



setting our sights on the future



MDAS
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

**ANNUAL
REPORT 2020**



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Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned this document may contain images of persons who are now deceased

Photography in this report courtesy: NewsAlert PR, AdMedia, Gange Productions, Lisa Milne, Sunraysia Daily, Swan Hill Guardian, Staff MDAS Mildura, Robinvale, Swan Hill and Kerang

About us

We acknowledge the First Peoples of the Millewa-Mallee, The Latji Latji, Ngintait, Nyeri Nyeri and Werigia, as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Country on which we are. We pay our respects to the Elders past and present of First Peoples of Millewa-Mallee and the ancient connection they hold with their Country.

We are the proud and strong descendants of the oldest living culture in the world.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services wishes to pay tribute to all community members who have passed away in the Mallee this year, as well as those in other communities with a family connection to MDAS members, staff or community as a whole.

Symbolism of our logo

Our logo is based on a design by Sharon Kirby

Our vision

Generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities.

Our values

Our values drive our culture, are central to how we make decisions and ensure services are delivered in a socially-responsible way.

Our four values are

Optimism

Community

Respect for Culture

Compassion

Our offices

Our Mallee communities are serviced by MDAS offices in Mildura, Swan Hill, Robinvale and Kerang.

Mildura (administration)

120 Madden Avenue, Mildura
PO Box 5134 Mildura 3502
Phone (03) 5018 4100

Robinvale

77 Perrin Street, Robinvale
Phone (03) 4013 2000

Swan Hill

70 Nyah Road, Swan Hill
Phone (03) 5032 5277

Kerang

9 Nolan Street, Kerang
Phone (03) 5412 6004



setting our sights on the future

MDAS is a proud Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) that has a 30-year history of delivering sustainable, democratic, grassroots services and providing the local community with a vehicle for self-determination. We believe the imposition of structures without community control as a central tenet will fail.

As Aboriginal Australians, we are best-placed to decide and implement the programs and services that work for our communities.

With MDAS and the community working together, we know we can positively enrich the lives of all Aboriginal people living and working along the many river systems across the Mallee District.



How we work

Therapeutic Systems Team

The safer and healthier our relationships, the better we all do.

We are proud to have implemented the Therapeutic Systems Team (TST) across the whole of the MDAS organisation during 2019-20.

The TST is an intervention which intentionally and assertively observes how healthy and trauma-informed the dynamics across MDAS are.

At MDAS we have "the person" at the centre of all that we do. Our business model is depicted as the "Helping Hand of MDAS", where the person is at the centre of our service delivery, surrounded by the community.

By applying the 'The Hand of MDAS' as the centre of TST thinking, members of the TST create a safe base for all staff. The safe base practices flow into the work staff do in community. Because

it focuses on the systems across MDAS, it really gets curious about the space between people...in their relationships with each other, their Communities and their working environments.

This means revising policy and process; supporting change initiatives; assisting leaders to plan and reflect on their teams and strategic directions; supporting teams to learn and grow; and individually holding space for our employees who may need time for their own inner consideration and support.

Some of the ways that the TST works include:

Embedded child-safe practices across all of MDAS

Creating and delivering tailored training and learning packages

Provision of 1:1 and group case consultation

Offering Reflective Practice

Reviewing and supporting revisions of policies, processes and MDAS products

Collaborating with leaders and managers in building safe teams

Working alongside Human Resources to ensure MDAS is a person-first learning organisation which really ensures adult learning and growth nurtured for all employees.

The TST has two full time staff, and works alongside members of many teams across MDAS to ensure therapeutically safe practices are being maintained.

The MDAS TST was implemented organisation-wide in the final month of 2019-20 and is beginning to build rich and reflective spaces across the organisation.




Person-Centred
Ages & Stages


Soul/Culture


Family/Children
/Youth


Social and
Emotional


Body Health/
Housing


Environment
/ Self-determination

Our board



KEITH HAMPTON - CHAIRPERSON

Board member since 2000; manager of the Wiimpatja Healing Centre since 2011. Prior experience with the Department of Primary Industries and working with Koori trainees in horticulture and labouring.



PAM MCCORMACK - SECRETARY

Board member since 2011; Team Leader, Customer Service Officer; mother of three.



JOSH KIRBY - BOARD MEMBER

Board member since 2015; Previously served Balranald Land Council, Dareton Youth Centre, Swan Hill Aboriginal Cooperative and Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative.



MELANIE LANE - BOARD MEMBER (KERANG)

Board member since 2017; Certificate 4 ATSI Primary Health Care Practice; Board member Kerang District Health; Manager Corporate Services Swan Hill-Kerang/Senior Aboriginal Health Worker/Kerang Community Facilitator MDAS Kerang; LMARG member



CARA-LEE BROWN - BOARD MEMBER

Board member since 2019; Bachelor Social Work (Hons); Social Worker with the Department of Human Services; Mother of four children



JASON KIRBY - BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED 2020

Jason Kirby is a current and active Mildura community member assisting mentoring to all ages. A teacher's assistant over 5 years at primary schools and to all ages through TAFE

Co-ordinates, coaches & mentors the Mallee Tigers Football Team (3 years) and player (13 years)

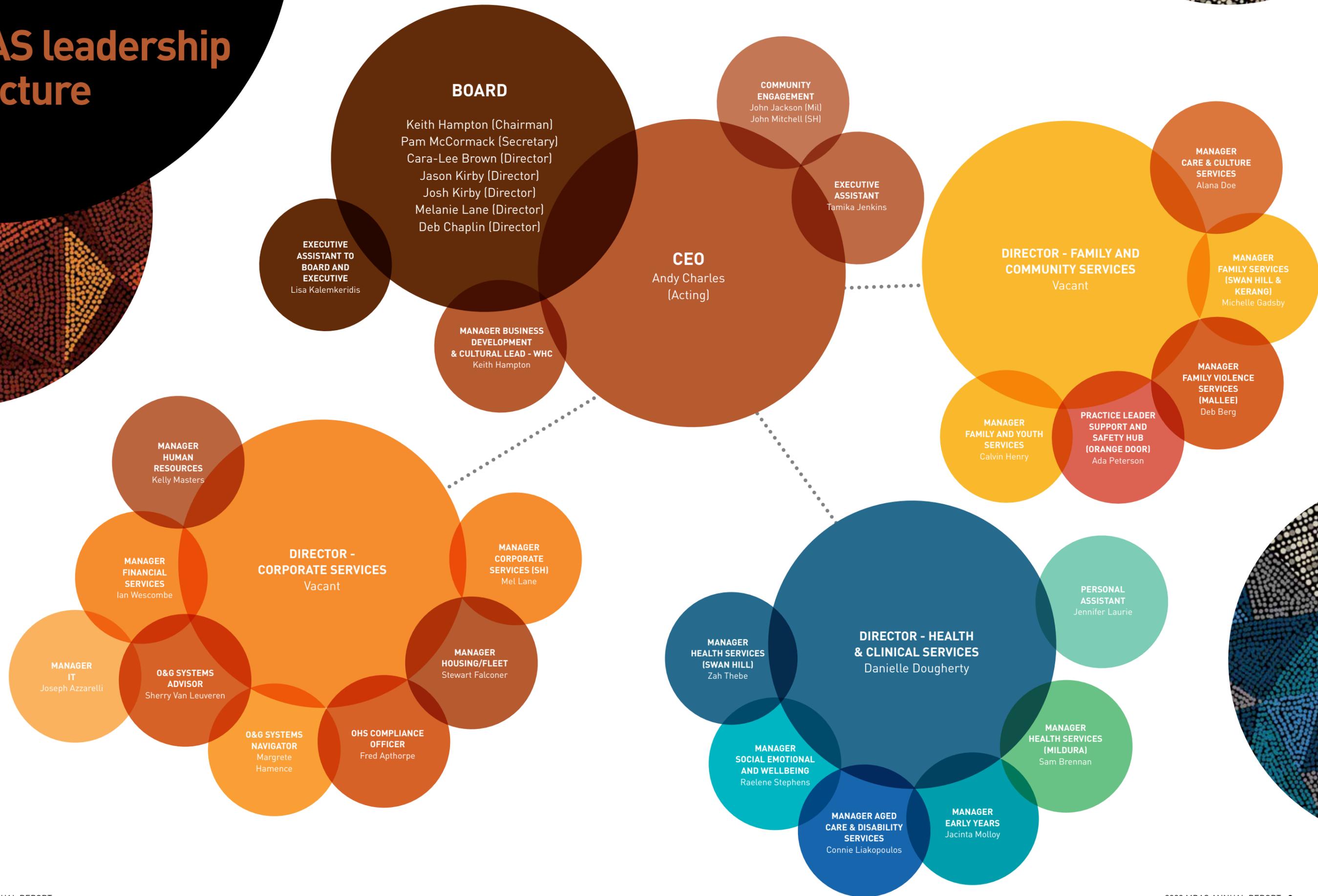


DEB CHAPLIN - BOARD MEMBER (SWAN HILL) BOARD MEMBER APPOINTED 2020

Swan Hill District Hospital Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.

MDAS leadership structure

JUNE 2020



Highlights and milestones 2019/20



JULY 2019



The first combined gathering of the Swan Hill and Kerang Koori communities for NAIDOC celebrations at Menera Farm was just one of many activities now happening at the historic property. More than 100 people celebrated NAIDOC Week at the Menera community day –for many Elders and community members it was the first opportunity to get back “on country” at Menera. Boys and girls camps for local youth were held at Menera in the leadup to the Community Day.



NAIDOC 2019’s theme was “Voice. Treaty. Truth.”. It celebrated the Indigenous voice – over 65,000 plus years old. The Indigenous voice was the first words spoken on this continent in languages that passed down lore, culture and knowledge for millennia and NAIDOC celebrated their importance to our history. Support for NAIDOC celebrations continues to strengthen across the Mallee. Flag raising ceremonies for NAIDOC Week 2018 were well attended in Mildura, Swan Hill, Kerang and Robinvale.

Voting began in the First Peoples’ Assembly elections in Victoria. The Assembly is to be the voice of Aboriginal people in Victoria, in the future treaty process. Our Assembly Election Officer for North West Victoria was Sarah Nalder who is based at MDAS Swan Hill.

AUGUST 2019



There’s nothing like a new delivery of Deadly Choices shirts to get the mob motivated to get their health checks! The Deadly Choices program provided a focus for health messaging throughout 2019-20 – but promotional t shirts, hats and scarves that everyone loved wearing promoted deadly health messages all around our communities. MDAS also partnered with Deadly Choices for school programs in Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang this year. Approximately 70 students aged between 10 and 17 completed the program in school.



A research project investigating gambling harm in Victorian Aboriginal communities in the Mallee and Gippsland was published in the national Journal of Gambling Studies.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria are more likely to gamble and to experience gambling harm than non-Indigenous people. The paper, by La Trobe University researcher Sarah MacLean, involved MDAS Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team members including Tiffany Griffin, (pictured) and looked at why gambling was a popular pastime and to work towards more effective interventions. The research involved interviews with 50 people in Mildura and Bairnsdale who had experience of gambling or had been affected by another person’s gambling.

Highlights and milestones 2019/20



SEPTEMBER 2019



We reminded each other to check in on RUOK Day in September. Community and staff activities at all the MDAS sites focussed on how to start a conversation if you've noticed a change in a family member, friend or workmate.

OCTOBER 2019



Our Mildura Aged Care and Disability Services team moved into their new hub in an upgraded, central location that's more accessible for Elders and people with disabilities.

The site is adjacent to existing MDAS services and was chosen because of its convenience for clients. The building is now the central hub for all Aged Care and Disability Services in Mildura so everything and everyone our clients need to access for aged care and disability services is in the one place.



