is the utilisation of audio files, disseminating information in language. CatholicCare will continue developing a number of audio and video resources for newly arrived families in language. This library will improve efficiency and will allow TRAMS to allocate caseworker appointments for the clients most needing one-to-one support.





Local Businesses

Employee Assistance Program

We have traditionally supported schools and not-for-profit businesses in the social sector workplace with counselling, mediation and critical incident responses and now, in response to community need, we are making this affordable service available to the wider business community throughout our region.

Benefits of workplace Employee Assistance Programs or EAPs have been well-documented and include:

- Improved work performance and productivity
- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased staff retention
- Resolution of work-related problems

323

Number of people assisted through CatholicCare EAP

Now, more than ever, it is important that all businesses and organisations have easy access to an affordable EAP program. The CatholicCare Employee Assistance Program follows a pay per use model and includes:

- Confidential, short-term counselling
- On-site critical incident response
- Workplace mediation services and
- Training to support psychological wellbeing in the workplace

“Thank you so much! ... You were amazing and helped us both bring out our truths in a highly supported environment.”

EAP Mediation client

Individual counselling

There is a direct correlation between workplace productivity and mental health.

We provide proactive and preventative interventions that assist with identifying and resolving both work and personal problems that may adversely affect work performance and overall wellbeing. These sessions are delivered face-to-face, over the telephone or via video call.

Our counsellors cover a range of specialised areas including:

- Work related issues (including adjusting to change, bullying, trauma and managing conflict)
- Emotional stress, anxiety, conflict, tension and depression
- Separation, divorce or relationship difficulties
- Child and family issues
- Health and lifestyle issues (including drugs, alcohol and gambling)
- Financial and legal referral
- Grief and bereavement
- Personal trauma
- Conflict coaching

“I can’t do this any more!”

A CatholicCare EAP counsellor was working with a highly skilled employee who had almost reached a point of feeling completely burned out. This individual was experiencing workplace bullying, had a complex home life situation and was ready to quit their job as they felt they could not cope.

After several counselling sessions, this individual developed strategies and techniques to manage their situation and had a new perspective that was leading them in a more positive direction.”

Workplace mediations

CatholicCare Mediation team support conflict resolution within a workplace.

Our trained mediators support the impacted parties to:

- focus on communication, including detailed conversations around trust and respect. The parties are supported to communicate in an honest, positive, and constructive way including how to have future difficult conversations
- discuss how they will put the past behind them and focus on a beneficial future working relationship
- develop strategies to resolve future conflicts
- clearly understand each other's roles in the workplace to increase transparency and reduce future conflict

CatholicCare mediators provide recommendations to management on:

- how the workplace can support the parties to implement their agreements from mediation
- reducing impact of the conflict between parties on staff and others (e.g. children if mediation is occurring in a school environment)

Critical Incidents are unplanned events that impact a team or individual. They can include robberies, fatalities, assault, major incidents or natural disasters.

Generally, CatholicCare expect to have a clinician on site within 1 hour of notification of a critical incident occurring (pending distance and safety of the site). Providing prompt support for impacted employees is vital to their emotional health and well-being and the ongoing recovery and functioning of the organisation.

CatholicCare provide multiple options for on-site support, including group debriefing and one-on-one counselling.

ONSITE CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE

CatholicCare provided support for

14

critical incidents

7

schools or educational institutions

5

manufacturing businesses

2

service-based organisations

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

2

sudden death of staff member

1

staff member threat of suicide

3

staff suicide/death

1

death of a child/client

2

onsite suicide

4

redundancy

“Thank you so much for everything. There are people that enter your life and make an impact positively and you are one those people for me so thank you so much.”

Business Skills Connect

96% of Toowoomba businesses surveyed are open to hiring a migrant or refugee in their business.

CatholicCare partnered with Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce to establish employment relationships with local businesses and uncover job vacancies for migrant job seekers, thereby supporting a local skills supply chain. Opportunities were explored on how our migrant workforce may be able to assist with the burgeoning skill shortage being experienced in the region.

This project identified major benefits as well as perceived and real challenges associated with local employment of migrants and refugees.

Even though no job placements were made, momentum and traction is continuing to build and progress is being made.

It was found that the main barrier to migrant employment is 'communication issues due to language barriers' - 82% of respondents selected this as a barrier. There is also a perception that additional time will be needed for training migrant employees.

One of the main benefits of employing migrants or refugees is greater diversity in the workplace which promotes different perspectives and ways of thinking. The community aspect was also seen as a key benefit, that is helping families to assimilate.

The main insight from employers currently employing migrants or refugees is that migrant employees are loyal, hard-working, helpful, caring, tolerant, mature, resilient and have a solid work ethic and use their initiative.

Interpreting Support

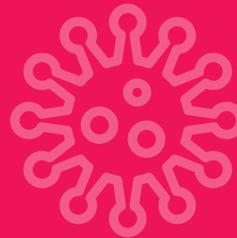
Toowoomba is home to a culturally and linguistically diverse population.

We offer local businesses access to a pool of skilled local interpreters in several in-demand languages. Languages include Kurdish-Kurmanji and Arabic.

4

businesses supported
with interpreting
services

COVID-19 PANDEMIC Our response



FREE COUNSELLING SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

The introduction of lockdowns, state border closures and general restrictions in March 2020 resulted in significant stress across all parts of our region. CatholicCare was able to provide counselling support for individuals through existing programs, and in response to community need, introduced a service encouraging business owners to call for a free, confidential conversation. This service was widely promoted via social media, the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise. Additionally, CatholicCare produced the Accidental Counsellor tool for those finding

themselves in a situation where they are needing to provide support to an employee, colleague, or friend. The uptake of the tool was swift and the response was very positive.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Our EAP service initially saw a small decrease at the beginning of the shutdown, due to individuals working from home, or losing work entirely. In addition, although we transitioned to phone and video appointments, there were some individuals who preferred face to face appointments and wished to wait for the lockdown to be over.

Many workplaces have been overwhelmed in just trying to

survive the pandemic without having to close completely. We are now beginning to see the mid/long term effects on business as a result, and as we move from a crisis phase to a maintenance phase in terms of managing the pandemic, employees and employers are finally giving themselves a chance to take a breath and take stock of the impact this has had on their emotional and mental health and wellbeing.

Demand for CatholicCare's EAP service has steadily increased, especially with the prolonged nature of the pandemic and the cumulative impact this has had on individual and families in terms of stress, finances, relationship strain, social isolation and workplace changes.