Ten teams from across the Mallee competed in the Victorian Aboriginal Community Service Association Limited (VACSAL) Indigenous Football and Netball Carnival at Ballarat...but the Mallee Tigers stole the show, taking out the the coveted A Grade football title for the first time at the annual Victorian Indigenous football and netball carnival at the weekend.

The C Grade netballers and A Grade footballers made the finals of the three-day competition, with the footballers taking out the title for their division.

NOVEMBER 2020



The MDAS Social and Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Demonstration Project was invited to present at the International Criminal Justice Conference in Melbourne. The Demonstration Project is setting new benchmarks in improving mental health outcomes for Aboriginal people in, or at risk of entering, the community corrections system. The program has had 260 referrals since it began, and has 85 active clients. Many clients face life-long mental health journeys. Gloria Spencer (pictured) is now leading the project for MDAS.

DECEMBER 2019



After years of tireless advocacy from Aboriginal leaders, Victoria became the first state to enter into Treaty discussions.

The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria became the voice for Aboriginal communities across the state, representing them in the next phase of the Treaty process.

Jacinta Chaplin, Jason Kelly and Raylene Harradine were elected to represent the North West. Jacinta Chaplin (pictured), a proud Wadi Wadi woman from Nyahwest gave an emotional and heartfelt maiden speech to the Assembly in December.

JANUARY 2020



Our Mildura Early Years families had a blast at our HIPPY Graduation at Woodsies Rock Shop. HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) is a two-year, home-based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children. It's a chance to learn and grow for parents as well as children and families usually start with us the year before their child is due to start school. Pictured are HIPPY graduates Lillie Suckling and Kerrie Lamming, with Ada Peterson and HIPPY tutors Rianne Bowden and Teonie Mugeridge).



Our Swan Hill community art competition gave some existing and emerging artists an opportunity to showcase their work, and have it used in future MDAS promotions. We were blown away by the skill and creativity that's right here in our own region – reflecting the ongoing strength and importance of art, culture, language and storytelling in our communities. The independent panel awarded prizes to: Under 12 years, Nioka Nalder; 12 -25 years, leesha Kelly; Open, Steven Wellington. The work of the winners will be incorporated into MDAS branding and imagery in future.



Our Swan Hill Youth Program was nominated for the Children and Youth Awards at the Loddon Mallee Regional Community Justice Awards. And we were extra proud that our fabulous youth worker Arron Nicholls was nominated as well, for the Strengthening Culture Award. Arron and the youth team have been doing some super work with our youth camps and community days at Menera – and it shows in the growing cultural learning and pride in our young people, which improves outcomes in all sorts of areas.

Highlights and milestones 2019/20



FEBRUARY 2020

Our MDAS Robinvale Thank You Day was a huge hit. It was a great way for community to come out and farewell the school holidays – but also an important way to say thanks to the Robinvale community for embracing our Family Services over the past four years.

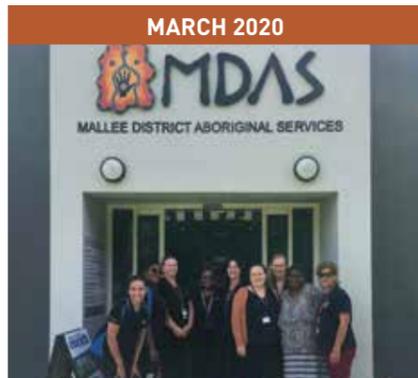


Our Swan Hill Health Team received an excellence award for point of care testing for our Diabetes Clinic.

It's important the systems we have are monitored to ensure the highest quality results, so we can provide the best care. We do monthly checks on our diabetes testing equipment through the QAAMS Program (Quality Assurance for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Medical Services). In 2019, our Swan Hill clinic received the only Award of Excellence in Victoria under this program. Well done team! This program is led by (pictured) Aboriginal Health Practitioner Nicole Davis (left) and Aboriginal Health Worker Tahlia Newman.



Our Mildura MDAS sites were reconfigured during 2019 and the work was finally finished early in 2020. Our new Early Years Hub and Aged Care and Disability Services Hub was at long last providing appropriate spaces where the needs of our Early Years families and Aged Care and Disability clients' can be met in appropriate, purpose-designed space.



MARCH 2020

Traditional Aboriginal healing practices and western medicine came together in an exciting new partnership at MDAS Mildura and Swan Hill.

For the first time a Ngangkari Traditional healer from remote South Australia, practiced at MDAS Mildura and Swan Hill clinics, with the plan for the healers to continue to offer their services every two months.

The partnership between MDAS and the Aḏangu Ngangkaḏi Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (ANTAC) is the first ongoing collaboration of its kind in Victoria.



MARCH 2020

When COVID-19 hit in March, we were pleased to be able to step up to the plate through our partnerships with SecondBite and Foodbank and provide a bit of a hand for people who might be struggling to put healthy food on the table.

Food insecurity is a lot bigger issue than many of us realise – and our partnerships are continuing to deliver dozens of boxes of fruit, vegetables, bread and non-perishable items to community members in Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang right through the pandemic. Kane Smith is pictured doing a Mildura delivery.



APRIL 2020

We implemented Telehealth in response to coronavirus from late March. Because of social distancing rules, our clinics stayed open, but we were only doing face-to-face examinations when necessary.

We were worried some people were putting off reviews or treatment for chronic conditions, or health concerns because of COVID-19 and by early April, many of our services and appointments were being done on Telehealth or over the phone.

Our transport and support staff used I Pads and mobile phones to help Elders and others who didn't have technology available to be able to access Telehealth. It meant community could still see or talk to the doctor, like Dr Anand (pictured) just in a different way.



MARCH 2020

MDAS had more than 100 staff studying national accredited training during 2019-20, from certificate to master's degree. It's all about working to grow our own success by investing in our staff – it strengthens our workforce and skills, builds succession planning into our organisation...and it helps build stronger families and role models. Justine Bowden and Angela Yates (pictured with their manager Tiffany Griffin) from our SEWB team were among those to graduate with Certificate IV qualifications in Community Services – while working in busy roles supporting the community, caring for their children and families and their community commitments.



APRIL 2020

Proud Yorta Yorta man Andy Charles was appointed Acting CEO of MDAS. Since starting at MDAS in 2011 as a Youth Justice Worker, Andy has worked his way up as a manager of youth services, a senior program manager for families, and most recently, the Director of Family and Community Services. Andy took on the role when former CEO Rudolph Kirby stepped down for personal and family reasons.

Highlights and milestones 2019/20

MAY 2020



Our groundbreaking Our Mob Speaks community consultation process was launched in May. Our Mob Speaks is a new way of listening to our communities. It's about the community talking, and MDAS listening.

Our goal is to yarn with around 400 people every three months, across Mildura, Swan Hill, Kerang and Robinvale. This means we will be out yarning with people, young and old. We will be listening to what is on your mind and how MDAS can improve the support we provide.

A dedicated team of good listeners from our Community Engagement Teams will be doing the listening. They record only what is said, not who said it – so everyone can feel safe to talk about what's on their mind.

The information gathered through these yarns will be essential for us to continue improving MDAS services and talking with government about community concerns and ideas, to make sure we are attracting the right investment to support our communities.



It was all hands on deck from our Men's, Family Violence and Youth teams to transform the old San Mateo Avenue MDAS site into a Men's Hub.

When complete, it will be a Men's Hub and a Men's Shed - a centre for all 'Men's Business' and positive men's and boys' programs run by Coordinator Rocky Sloan and his team.

It so exciting - we will soon have a brand new, purpose-made space for all the great work they're doing!

JUNE 2020



Our Mildura Family Services reception was revamped during the COVID-19 shutdown.

The welcome desk was moved to the opposite side of the reception area so our team can greet you as you arrive. Including Tessa Clark and Pam McCormack are pictured in the bright new area after the freshen up, which is making it a much nicer place to work and wait!



MDAS at work

Mallee District Aboriginal Services has a proud tradition of challenging, questioning and innovating to bring about results and change within our communities.

We are noted and respected as an organisation that does not accept the status quo – but works proactively to find new ways to break cycles of behaviour, to support our people,

families and communities and to bring the wider community along with us on our journey.

The following pages show MDAS at work – stories and case studies** that demonstrate the effectiveness of our programs and our willingness to lead.

** Names have been changed

Here for our Mobs in the Mallee during COVID-19



Online is now part of our new normal and a critical element in the evolution of service delivery at MDAS when COVID-19 restrictions were implemented in March.

MDAS was one of the first health service providers in the Mallee to move comprehensively into the Telehealth space. We launched the Health Direct portal in March, with a large proportion of consultations moving onto the online platform over the following weeks and months. This required 100 percent staff engagement and significant community education and outreach – a task that every MDAS Health team member had a role in.

Our Health, Family and Community teams all hit the phones to touch base regularly with existing and new clients, to provide reassurance and support and to ensure continuing engagement, a listening ear and appropriate service delivery.

From an organisational point of view,

the transformation was dramatic, with working from home, at least part of the time, the “new normal” for most staff.

At the peak of the pandemic, about 60 percent of MDAS staff were working remotely, meaning critical and frontline staff could implement social distancing and keep working to keep services running at our main sites and to keep community supported.

And although that sounds simple enough, the size of the technical challenge, for a staff of nearly 250 was substantial.

Little is heard, in normal times, of the MDAS IT team, but these four quiet achievers made our online transformation happen.

Resources were stretched thin at first, but, thanks to a lot of MDAS business functions having been moved to cloud-based services previously, the required workforce was mobilised within a fortnight of the implementation of restrictions by using a combination of MDAS

equipment and staff BYO devices.

The team rolled out Microsoft Teams within weeks – a project that would normally be months in the making. It meant staff could stay connected via PC, laptop or mobile phone no matter where they are located.

And as the nuts and bolts to allow continued service delivery were being put in place, right across MDAS teams were turning their minds to innovating -- trying new things to reach out to community in what was a confronting and uneasy time.

Our January partnership with SecondBite to address the issue of food insecurity proved timely. We were able to ramp up this partnership across the region, to ensure vulnerable Elders, families and community members could continue to safely access fresh food and essential supplies. Approximately 1500 food hampers have been delivered to community in need in Mildura, Swan Hill and since its inception.



Our Early Years teams launched online playgroup activities to continue to engage with our families. Our Early Years Facilitators Elvie and Marissa began presenting weekly video Dreamtime stories and activities, and, because our playgroups had to be cancelled, we partnered with Sunraysia Arts and Learning to bring a weekly Playgroup Music Facebook Live for kids and carers to join in.

Our Social and Emotional Wellbeing team, concerned about losing engagement with vulnerable young people involved in traditional school wellbeing programs, reached out with a Facebook Live Weekly Wellbeing with Team Leader Darlene Thomas. Activity packs are regularly distributed to our Koori Women’s Diversion Program clients, and others who need them, and regular phone contact is kept up to keep clients engaged and positive.

In reaching out, our teams surprising also engaged with new community members and families at this difficult time.

Newspapers closed, but community members were isolated in their homes, and hungry for information and support. They turned to social media and to trusted organisations for information and advice – the MDAS Facebook page, already with strong community engagement, grew more than 30 percent from January to June. By June 30, the page reached 2451 followers – the equivalent of almost half of the estimated Indigenous population in the MDAS coverage area.

Throughout this crisis, we have found new ways to work, new ways to stay connected, and new ways to support our communities – despite the challenges of COVID-19, with the support of our dedicated, innovative and community-focussed teams, we continue progressing towards our vision of generations of healthy, vibrant and strong Aboriginal communities.

It would have been impossible to imagine, before February 2020, the transformation we would see in our communities, our families, our workplaces and our lives during the second half of 2019-20.

COVID-19 has challenged all of us, in so many ways, and for a complex organisation such as MDAS, the scope of the challenge and the change was, at the outset, daunting. Fortunately, there was little time to consider – there was simply an imperative to adapt to continue meeting the needs of our communities.

We’ve had to find new ways to reach and stay connected with clients and each other. Keeping families and mob safe and MDAS teams working cohesively has required huge commitment, effort and vision from every individual and every team.

The way our teams met the challenge, innovated and have gone above and beyond is something we are enormously proud of, as an organisation, because we were at the forefront of so many initiatives aimed at continuing and improving service delivery during this difficult time.

Mental Health

Winning Victor's Trust – Social and Emotional Wellbeing Mental Health Demonstration Project

MDAS is the lead agency in the Mildura Mental Health Demonstration Project.

It is a partnership with Mildura Base Hospital that aims to build a more integrated approach to mental health care for Aboriginal people with moderate to severe mental illness who fall between the gaps due to the nature of their mental health and social support needs. The program streamlines access to Mental Health



Case study

Victor has a history of violence, drug and alcohol abuse, self-harm and jail time.

He was angry, and his partner and children had little or nothing to do with him.

A motor vehicle accident at 30 left Victor with serious injuries and frequently in pain. Victor didn't care about the feelings of others and alienated himself.

He refused his medication, lost the will to behave appropriately, exhibited suicidal tendencies and would not trust those offering help.

However, working with a Demonstration Project MDAS caseworker has allowed Victor to turn his life around. It's an ongoing journey for the 42-year-old, but it began with trust.

After successfully engaging with various specialists and complying with his medical regime, Victor found the confidence to re-join social activities with others.

Eventually, he was discharged from the mental health inpatient unit and spent time in the (Prevention and Recovery Centre) step-down residential unit.

Over time, Victor re-engaged with his ex-partner and children and they are now re-united. He has also reconnected with his sister and her family.

He has a job, and after saving a deposit, has bank approval for a housing loan to buy his own home for his family. When he's not working Victor likes cooking for the family, fishing to provide for local community members and hand-crafting Aboriginal artefacts. He has become a mentor for local Indigenous youth, commenting on his own chequered past, reflecting on his journey with the MDAS-led team and sharing his goals and aspirations for a brighter, happier future.

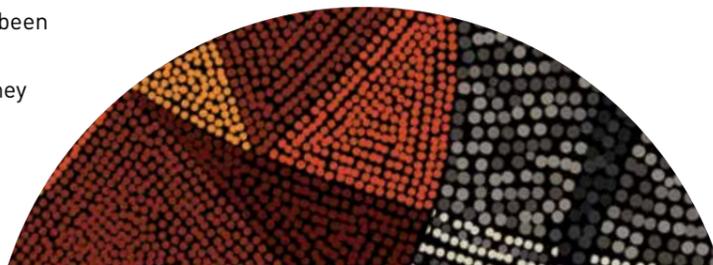
MDAS and the Demo team have been with Victor every step of the way throughout his remarkable journey and transformation.

His case worker says the positive changes are "significant", but the outcomes were not achieved without perseverance.

"Building a trusting relationship with Victor took continuous contact and non-judgment of his past behaviour. As we built trust, Victor became more confident in our decisions to support his mental and physical wellbeing."

"Everything we said we would do, we did! We had to follow through and build trust ... Victor was paranoid and trusted no-one"

- MDAS CASE WORKER.



Aged and disability services

Opening up to Judy

COVID-19 has been a challenge in many ways

–but, strangely enough, it's also opened up new opportunities for MDAS to reach Elders and community who are isolated and don't access all of the supports available to them. Support worker Judy Stafford joined the aged care and disability services team to engage with and support vulnerable local Elders, and she says delivering food hampers during COVID-19 has had its up-side.



Case study

George is a loner who sticks to himself. The single dad cares for a child with a severe disability and his life revolves around caring for the special needs of his child.

MDAS support worker Judy Stafford met George when she and a co-worker delivered a hamper to his home during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Judy recalls that George was extremely grateful but reserved and said very little.

Working from home during the pandemic restrictions, Judy hit the phones to keep in touch with the Elders and offer support where needed.

Video calls were arranged between families and friends who could not visit each other. Craft supplies, books and food hampers were dropped off to those who were not mobile.

"Trust has been gained through lots of listening, opportunities for story-telling, asking questions,

acknowledging problems and sourcing possible solutions," she explains.

She talked to Elders about their hobbies, what books they were reading, any artworks they were making - even their favourite footy teams!

In follow-up phone calls, Judy noted that George was always polite, but the pair never held a "real conversation", despite weeks of regular contact.

"I knew I needed to be persistent," Judy says, so she kept calling and hoping that eventually George would open up to her.

"One day I sensed that he was flustered, or there was something not quite right, so I asked if he was okay? He replied 'yes, but no' ... so I asked if there was anything I could do, but he said he didn't think so."

Determined to get to the bottom of what she sensed was a problem for George, Judy changed her approach and asked about his child.

She subsequently learned that his frustrations stemmed from the fact that a pharmacy which previously delivered vital medication for the child had stopped its home delivery service.

Judy the problem-solver arranged for the medication to be home-delivered another way to a very appreciative George.

George and Judy now have long phone conversations!

They're talking about the various social support groups available to Elders and George is actively considering getting out of the house occasionally to meet other people.

Judy says she's "honoured" to work with a supportive, committed team that's focussed on making a difference, person-by-person.

Finding the right fit

Mallee Aboriginal Employment Program

MAEP, through coordinator Kosha Shanahan, supports people who are unemployed, including candidates who experience multiple practical, physical, social and emotional issues and circumstances that are a barrier to finding employment.

MAEP offers intensive assistance and the opportunity to be linked into a holistic range of services to increase the likelihood of a successful transition from unemployment to long-term sustainable work. MAEP also works with employers to identify sustainable employment opportunities.



Case study - Kailey Clark

Kosha

Kailey and I worked together for about eight months. We talked about her strengths in admin and computing and her passion for culture and community - then tailored a resume to the type of work that she was aiming for. We talked about her dreams for the future, what can get her there, what would she like to invest her time in and what interested her to learn more about. In that time, we applied for a variety of jobs in and outside of MDAS, and Kailey obtained a few casual roles while we focused on securing a full time role. As well as the chance to experience a few different roles, the casual positions were important to add experience to her resume as was the opportunity to meet and impress potential employers... and she did. Kailey was always open and willing to try new approaches and ideas. Eight months after starting with MAEP, Kailey secured a Traineeship with MDAS Learning and Development - she is an amazing trainee, and I'm so proud of her.

Kylie

Kylie Henderson (Kailey's Manager): Kailey coming on board has been one of my most treasured highlights of working for MDAS. I am extremely blessed to have such a young, strong community member to work alongside every day. Kailey not only completed her traineeship in Certificate III three months before the nominal completion date, she also excelled in her studies and uses the skills she developed to grow our program area. Kailey is a very valuable member of our learning and development team and we learn from each other every day. She has fresh new ideas that encompass cultural respect and safety. I'm very lucky to have Kailey as my succession plan. She's very connected to community and always considers community and the cultural wellbeing of our staff when making learning and development decisions.

Kailey

MAEP not only helped me find work but it gave me the confidence in myself to look for work effectively, communicate with those in the workspace and also with potential employers. I definitely (and already have!) recommended MAEP to community because it helps people develop the confidence to just have a crack at finding work. MAEP can be life changing and can help so many people find their path. Before I started MAEP I was rather lost and youth who are not sure where they want to go or what to do next can really benefit from MAEP. My traineeship with Learning and Development has now helped me to realise where I want to go in life and help to achieve current goals and set new big goals for the future. I'm so appreciative of MAEP and so thankful for what it has done, not only for me but also this amazing community we are part of.

Traditional healing

Restoring body and spirit

Traditional healing practices and western medicine came together in an exciting new partnership at our MDAS clinics in Mildura and Swan Hill



For the first time Ngangkari Traditional healers from remote South Australia practiced at our MDAS clinics in February, and, prior to COVID-19, the service was scheduled to continue every two months.

The partnership between MDAS and the Aḏangu Ngangkaḏi Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (ANTAC) is the first ongoing collaboration of its kind in Victoria and an exciting breakthrough in health service delivery in the Mallee.

The 60,000-year-old traditional healing practices are handed down by from generation to generation.

Today there are 14 Ngangkari descendent healers, offering treatment through bush medicine, smoking ceremony and re-aligning the spirit. The Ngangkari are highly-respected and sought-after for their expertise and for what they've achieved with people

across Australia. ANTAC is the first organization of Aboriginal traditional healers in Australia - a not-for-profit social enterprise formed with a vision to support, maintain and practice the 60,000 year-old Aboriginal traditional medical knowledge system in the 21st century.

As health services, we usually focus primarily on the physical - but this partnership recognises there is a whole separate element to health and wellbeing, that is around the spirit.

The first healing clinics in Mildura and Swan Hill were booked out, and community members were so excited to be able to access traditional healing practices. The partnership also demonstrates the commitment of MDAS to cultural safety in our clinics and practices.

The success of the visit prompted strong interest and the return of the healers, when it can occur safely, is eagerly anticipated by our communities across the Mallee.

Pictured, Top: Ngangkari traditional healers at work (Photo courtesy ABC)

Below: Debbie (second from right) during her healing visit to Mildura, with MDAS clinical staff



A team approach to health

MDAS Health

Heathers story

Heather is 64 – but has struggled with multiple chronic health conditions since her late 40s and early 50s.



Case study: Health

Diabetes, asthma, chronic kidney disease, sleep apnoea, hypercholesterolaemia, arthritis, ischaemic heart disease and hypertension are just some of the health challenges that Heather faces. Apart from the physical limitations and psychological impacts of her conditions, simply navigating the health system and the many services she needs to engage with are a battle in a practical sense. But for Heather, Integrated Team Care has a world of difference.

The diverse group of specialists and health care workers involved in Heather's care implemented team management. Working together in Heather's care are nurses, a GP,

Endocrinology, Aboriginal Health Workers, Allied Health workers and a Diabetes Educator. Change can be scary at first, and it was for Heather. But regular contact and engagement supported Heather's journey to navigating her own health care and helped her build belief in her ability to approach difficult situations. The client-centred focus helping Heather to improve her understanding and awareness of managing her conditions was also key to her success. With more control comes confidence. The Team approach means every aspect of Heather's care, and all the clinicians involved are on the same page about her needs. MDAS Health Workers used opportunistic appointments and structured appointments to

ensure Heather could attend all recalls for full cycle of care, with minimal disruption. Community-focused health care is our common goal, and Heather is an example of the dramatic results that can be achieved. Heather feels empowered and in control of her own health care and that she has the confidence and ability to have a say on what she wants to achieve, rather than simply going with "the system".

Pictured: Aboriginal Health Worker Boris Wilson; Allied Health Coordinator Crystal Kirby and former MDAS Aboriginal Health Worker Rose McBride

Then and now:

Haemoglobin (diabetes monitoring)
Weight
Blood Glucose Level (diabetes)
ACR level (kidney function)
Insulin dose

2005-06

12.7%
72.5kg
24.6mmol/L
80.7mg/mmol
70 units

2020

6.3%
66kg
8.6mmol/L
18.5mg/mmol
55 units

An eye for health

Jock Peterson, MDAS AHPACC Officer

By any stretch of the imagination, James Peterson - Jock as he's affectionately known - has had his fair share of bad luck.

After the Ngemba man watched his father die of leukaemia, Jock himself was diagnosed with cancer and endured years of surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.



Just when he thought he had it beaten, Jock discovered he had tumors behind his left eye and in his bowel.

But Jock, who moved to Mildura with his parents from Brewarrina in north-east NSW when he was 10, is a fighter - and a survivor!

Jock is now drawing on his own life experiences to help mob throughout the Mallee in his role as an Aboriginal Health Promotion and Chronic Care Officer at MDAS.

Initially employed as a health receptionist, Jock has worked across the organisation in health-related roles including coordinating eye health services across Victoria at one point, criss-crossing the State with a retinal camera and screening Aboriginal people for eye problems.

It's still part of Jock's role at MDAS, and he understandably has a passion for eye health. Jock fondly recalls that both his father and his grandfather met the late Fred Hollows when Dr Hollows and his team were working near Bourke, in

NSW, years ago. Hollows was a New Zealand-Australian ophthalmologist who became known for his work in restoring eyesight for thousands of people in many countries around the globe.

MDAS Health now has an optometrist visiting monthly and also uses the services of two local optometrists as well. Part of Jock's role is to support community members to feel comfortable in accessing important eye health screenings and services.

"We've got some clients who don't like to leave their homes, so I go and pick them up and bring them in," Jock says.

One of his clients, an Elder who cares for three grandchildren, was on a surgery waiting list but at risk of losing custody of the kids because of her failing eyesight.

Knowing who to talk to and where, Jock was able to fast-track her surgery in Melbourne and sorted two problems at once.

"I saw her a while ago and she recognised me from 200 metres

away. She called my name, waved and yelled 'I can see you mate'. That was absolutely awesome!" Jock says.

"She's back to walking down the street without aids. She can catch public transport by herself, go shopping by herself. She does everything now."

* Excerpts from a Melbourne University article by Nick Schubert published 2020



Working together



Keith Hampton
Chairman

reports

Our vision for MDAS is for “Generations of Healthy, Vibrant Aboriginal Communities”.

It’s a vision that is true and that I hope for in our organisation and communities for the future.

When I first took on the role as chairman eight years ago, I wanted to help build an organisation that not only provided important services to our mob, but also to build a pathway for our future generations and community.

The business of MDAS continues to deliver strong, reliable, culturally safe services to our communities in the Mallee, as you will see elsewhere in this annual report, I hope these culturally safe services continue.

Year after year, our Kerang, Swan Hill, Robinvale and Mildura communities are coming through the doors in greater numbers for MDAS to help them with their health, family, community, cultural needs and I hope the community continues to support MDAS.

There is a lot of good news in the MDAS story this year, but that does

not mean we do not have challenges. We do. As an organisation and as a community if we support and assist each other I believe we can overcome these challenges.

Despite the progress we are making in service delivery and growth in engagement, it was a disappointing aspect of the 19/20 year to be questioned by the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission regarding our operations. We have cooperated with the work of IBAC and will continue to do so if that investigation is ongoing.

A lot of work and effort over the past eight years has been centred on building an organisation that is robust in its processes and procedures. Not just for MDAS, as an emerging ACCHO, but also for other ACCHOs. This is an ongoing process and one that needs constant attention. There is a lot we have done, but there will always more to be done.

MDAS will do their best if our mobs work together and a lot of the time, we do. There are many different voices and opinions on how things should be done. We don’t always agree. But unless we continue to find ways to work together as a mob, the way forward will be very difficult.

I am grateful for the support of a committed MDAS board and it is great to see younger faces coming to the table – this year 19/20 we welcomed Kiea Charles for a short time, a young mum from Swan Hill and Jason Kirby a young father from Mildura to the board. Both have great ideas; these young people are our future with the Governance of MDAS.

I wish to thank and congratulate every one of our current 250 staff and Board members for their work in a year that has provided many challenges. Despite the worries of the situations with coronavirus and the ongoing investigation, we have still achieved so much.

We were aware and concerned about the vulnerability of our mobs when COVID hit early in 2020. As you will read elsewhere in this report, our teams have done an amazing job in reaching out to community, providing new services and new ways to deliver services right through this pandemic.

It has been difficult, but to everyone in every team who have had to make sacrifices and step out of your comfort zone to keep our mobs safe I say thank you. We have most certainly been here in new ways for our mobs in the Mallee when they have needed us most.

During this year, our chief executive officer for the past eight years Rudolph Kirby stepped down from his position for personal and family reasons. I thank Rudy for his work over this time and would like to say thanks to him and the many previous staff and Board Members who have helped build MDAS to where it is today, with a special thanks to Lauris McCormack for the tireless work with our Aboriginal Community as the Manager of the Health Service for many years and for all she worked towards and achieved for the community in funding for the new Health building at MDAS.

I am proud that one of our own young leaders, our MDAS Director of Family and Community Services Andy Charles, was able to step up as the acting CEO until a permanent appointment is made. This role will be advertised in the new year.

As I said at the start of this report, our vision is for “generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities”, and that is a job that is not yet finished.

As outgoing Chair of MDAS I wish to thank all who have supported me and I will continue to support MDAS in some way and wish all of MDAS the best in the future.

Looking ahead



Andy Charles
Acting CEO

This year has been one of many challenges, both for MDAS as an organisation, and for our local communities.

MDAS is an organisation working hard on all levels to ensure that our community and mob are receiving the best possible quality care and support to achieve positive outcomes.

We acknowledge that this past year has brought a level of dissatisfaction from both a number of stakeholders and community across the Mallee. With this has come heavy scrutiny of MDAS' organisational governance and our financial management.

We do not shy away from scrutiny or accountability at any time, and we are proactively working towards change and processes which will reassure community and reinstate confidence.

We acknowledge there are opportunities to do things better, and in moving forward we are wanting to reconnect with ALL of "Community". We are committed to ensuring all

voices can be heard relating to being a member of MDAS, receiving the services community is entitled to and everyone can be part of what MDAS looks like as an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation.

The dissatisfaction has been a bitter pill to swallow operationally, though, because as an organisation, we have done some great work over the past 12 months.

This report outlines the achievements of the essential and in many cases life-changing services MDAS provides. Every day I see demonstration of the true passion and commitment within all 250+ staff who work across Mildura, Robinvale, Swan Hill and Kerang, including now 120+ Aboriginal staff who are, themselves, part of 'Community'.

The external questions should not, in any way, shape or form, take away from the value and achievements of their work. I am incredibly proud to lead a team that is committed and focused on enabling positive change in our community and I would ask you to recognise the enormous value of the individuals and teams I am proud to work with. This report outlines just some of our achievements together over this past year.

Internally this is a challenging time, but to say COVID-19 has added to the complexities would be an understatement. The pandemic since the start of the year has been unlike anything that the world has seen, and hopefully will ever see again.

As difficult as it has been however, it has further highlighted the quality, flexibility and commitment of our MDAS teams. Through these difficult times MDAS staff and community have rallied together to create some

exciting and innovative new ways of connecting mob to services and vice versa. Some of these innovations will certainly extend post-COVID as new ways of doing things that enable far greater outcomes and engagement than ever before.

Going forward we are taking a strong focus on consolidation of current program areas and services delivered by the organisation to further enhance and build stronger and better integrated services for Mob across all areas of support.

This includes:

Mens' services/Justice Services

Aged and Disability/Elders Services

Housing and Homelessness Support

Early Childhood and Family Support Services

Cultural Care Services

Health/Specialist Services

Some initiatives underway in support of these goals include:

Phase 2 of the Common Elements Approach project with MDAS Men's services. We had good outcomes with the first phase (including the Early Years and Family Support Services programs);

The integration of a new MDAS Therapeutic Systems Support team across the whole of the organisation headed up by Kathy Crouch as Lead Practitioner;

The integration of the Wiimpatja Healing Centre (now aligning with the Social and Emotional Wellbeing team) to further support the rehabilitation of Aboriginal men engaged in

the program in having a more streamlined service;

The development of a Men's/Elders hub that is central as a "safe space" for all Aboriginal Men in community with outreach support services to be provided from MDAS. (The facility will also include accommodation support for men in community who are at risk or involved with police or the justice system).

We continue to achieve key goals in line with our Strategic Plan 2018-2021. Outcomes aligned to the Strategic Plan were highlighted in our previous two years of annual reports, and within the operational reports in this annual report.

We will continue working in a determined and systematic way towards aspirations that are yet to be reached. As an organisation, we are proactively and positively looking ahead - as a leader, I am committed to building a culture that strives to provide the best level of service to our mob possible at all times.

Embedding our key MDAS organizational values of: Optimism; Community; Respect for Culture; and Compassion not only in our organisation but in our communities will ensure we continue progressing in a meaningful way towards our vision: "Generations of Vibrant, Healthy and Strong Aboriginal communities".



Innovation and commitment

Health Services



Danielle Dougherty
Director of Health Services

Our commitment to our vision of “generations of healthy, vibrant and strong Aboriginal communities” requires a growing focus on preventative health care, and to this end, it is pleasing to have more people than ever accessing GP Management Plans to take charge of their own health. Good signs are also emerging in our chronic disease management space, with more engagement among clients with chronic disease and Integrated Team Care allowing more people to gain support to access specialist services.

We are looking to the longer term by increasing our focus on initiatives which make generational change possible, and achievable.

A highlight in this space is the implementation of our food security partnership across our communities with Second Bite in January. Food Insecurity includes lack of access to food, inadequate food and inappropriate use of food. Although the prevalence of food insecurity among the general Australian population is approximately 5%, some groups (the Aboriginal community, those out of work, single parent households, low income earners, rental households and socially isolated people) often experience food insecurity at higher rates. People may experience food insecurity due to lack of resources (including money and resources such as transport), affordability of nutritious food, geographic isolation, and a lack of motivation or knowledge about a nutritious diet. Food insecurity can negatively impact the short and long-term outcomes for children and is also linked to chronic health issues such as obesity, Type 2 diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease. Our Second Bite program has delivered between 1250-1500 food hampers to community in need in Mildura, Swan Hill, Kerang and Robinvale since

its inception.

As we continue to consider the possibilities and improvements in our program delivery, we are also focussed on the practical clinical necessities for safer service delivery. During this year, our Mildura clinic benefitted from developments that allow an ambulance entrance to the building and an isolation room to allow us to respond to infectious disease safely.

In the COVID-19 space, we worked quickly and proactively to implement best practice for information flow, risk management and outreach. This included a partnership with the Kirby Institute to provide on-the-spot COVID-19 testing at our Mildura clinic from late June 2020. The point-of-care testing was the first of its kind in Mildura and makes a positive or negative result available within 45 minutes, rather than waiting up to four days for a result to come from pathology tests. It meant we could effectively deal with a potential case of COVID-19 much more quickly and ensure we take every possible measure to slow any spread of the virus among our vulnerable community members.

Although it has been challenging and uncomfortable, the pandemic has provided many learnings for the future. We are committed to a greater focus on collaboration, both internally and with partner organisations.

MDAS Health and Clinical Services looks forward to a new year of achievements ahead with a new leader and Executive team, continued growth through more effective community engagement and continuing to tailor programs and services that meet and exceed community expectations.

The past year has presented many challenges, but I am proud that our MDAS Health and Clinical Services teams have responded with innovation and commitment to finding a way to continue to service the community during this difficult time.

We have initiated many changes, and we have learnt a great deal about different ways of doing things. COVID-19 has forced us to be innovative and creative in service delivery. We have developed new platforms and behaviours for reaching people during isolation (Facebook, telehealth, Facetime consultations, daily contacts through telephone and social distancing).

This year has been a time to reflect on learnings and consolidate our program areas, but, as you will read elsewhere in our reports, COVID-19 has provided some unexpected up-sides, with opportunities to grow in new ways, and to reach more of our community.

Mildura Health and Clinical Services Report



Sam Brennan
Manager

Highlights

208 New ATSI clients were seen by Mildura Health this year

Services provided to 2018 ATSI clients and 710 Non-ATSI clients

Three Flu clinics – 500 immunisations completed

Reduced risk of medication mismanagement for 100 clients on more than five daily medications (QUMAX Webster packs)

Integrated Team Care for over 150 chronic disease clients to attend medical appointments or treatment (Another 92 clients not enrolled in ITC program also supported)

GP Chronic Disease Management Plans increased from 2018/19

ATSI Health checks (715s) on track to exceed 2018-19 (pre COVID)

Clontarf and Stars school programs actively partnering with MDAS Health

Get Yourself Tested campaign (GYT) response to increased Syphilis infection rates

Our Mildura Health and Clinical Services teams have sharpened their focus on preventative health care and health promotion initiatives, with the result that we have engaged with more than 200 new clients this year.

Health Promotion

Deadly Choices

Partnered with 4 schools

Approx. 50 students completed program from ages 10yrs-17yrs

Community Events

Christmas party at Mildura Waves – We were thrilled to have 367 community members attend. A barbecue was provided with different Indigenous foods for community to try, including wild boar, kangaroo sausages and bush yoghurts

Men's Health Week

Health Promotions staff presented recorded videos each day promoting what men's health means to them.

Morning tea and lunch with 23 men attending

Community engagement

Partnership with BreastScreen Victoria (Female Artist Competition to design a shawl for BreastScreen initiative) Art Competition for youth to create artworks for Health Service internal walls

Nutrition and Public Health

In-house Catering

Completion of planning and development of a Healthy Catering menu for staff. All food provided to staff, community and visitors for events, meetings and functions will be created in-house, are healthy, tasty and low in salt, fat and sugar. The program is being rolled out in July 2020

Cooking with the Elders

In 2019 our weekly cooking group with the Elders began, offering a space to share information on healthy foods and revamp our favourite recipes to support the health and medical conditions of Elders attending. It also emerged as a space for the Elders to yarn and connect with MDAS staff. Elders chose a recipe each week to prepare, cook and eat

Public talks/cooking groups

A regular schedule of talks and monthly cooking groups with Meminar, Resi-Care, and Warakoo to support and promote healthy, nutritious and safe food for community. Public talks also occurred for the Robinvale Clontarf Foundation and at a number of Health Promotion events.

Allied Health

Allied Health service delivery has continued to increase over the past year. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we were able to recommence services including Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, Audiology and Optometry. Specialists such as Cardiology, Endocrinologist continued to be accessible via Telehealth.

It's pleasing that despite the difficulties of COVID-19 from March, client encounters with Allied Health services was similar to and, in some cases, higher, than in 2018-19.

Allied Health Snapshot

Podiatry 335 encounters (2018-19 367)

Physiotherapy 197 (224)

Cardiology 91(127)

Audiology 237 (158)

Speech Pathology 85 (255)

Optometry 52 (37)

Dietician/Nutritionist 327 (585)

Pharmacist 369 (664)

Allied Health Coordinator/Care Coordination 1117 (620)



Swan Hill-Kerang Health and Clinical Services report



Zah Thebe
Manager

Highlights

Recruited a full time GP Dr Atiqul Islam for Swan Hill and Kerang

Consistent GP clinic in Kerang for the past year

Launched a combined Swan Hill reception team with Family Services

Membership of Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership for community wide health initiatives

Strengthened relationship through MOUs with Swan Hill District Health/ Northern District Community Health

Partnering with SHDH to recruit medical personnel and health professionals to the area

New paediatrician service every second month

Engagement in health agency COVID-19 planning meetings in Swan Hill and Kerang

Partnership with the Leisure Centre Swan Hill to allow community

members to take health and fitness classes

Introduced the "Road to Deadly Health" once a month with the Elders group (led by Monica Doherty)

Our Swan Hill and Kerang Health staff are a very positive and optimistic team, and I congratulate and thank them for a very successful and collaborative year in working towards improving community health.

We took a huge step forward early in this reporting year. We were thrilled to secure the services of a permanent GP, Dr Atiqul Islam, who has brought consistency, stability and a new level of trust to the Swan Hill and Kerang community's engagement with MDAS health.

A highlight this year was the recruitment of an Allied Health Trainee and an Aboriginal Health Worker Trainee. Both of these young women have shown wonderful commitment to their studies and their communities, and will continue to be a great asset to our service delivery into the future.

An important step forward in improving eye health for our community occurred with the availability of a Retinal Camera. This service has been well-utilised from the outset and is an important investment into the future management of our Diabetic and chronic disease clients.

The entire community was energised by the visit to MDAS Swan Hill of the ANTAC Traditional Healers for the first time. The experiences of those who had sessions with the visiting healer Debbie created huge interest in the second visit, scheduled for April, and it was disappointing that this had to be shelved due to COVID.

However, this important initiative in combining Western and traditional healing methods was one of the most welcomed initiatives by community and we are committed to ensuring the healers return when the coronavirus situation allows.

The flexibility and commitment of our teams was tested in the difficult early days of COVID-19, but I am proud of the way our teams responded and stepped up. The implementation of Telehealth quickly and efficiently, and the willingness of our teams to transition to new models of care and find new ways to work allowed us to continue to provide responsive, much-needed and culturally safe services to our communities.

Our annual flu vax clinic was highly successful this year, with an increase in the number of vaccinations – especially important during the pandemic. Some home visits were done by our nurse immunisers for vulnerable clients.

Health Promotion

Deadly Choices schools program delivered in Swan Hill and Kerang. Overall, we had about 40 students take part in the program. We received a letter of thanks from Koori Education Student Support Officer at Swan Hill Primary about how well the program was run and that they wish to continue it in future

Get Yourself Tested – STI prevention promotion of STI awareness and testing

Strong engagement with quit smoking programs

Fluoride Varnish program in schools through LMARG (81 children receiving treatment)

Community engagement

Partnership with BreastScreen Victoria (Art Competition to design a shawl for BreastScreen initiative)

Women's Health event

Deadly Choices stall at our Swan Hill-Kerang 2019 Community Day in which we had raffles, prizes and information about health services

Men's Health Event morning tea and lunch

International Overdose Awareness Event giving education to Community about how to help those in an overdose with the recovery position and how to contact emergency services.

Integrated Team Care

Chronic Disease management program continues to grow and support clients towards improved health and lifestyle outcomes

Chronic care program supporting clients eg Blood Glucose monitoring equipment (diabetic clients) and blood pressure machine (clients with hypertension) to allow them to manage better at home



Award of excellence

Our health team received an excellence award for point of care testing for our MDAS Health Diabetes Clinic.

We do monthly checks on our diabetes testing equipment through the QAAMS Program (Quality Assurance for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Medical Services).

In 2019, our Swan Hill clinic received the only Award of Excellence in Victoria under this program.

This program is led by (pictured) Aboriginal Health Practitioner Nicole Davis (left) and Aboriginal Health trainee Tahlia Newman.

Quit success

Throughout 2019-20, we have had a significant client load wanting to reduce or quit smoking.

Quitting is never easy and our major success this year has been in clients who have been able to reduce dramatically the amount they are smoking. One client has stopped completely, a significant number have reduced smoking substantially.

In addition, we have had great staff support for enforcing our MDAS on-site smoking policy – there has been a marked decrease in smoking around the community hall as a result. COVID-19 provided additional challenges in this space, but our Health Promotions Officer Suzanna Aertssen has been proactive in continuing to support clients over the phone, or with opportunistic catch-ups when they are in the clinic for other appointments.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing Report



Raelene Stephens
Manager

In a space where human connection and engagement is so critical to success, the MDAS Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) team faced significant challenges this year and on-going with COVID-19.

But the second half of 2019-20 has been remarkable in the collaboration and adaptation our team has shown, finding new ways to connect to ensure clients receive the care and support they need more than ever in these most challenging times.

Our SEWB team has grown rapidly over the past 12 months with a large focus being on recruitment, training and succession planning. The SEWB team now consists of 35 staff members - 22 Indigenous identified Staff and 16 non-Indigenous.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

In the first quarter that COVID-19 restrictions were in place (Jan-March), client contacts jumped by 85% compared to the previous quarter. Despite the obvious challenges, the AOD team was able to assist eight individuals to complete withdrawal over this period, followed by referral to a rehabilitation facility – a huge achievement.

Bringing Them Home / Gamblers Help & Prevention / Family Wellbeing Programs:

BTH and Gamblers help workers are at the forefront of delivering the family wellbeing empowerment program to the community, even during COVID-19. Innovations have included care and activity packs, healing smudge sticks, pamper packs and in-home support being delivered to clients, families and Elders, and a focus on finding new ways to reach and support community.

Two new gambling support workers are focusing on community engagement, resulting in new relationships and better visibility in the community.

With Family Wellbeing face to face and in-school sessions on hold due to COVID-19 the FWB Coordinator began weekly Facebook Live Wellbeing sessions. The average views per session were 605, with the highest 1500 views. This has allowed the program to carry positive messaging/ coping strategies into the community during COVID-19 but also to reach new community members.

Koori Women's Diversion Program:

Koori Women's Diversion Program exceeded KPIs for 2019/2020 despite the challenges we are facing with

COVID-19 restrictions. Adaptations to program delivery included suspension of weekly groups, with clients being provided with supplies to complete art activities at home instead to help keep them motivated and engaged. Clients have been supported with mobile phones to aim to facilitate more consistent contact with Case Workers whilst face-to-face contacts are minimized.

Mental Health Demonstration Project:

The model of support and care has changed significantly over the past two months due to COVID-19. These changes are reflective of social distancing and implementing relevant safety measures to ensure that individuals are receiving supports and services reflective of their needs. Non-engagement has been much less than in 2019. We have a psychiatric registrar overseeing assessment this year, giving a higher degree of oversight for the moderate to severe groups.

AOD: 502

Mental Health Demonstration Project: 155 referrals (82 active clients)

Koori Women's Diversion Project: 18 clients (11 active)

Bringing Them Home: 78

Gamblers Help: 17*

PHN Clients: 55

Local Justice Worker Program: 4**

*101 community members engaged in presentations and group work activities

**On hold due to COVID-19

Aged Care and Disability Services



Connie Liakopoulos
Manager

Highlight

The highlight for MDAS Aged Care and Disability Services this year was the official opening of our Mildura Aged Care and Disability Services Hub on October 17, 2019.

The hub is more accessible and user-friendly for Elders and people with disabilities and its position, adjacent to existing MDAS services, was chosen because of its convenience to clients. The building is now the central hub for all Aged Care and Disability Services and it's wonderful to have everyone and everything our aged care and disability services clients need to access in the one place.

The opening of the hub allowed the reintroduction of our social support groups and a new "men's only" group has been a success. Our social support groups enjoy speakers from various organisations, attend healthy cooking classes, an exercise program, arts and crafts, bingo and a weekly golf day in conjunction with Mildura Rural City Council's "Move-it" program.

The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building program through

the National Disability Insurance Agency was a positive step. It is helping people access Disability supports for the help they need to live independently.

The Navigator Project in partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health has increased client participation. The trial is helping people over 50 to access the My Aged Care platform and get the support they need to live independently at home. We also have a new Aboriginal Access Support and Community Linkages Program to roll out in the first half of the new financial year in the Swan Hill area.

COVID-19 certainly provided some additional challenges both for us, as a largely face-to-face service delivery model, and for our clients. Our social support groups had to cease, taking away a much-needed weekly outing and social connection for many clients.

But it has been inspiring to watch our dedicated teams find new and creative ways to work (see story), to support clients, engage with them, help them stay motivated, connected and feeling supported.

This was particularly so with our Home and Community Care Programs (which provide yard maintenance, domestic help, personal care and other specialised support services) – these have continued to be increasingly busy this year, but our wonderful workforce made all the difference to the lives of clients in this difficult time.



Reading the needs of our Elders in isolation – Aged Care and Disability Services

During a regular welfare check, a MDAS staff member became aware Aunty June was struggling because she could no longer pursue her passion for reading.

Aunty June was living alone and as well as no longer attending her weekly social support group, she was also unable to access new reading material or share what she has been reading with others.

The worker shared her own books with Aunty June as a stop gap, then set to work. An email to all staff resulted in a substantial library of reading material to share with Aunty June and other Elders and the "Swap and Go" Project was born.

During regular weekly calls with Elders, the support worker seeks out others who might be interested in receiving books and being part of a new "virtual book club". The library of books now on hand is being categorised into areas of interest, from picture books for non-readers, to fiction, non-fiction, history crime and romance.

Early Years Report



Jacinta Molloy
Manager

As difficult and challenging as 2019-20 has turned out to be, I am incredibly proud the MDAS Early Years team has continued to strive towards creating true generational change in this difficult time.

Throughout this year, early years has continued to strengthen our focus on data and research to demonstrate our models are having a positive impact on the families we are working with. This year we partnered with the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare to document our Early Years model and start to track outcomes for families. We are also working with Melbourne University to look at historical data and tell the story of success over the past six years.

When COVID-19 occurred, I am proud that our MDAS Early Years teams led many of the innovations through with an innovative online presence that has grown and attracted many more families to the MDAS online platform and to engage with our services.

Highlights

HIPPY, our Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters, had record enrolments in 2020, with parents all eager to be the best 'first educators' for their children

Playgroups needed to be shelved due to COVID-19 – but we implemented three sessions a week broadcasting via Facebook – one story, one activity, one live music session.

Two have been sent to all 21 KPSA sites and phone contact maintained during the term.

Dr Erin Kelly was recruited to the Koori Maternity Service, and the continued collaboration with Prof Ian Pettigrew means more women can be seen antenatally at MDAS

KMS recruited Tarina Sailor, in response to COVID-19, for her connection to community. The cultural support role she plays with women and families in the Antenatal period and into early childhood has been extremely positive for the service and community.

The Swan Hill team facilitated a beautiful Welcome Baby to Country ceremony attended by more than 15 families.

The Swan Hill team of Malinda Loats and Elvie Kelly-Britten presented at the 2019 Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Child Care Conference (SNAICC) in Adelaide. Mildura's contribution was led by Kelly Taliloa and Amanda McCole who presented on the value and healing capacity of reflective practice in organisational health across the Early Years team.

The Early Years team has been driving conversations and thinking around autism and developmental considerations in our region. Aboriginal families are not often feeling heard or supported when questions around unusual development arise for their children and MDAS is stepping into that space to learn how we might serve our community better.

All Early Years staff completed the in-house tailored course on childhood sexual exploitation which is a necessary and vital mandatory learning and review for our staff and community.

An innovative self-paced training package for staff was created around the topic of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. MDAS case workers now have a quality learning course available for staff in any team in any part of MDAS that can be done in their own time, in their own environment that keeps them aware of good practice and knowledge development in the infant space, ensuring that the foundations of life long mental health and wellbeing are identified and strengthened for our future generations



MDAS continues to lead in infant mental health

Our work in the infant mental health space has been recognised internationally, with both submissions to present at the World Congress of Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) being accepted.

One of the presentations was part of a symposium on culturally diverse use of New Born Observations (NBO) and how MDAS has been learning alongside Community and workforce to improve relationships for infants in their families.

The other was a workshop on 'Wondering From The Womb' and how it is being used in community, across the organisation and in training spaces to help the voice and spirit of the unborn child heal adult trauma, fear and parenting concerns.



Promise Keepers

TAFE approached the MDAS About Tomorrow project to present a program to their VCAL students to address the high rate of drop out and disengagement because of relationship breakdown amongst the male and female students. A pilot program was created to address this need using principles from Circle of Security, Family Wellbeing and Collaborative Therapy. It was overseen by Aboriginal staff members to ensure that it was culturally relevant. The resulting

program was called Promise Keepers and was delivered to 13 students 10 of whom completed pre and post feedback sheets which demonstrated great interest in continuing the program in 2020. The faculty of the VCAL were keen to have us present the program again and we are currently engaged in negotiating the best mode of presentation taking into consideration the restrictions in place because of COVID-19 pandemic.

Connected Beginnings success story

The Connected Beginnings project integrates early childhood, maternal and child health, and family support services with schools, in Mildura and is flourishing with the introduction of new services. Over time, this will contribute to reducing the disparity in school readiness and educational outcomes between Indigenous

and non-Indigenous children.

The deployment of Dr Erin Kelly GP Obstetrician to work at the Mildura Primary School clinic has seen mums getting the best possible care in a COVID-19 safe location. It's encouraging to see the number of pregnant mums coming to the clinic. Connected Beginnings has also employed the services of Brook

Gibbons Speech Pathologist to attend Ranfurly Primary School to capture children that may have siblings who will attend the school in coming years to have them school ready. Also joining the CB team is Dr Peter Beggs Pediatrician with a much needed service for our children.

Family and Community Services Report

Family Services



Andy Charles
Director of Family Services

COVID-19 has presented many challenges for MDAS Family and Community Services and the Aboriginal community for the majority of 2020.

However, with this, our teams have still found ways to ensure that mob have been supported over this significant and challenging time.

The major areas affected and needing innovative ways of providing support included:

The Youth Services programs areas with case management, education support and statutory involvement with limited contact.

Homelessness support and crisis accommodation supports, due to social distancing requirements and restrictions put in place in homes.

Case contracting/Kinship care provided to our vulnerable Aboriginal children in care and ensuring that

our most at need children and families' critical supports are met with whatever support has been required.

Therapeutic Care Residential. For a period of time during first onset of COVID our unit relocated out to Cal Lal station to ensure safety needs of Aboriginal youth were met.

Family Violence has also been quite innovative and savvy in continuing to provide Family violence support services to community in one of the most critical times.

We continue to have a key area of focus in Family and Community Services on the transition of Aboriginal Children in Out of Home Care. This is through the Road to Reform Initiative still being undertaken by the Victorian Government and Department of Health and Human Services and includes the Kinship Care and Foster Care program areas.

Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care (Section 18) is an area that Mallee District Aboriginal Services continues to strive to enter. We seek to have line-of-sight and decision-making powers for vulnerable Aboriginal children in the Mallee region, as VACCA, BDAC and now NJERNDA and BADAC are doing through the preauthorisation phase.

There is also a review being completed into evidencing the value and positive outcomes that have been achieved through the program over the past four years and the push to have it funded ongoing and rolled out across the state.

During the past year, further investment and resources have been provided through Family Safety

Victoria for the Orange Door and importantly the Aboriginal-specific Practice Leader and Practitioners roles across the Mallee. This is to ensure that the increased support and quality of service remains for all of our Aboriginal communities experiencing Family Violence.

Snapshot:

77 families in family support

7,014 hours Intensive Family Support

Case managed 112 youth

207 clients in housing support

129 episodes of crisis accommodation. (Totalling in 1680 bed nights)

Swan Hill and Kerang Family and Community Services Report



Michelle Gadsby
Manager Family Services

We are delivering some great and innovative work in Family Services, and I am proud of the way our Swan Hill-Kerang team has responded positively and with leadership to a challenging year.

We are currently a team of 15 – with 9 of our staff members Aboriginal. There are 15 programs delivered by our team and we have put a more cohesive structure in place to have two Coordinators sitting across Family Services programs. Training is ongoing with some staff participating in TAFE qualifications and due to COVID-19 some online learning.

Family Services staff work very collaboratively with other MDAS programs within Social, Emotional Well Being, Health and Early Years. Our ongoing program-specific peer support program across all MDAS Family Services sites is bringing great development and growing confidence in our workforce, and there has been some really great

work delivered consistently across the Mallee.

COVID-19 restrictions have seen Family Services work on a rotating basis from home. Our team has worked really hard to ensure there has been minimal interruption to program delivery. Staff are now very well trained in the online world and linking in to meetings via video conferencing is now part of the workday.

A highlight of this year was the relocation of Youth Programs from the MDAS Community Hall to a new Youth House more central to the CBD. The Youth House will be where the Youth Hub will be delivered twice per week and the gathering place for the Youth Mentoring program. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions the Youth Hub implemented a new trial where the program was delivered on a Tuesday night for 8-12 years old and over 12 years old on a Thursday night. This appeared to be working well with youth staff able to make activities more age specific to promote engagement.

The Youth House will also provide an opportunity for one-on-one catch ups with mentees and youth staff in a familiar and safe space. The few sessions that have been delivered



out of the Youth House (prior to COVID-19) were successful with youth enthusiastic about having their own space.

The Youth Mentoring program initiated an "Iso Art Competition" with many amazing pieces of artwork submitted. Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted the Youth staff will be very excited to resume program delivery with lots of ideas and planning occurring around innovative program delivery particularly around Culture.

One of the highlights was when the Youth boys participated in the Welcome to Country at a Community Day at Menera by performing several Traditional dances. The boys had been practising for two days. On the day they were painted up and wore lap laps. They danced in front of approximately 120 Community members.

Their pride in their Culture was evident to see in the wholehearted manner in which they danced. The dancing was an amazing way to cross the generational gap and it was inspiring to watch the way the dancing connected everyone present at the Community Day.

Robinvale Family and Community Services Report

Angelika Fevaleaki
Co-ordinator

We had a great start to the year with a Thank You Day – a day of celebration and giving back for allowing MDAS to continue servicing the community, as well as appreciation for past years of service and support delivered to within Robinvale.

Our staff have come a long way with the changes of programs within the last year and have adapted to delivering those services within the Robinvale area.

Our program areas across MDAS have been a wonderful support to our Robinvale case workers, allowing us to enhance the delivery of the programs we now operate from the Robinvale MDAS office:

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Youth Services

Early School leavers

Youth Justice

Aboriginal and Child Specialist Advice service (ACSASS)

Staff have become more confident within themselves as individuals working in a great team environment. I am amazed by the support we have received from the community and external service providers with the changeover.

The eye-catching orange MDAS building in Robinvale's main street is a great asset. It's central and closer



to residential areas, but it's also very noticeable, and it's more important than ever that we are visible and accessible for the community.

Staff have persisted during challenging times with engaging the community and steering them in the right direction of support. We continue to promote the programs as we grow and we are developing new spaces and areas within our compact office to fit the needs of the community and supporting networks. We are proud of the achievements we have made through our services and assisting community to create a better future for our people in Robinvale.



Care and Culture



Alana Doe
Manager

Our work with young people and families has become more complex in this past year – but the challenges of COVID-19 have only added another layer of importance to the critical work we do.

The Care and Culture team is dedicated to safeguarding Aboriginal children and young people, and ensure they are empowered and protected in decisions on their lives, safety and family and cultural connections. We strive to ensure all decisions made are in the best interests of the child or young person and consider their connection to their Aboriginal heritage, family and community.

Cultural Advocate Support Team

The Cultural Advocate Support Team provided over 500 clients with tailored support and advice during 2019-20. The team is responsible for managing all service delivery within

the Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice and Support program, Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making and Cultural Support Plan program areas. We provide Child Protection Practitioners advice about culturally appropriate intervention and service delivery in decisions made regarding Aboriginal Children and Families. As a specialised team we have built, maintained and fostered strong relationships with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) particularly Child Protection.

First Supports:

The First Supports program is focused on children in care placements. Our team has doubled in size in the past 12 months and referrals continue to increase. Families are being well supported with new placements. The FS team are working closely with the Kinship team on families engaged with both teams, ensuring families receive a wraparound service. We are excited about the engagement of some of our non-indigenous carers within the program. They are absorbing all the information provided and are embracing MDAS to ensure the children are linked with their community and culture.

Kinship Reunification:

Our Kinship Reunification team is achieving positive outcomes with the parents engaged in the program. Parents are supported to be involved with the children during their important milestone moments such as birthdays, first haircuts etc. It allows the child and parent to strengthen their bond in the hope of future reunification being achieved. Caseworkers Rachael Farr

and Winona Bhatia presented on their unique work at the Aboriginal Children’s forum in Lakes Entrance, speaking passionately about the benefits of the program and the changes required to achieve better outcomes.

Out of Home Care /Kinship Care

Our Senior Caseworker, Children’s Cultural Care, Manu Paul, built a positive relationship with one of the fathers of a young girl we have in Foster Care. The dad previously hadn’t engaged with services, but Manu’s connection has allowed the child to build a relationship with her Dad for the first time. She also received a birthday gift from her Dad for the very first time. Another of our Foster Carers completed renovations to their home in order to make room for a child in their care. The child now has a space in the family home that is theirs and feels incorporated into the family unit. We were so proud when some of our children did an amazing job dancing their hearts out at the Mildura show. We also had a recruitment marquee at the show, which stood out in the crowd and attracted a lot of attention. New advertisements for Foster Care have also generated a lot of interest. We have been able to support Permanent Care Orders for some of our children to family. We also have several pending in the coming months. Our Carers have access to a large variety of online training. This has rolled out during the COVID-19 period. Overall engagement by families/carers has been very positive during COVID-19. Staff have been contacted regularly when families/carers have needed support and carers have been readily

available when staff reach out. Staff have been able to re-engage one of our teenage boys back into school after a significant decline in attendance and engagement.

Therapeutic Residential Care

Over the 2019-2020 financial year the TRC has some 27 young people enter the facility. Each child has presented with different needs and varying case plan directions and each has been able to make varying forms of progress. The TRC has been built and maintained to resemble a ‘normal Family Home’ where celebrations and events such as birthdays and Christmas are supported for each child in a way that they are familiar with. Other Cultural events such as NAIDOC and reconciliation week are highly regarded, and celebration activities are developed and planned by the youth in care with full support and encouragement from MDAS Care staff.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic saw a number of changes to the care arrangements for the children residing in the TRC. During this trying time each young person was able to reside on country and remain safe. This situation provided some unexpected and dramatically positive changes in the young people’s social presentation with one young person having a complete turnaround in his trauma related behaviours- this child is now able to process situations and assess circumstances before reflecting and responding to concerns in a more thoughtful and planned manner.

Kyra’s** story – One-on-one safety and support

There is no “one size fits all” to working in the Care and Culture space. Our Targetted Care Package (TCP) team is a prime example. TCPs play a critical role in enabling children and young people to transition from residential care into alternative living arrangements that better meet their needs, and to prevent entry into residential care. Our MDAS TCP worker has a pivotal role in case management in line with the child or young person’s case plan and cultural support plan. For one young client, Kyra, the appropriate supports have allowed her to make exciting progress in her life and to step confidently into her future. She graduated foundation VCAL at TAFE in 2019, and a two-week trip

back to her country over Christmas and New Year allowed her to reconnect with family. Kyra is now moving into a transitional property to begin the next phase of her life. Kyra has faced challenges with COVID-19, but has still engaged consistently with mental health and AOD counselling; maintained consistent contact with TCP workers; built independence while workers were unable to have as much face to face contact; and was selected for interview for a position with DELWP which had many applicants. For Kyra and the other young people we support, we celebrate these achievements and milestones with the children and young people we support, and continue to be there for them as they navigate new challenges and work towards their goals.



Family and Youth Services



Calvin Henry
Manager

In 2019-2020 financial year, MDAS Family and Youth Services has continued to offer a wide range of support for the community's young people and their families.

We continue to have many levels of support through both case management and various programs.

Youth Services – Coordinator, Vanessa Dyke

Our case management levels are – Youth Justice, Youth Support Services, Early School Leavers

Our programs have been – Koori Youth Night Patrol, Koori Connect Re-engagement Program, Leadership Program, School Holiday Program

Youth Justice

Youth Justice continues to support Koori young people that are court ordered to engage with services that not only work towards rehabilitation

but are culturally appropriate. In the 2019-2020 year, Koori Youth Justice received 14 referrals from the Department of Justice. Our main Youth Justice worker battled with serious illness and other case managers within the Youth Services team helped to support Youth Justice clients in his absence.

Youth Support Services

Youth Support Services provides a more intensive case management model for a shorter period of time. It is aimed at clients that may be regarded as having a higher risk of offending and need immediate intervention through positive and purposeful interactions with the YSS case managers. During the 2019-2020 year, the team have received 26 referrals and have supported those clients.

Early School Leavers

Our Early School Leavers program is the early intervention arm of the Youth Justice program. Its aim is to reconnect disengaged young people with education or employment pathways. The ESL case managers supported 54 clients in the 2019-2020 year. There was diverse range of needs and supports across the many young people that were supported, and there were many good news stories of clients achieving positive outcomes.

Koori Youth Night Patrol

Our program for transporting young people home or to a safe place continued in the 2019-2020 year. The program ran as per usual from July 2019-March 2020. During this time,

the program also supported young people who attended the Midnight Basketball Program. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and safety concerns, the service was temporarily suspended between March and June. There was an attempt to restart the program close to the end of the financial year, but state restrictions were tightened at that time and the program's commencement was further delayed.

Koori Connect

Koori Connect is a re-engagement program that runs during the school term at the MDAS Youth Hub. It is aimed at students who have been disengaged from school for some time and that need some extra support to them to gain the skills to re-engage with education. It has a strong cultural focus and provides a lot of wrap around holistic support to the students who access the program. In the second half of 2019 the program engaged 11 students – all of whom were reconnected with their previous school or connected with a new education pathway. The program was rewritten in the summer school holidays. At the start of 2020, the program supported the previous year's students to make sure they had a complete and successful transition to their various pathways. There was continued support for one client through case management, as they build up their confidence and hours at their host school. There was one new accepted student who was severely disengaged, and he started his engaging with the program. Covid-19 brought Koori Connect to a halt. It is set to return in Term 3.

Leadership Program/School Holiday Program

The Leadership Program was run during the School Holiday program. Out of every two-week holiday slot one of the four days of the program was run as a leadership workshop. This was in conjunction with the Department of Justice and the community engagement team at the Mildura Police. Some Elders came and shared cultural sessions, and leadership skills activities were provided.

Housing services – Coordinator, Patricia Watson

The 2019/20 year in the Supported Assistance Accommodation Program (SAAP) and Aboriginal Tenants At Risk of Eviction (ATRE) programs has been a period of renewal with staffing changes – but we now have a strong and solid base which we are looking to expand in the new financial year with the addition of a new team member.

In the last year the Supported Assistance Accommodation Program has supported 233 clients along with their partners and/or children with emergency accommodation and long-term housing assistance, advocacy and referral, through public, private and Aboriginal housing. 118 of these clients have been new clients to the program. The SAAP team has successfully assisted 41 people in securing long term permanent housing in either private rentals, Social housing or Aboriginal Housing Victoria properties. The private rental sector is where the majority of community have gain and secured these tenancies.

We have also been able to utilise a 4-bedroom house and 4 single room units for emergency accommodation options to assist our clients in Mildura. These extra emergency accommodation options are a useful option to have as the prices of the emergency accommodation (caravan parks/motels) around the district are too expensive and not sustainable for clients on low Centrelink payments. These emergency properties also give clients the opportunity to have a reference/rental history to assist with private rental applications.

The Aboriginal Tenants At Risk of Eviction program works with clients who are at risk of being evicted from their rental for reasons such as environmental condition of the property or rental arrears. Mildura ATARE has assisted 114 clients from being at risk of eviction or homeless. The vast majority of this assistance has been in supplying over 100 skip bins to improve the condition of clients' properties.

Family Services – Coordinator Hine Billing

In March 2019 Department of Health and Human Services, Centre for Evidence & Implementation and Centre for Excellence proposed a Pilot Program of "The Common Elements Approach" where MDAS Family and Early Years Services took advantage of for approximately 12months. The program aimed to provide a more integrated and person-centred service system that is informed by principles of self-determination, client voice and experience, the best available research evidence and builds on the

skills and expertise of the workforce. The program was beneficial to everyday client delivery, particularly with implementing strategies for heightened behaviours. We are very thankful for the opportunity.

In 2019-20 Family Services supported over 45 families within the Loddon-Mallee Area within:

Aboriginal Stronger Families

Family Preservation

Integrated Family Services

Our commitment is to engage with community members with compassion, dignity and respect, and the result is many positive outcomes. The majority of Families supported during this time were self-referrals and received support around:

NDIS packages

Trauma

Mental Health

Education expectations

Wrap around support (individuals and families)

Court Matters

Food Assistance

Sorry Business Support

Family Violence Services



Deb Berg
Manager

Our MDAS Family Violence services continue to work holistically and innovatively in this challenging space.

Family violence is the biggest killer of women aged 14 to 44 in Australia, and for Aboriginal women, deaths from family violence are double. Tackling family violence has come into sharp focus during COVID-19 because of the heightened danger created, particularly for women and children, as a result of isolation, highly stressful situations and confinement with family violence perpetrators.

MDAS operates a range of programs aimed at ending family violence in Mallee communities. Despite the challenges of 2019-20 we have continued to progress towards this goal by working with women and children, as well as men, in new and positive ways.

Due to COVID-19 numerous programs were put on hold following restrictions that were handed

down. Precautions have been put in place to ensure safety guidelines were followed including PPE being used when conducting home visits and limiting the number of clients attending programs.

Men's Family Violence Programs Case Management/ Perpetrator/ Cultural Healing Program

Men's Case Management

Clients are being case managed from Mildura to Kerang. Clients are linked one-on-one to a case worker and are engaged in the development of a supported case plan. The program provides practical assistance such as accommodation and basic supports to the men, as well as help to address contributing issues such as employment, helping them to obtain licenses and jobs. The case management program provides cultural healing and working through family violence issues to identify negative behaviours and make changes.

Cultural Healing Program

All our Men's Family Violence clients are taken out onto country to feel and connect with culture to begin their healing journey. Numerous interactive activities and social cultural gatherings are carried out with the men from the Men's Family Violence programs and men from other programs. Conversations regarding cultural history and connection along with education, knowledge and support on changing behaviours and maintaining healthy relationships are the major focus of the programs. The majority of our programs and case management are held on country.

Adolescent Program

This program is for adolescents, male and female, aged 11-17 who choose to use or who are at risk of using family violence. Women's business and men's business is separated, and pre-COVID-19, clients were engaging well. Face-to-face group work and cultural programs have been impacted by COVID-19, but plans are in place to ensure it is up and running as soon as possible. Staff are continuing to work closely with schools to focus on at-risk Indigenous students.

Men's Behaviour Change Group

The Men's Cultural Healing Behaviour Change Group works with men who choose to use or are at risk of using family violence. Men can be self-referred or police/service referred with groups held at Mildura, Swan Hill and Robinvale. The Men's Family Violence Coordinator Rocky Sloan completed a Graduate Certificate to become a qualified Men's Behaviour Change Facilitator to ensure our program is culturally led and delivered. This program has been highly successful, with outcomes including clients who have changed their behaviours and have not reoffended. Many men from the program have been reunified with partners and families. The program carries a strong cultural focus, with men who have not reoffended invited to camps including Camp Jungi, Melbourne Dreamtime and Warrakoo.

A place of safety Meminar Ngangg Gimba

Meminar is our family violence refuge that gives women and children a safe place to dwell when they are escaping family violence.

Meminar has remained almost continually full again this year, with alternative accommodation being sourced from time to time to keep women and children safe. Our outreach services provide case management to women and children who are experiencing or at risk of family violence from Mildura and Robinvale, through to Swan Hill and Kerang and into NSW.

Cultural safety and cultural connection is an increasing focus of our work with traumatised women and children. Our Family Violence Therapeutic Team provides cultural healing through yarning, activities, programs and camps for adults, adolescents and children who have experienced family violence. Cultural healing occurs around the yarning circle or through cultural activities and Meminar has engaged three Elders (Aunty Dawn, Aunty Raels and Aunty Margie, pictured) who attend fortnightly to take part and to mentor clients. Our amazing support worker Leanne also well and truly made her mark in a beautiful way this year, by doing art work on all of the doors in Meminar's communal areas to reflect the cultural safety of our space.



Jenny's** story

Jenny came to Meminar after police were called to an incident at her home. Police removed her for her safety and Jenny asked to stay the night with a friend. Police also referred the case to Meminar – we contacted Jenny and she was able to move into the safety of the refuge immediately. (Although a victim is removed from immediate danger by police, often the risk of violence escalates once the perpetrator no longer has control of the victim). Jenny has a disability and had been in a relationship with her partner from a young age. Jenny told her caseworker she had endured severe violence over many years, including physical abuse that resulted in many black eyes and bruises. Her partner had control of her disability pension and Jenny was denied access to money. She had to ask her partner

for items to be purchased but her requests for aids and medical services she needed were mostly denied. The psychological and emotional abuse kept her isolated from services and community. Jenny had been convinced over many years that she could not survive without her partner to care for her, so when family, community or police attempted to intervene she would deflect the truth. Jenny had absolutely no self-confidence or independence and her spirit was lost. During her time in the refuge she became empowered and reconnected to her spirit through cultural healing camps and days out, yarning with Meminar Elders, Tidda's day in, art therapy and other activities. Jenny has showed incredible resilience and self-determination and now lives a life free from violence.

Corporate Services

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

2019-20 Major Highlights

We have 248 employees working some 525,000 hours on an annual basis.

Staff are working at a total of 16 locations throughout the Swan Hill, Robinvale, Mildura Region and remote Western NSW.

In the last financial year 19/20 there were no lost time injuries, the Industry Standard Rate is 9.5 per 250 employees.

Each Direct Workgroup has an accredited Health and Safety Representative (HSR) in accordance with OHS Legislation.

HSR's conduct monthly Audits on their respective DWG's.

The WorkSafe Inspectorate has made 3 on-site visits in 19/20 and were satisfied that the OHS Act and regulations were being followed.

All Incidents are reported to Managers in a timely manner.

A total of 278 incidents were reported, Report Only accounted for 70.50% of the total reports.

Risk Assessments are conducted as required, a total of 9 assessments were carried out 19/20.

9 OH&S Spot Audits were conducted 19/20.

Registered as a COVID-19 safe business with NSW government.

Swan Hill and Kerang Report



Melanie Lane
Swan Hill and Kerang
Corporate Services

The year 2019-20 was an extremely exciting one in terms of the development of MDAS Services within the Swan Hill and Kerang communities.

The creation of a new Corporate Services Manager Role for Swan Hill and Kerang is an indication of the growing importance of our communities within MDAS service provision.

This role allows the Corporate Services requirements of the Swan Hill and Kerang operations to be administered at a more local level, with greater understanding and response to local needs and conditions.

This year, we were proud to secure local Food Relief, Foodbank and the Secondbite partnerships to allow a better response to community in need in Swan Hill and Kerang. This was much appreciated by local community members, particularly during the months of COVID-19 and the delivery of food hampers was a critical outreach at a time when community was feeling confused and vulnerable.

We are expecting these to be long and beneficial partnerships to our local communities.

The Our Mob Speaks listening program was introduced at the end of the financial year, and this was welcomed with enthusiasm from community members who have had an opportunity to be involved.

Another major achievement this year was the streamlining of our reception services at Swan Hill and Kerang under the corporate services banner. This has been a positive step.

I am looking forward to the important and influential role that a local Corporate Services Manager can play in improving service delivery and infrastructure development in the Swan Hill and Kerang communities. There are important challenges ahead, and I look forward to working with the community in reaching our shared goals.

Human Resources



Kelly Masters
HR Manager

Growing our own success has continued to be our mantra in the MDAS Human Resources team, and we are now seeing the success from our commitment to investing in our own staff.

The concept of working to secure committed personnel and investing in those people to strengthen our workforce from within is now having success both in terms of sustaining our organisation and supporting our communities.

Investing in our staff is empowering our community and advancing our shared future.

It is not only the ongoing shortage of skilled practitioners in health,

family services, social and emotional wellbeing and administration areas that motivates this decision. The investment in an individual also has flow-on benefits in so many ways.

In strengthening our workforce and building succession planning through upskilling, we are also supporting the individual to reach their goals, we are helping them to create resilience in their family unit, we are strengthening community capacity and we are creating role models to inspire others.

The decision to study or return to study is a big commitment, particularly when many staff have full time work commitments and a busy home life. MDAS has worked hard to put in place support networks to enable student success: teachers; external student support; inhouse support through mentoring; and the flexibility from managers to allow students to manage the balance between study commitments and daily working life.

MDAS currently has 120 staff studying nationally-accredited training from Cert level to Master's degree. We have also supported 20 trainees in the 2019-20 financial year who are currently studying across all program areas in the organisation. These trainees were strongly supported by their direct line manager and worked alongside their direct line manager daily, supported by their own team

and the wider corporate services space.

For the first time MDAS has had four trainees in the Corporate Services space with all completing their traineeships prior to their final State Training Board deadlines. Extensions were not required to be applied for and this is the first time this has occurred in my time at MDAS.

The Corporate trainees all came through the MAEP program and look to have promising careers following a succession plan to be future MDAS leaders.

The commitment to their studies is not only an asset to their own drive to succeed but to external mentors, teachers and in-house support.

We have some real talent among our trainees and the goal for us is that they stay at MDAS and strive to become future leaders – hopefully on the table at management and executive level.

120 staff (nearly half of our workforce) are currently undertaking further training

Our Mob Speaks - a new way of listening



We are proud to have developed and launched what we believe is a community engagement process that will be a game-changer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

This year we developed and began the rollout in community of "Our Mob Speaks", a new way of engaging, talking and listening to our mobs to make sure we are providing the support that is needed to help our communities thrive.

Our Mob Speaks is about the community talking, and MDAS listening...

It was launched early in 2020 – but COVID-19 didn't stall our plans.

The new consultation method is not about community meetings or forums.

It's about listening to people who sometimes don't get heard.

Every month our Community Engagement Team is tasked to

be out and about yarning with individuals as well as talking with existing community organisations, social groups and school groups, to hear what's on their mind and to understand how MDAS can best support families and communities to thrive.

Because of COVID-19, we reshaped our plans so that our first yarns are one-on-one, about how MDAS can support community recover from COVID-19. We are working in new ways and have formed some new partnerships – we want to know what people think. In our first round of yarns, we spoke to 77 different individuals about how we can best recover from COVID-19. We'll keep talking to more people in 2020-21.

Some of that talking has been face-to-face, other times it has been over the phone. But our commitment is to draw on the deep wisdom, strength and resolve of the widest possible number of Aboriginal people living in the Mallee to guide our future.

Our MDAS community engagement staff record only what community says, not who says it. We know just

how important this is so everyone can feel safe to talk about what's on their mind. Information and feedback is confidential. Guaranteed.

The information is essential for us to continue improving MDAS services. The feedback will also be used to talk with government about community concerns and ideas, to make sure we are attracting the right investment to support our communities.

We will regularly provide feedback on our website and through Facebook about what our mob are saying.

It is part of a new process that will shape the future we want for our children today, and their children into the future, but hearing the voices of our mobs and generations across the Mallee.

Back on Country at Menera Farm



Menera Station, at Mellool, is leased from the Indigenous Land Corporation by MDAS on behalf of the Swan Hill and Kerang communities

The 1455-hectare freehold station is on Wamba Wamba country on the NSW side of the Murray River, 25 kilometres from Swan Hill. It is operated as a sustainable farming enterprise and is used for an increasing number of community activities.

More than 100 people celebrated NAIDOC Week at a community day at the property, and for many Elders and community members it was the first opportunity to get back “on country” at Menera.

The successful submission to lease Menera was made by MDAS in partnership with, and at the request of, the Swan Hill and Kerang communities in 2015. The submission was chosen by the ILC because of the lasting benefits to Koori communities in the Mallee and southern NSW.

More than 1000 hectares of Menera is under irrigation and the property is currently producing irrigated, dryland crops, running cattle, and sheep under a share-farming agreement.

Reflection on Menera: Keith Hampton, MDAS Chairman

“It was just a fantastic feeling at the Community Day. It was really special for the Elders and the young ones connecting across the generations. We’d had a boys’ cultural camp before the day, when boys from Swan Hill and Kerang were doing things like learning to throw spears and hunting witchetty grubs and a girls camp was also held in the leadup.

“On the day itself, we had the young boys put on the dances they’d learnt in front of the oldies, and the Elders were just so pleased to see their grand kids and nephews getting to understand their culture and being proud of it.

Uncle Rick Kirby, Justice Worker and Wadi Wadi Mudi Mudi Elder

“The Community Day was a real eye opener for people. It was our first chance to show off Menera and I think people were excited about what’s happening here and the possibilities for the future.

“The community absolutely needs a place to be out on country, practising our cultural traditions – it’s the closest thing we have to being ‘out bush’ and the old people loved it and the young people loved it.

“More community cultural days, more activities out here, especially ones that will connect youth to Elders across the generations on a place like this...it’s good medicine.”

Financials

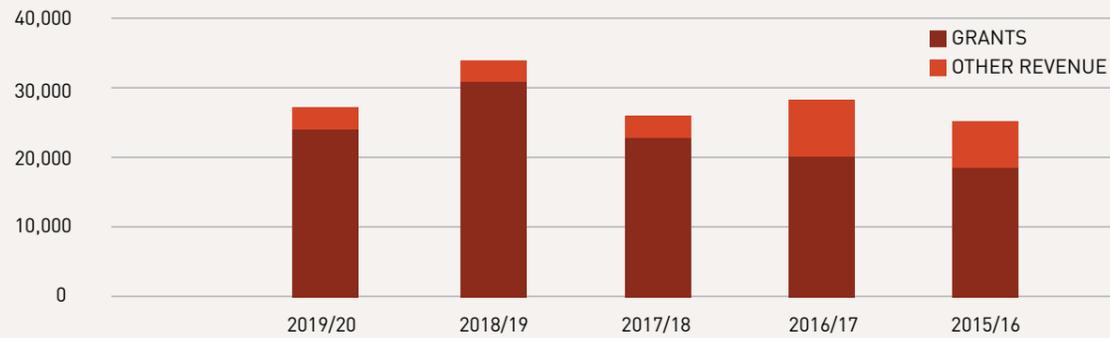
Financial Position and Performance

Snapshot

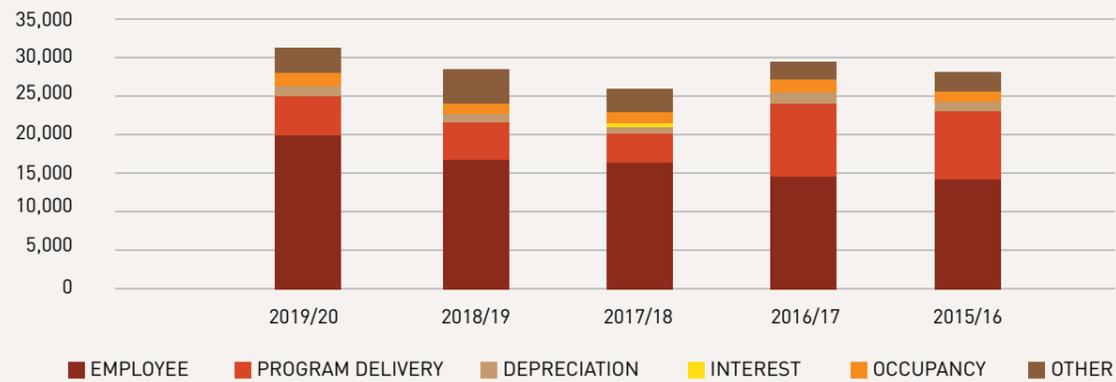
The graphs below show a snapshot of MDAS' revenue, expenditure and result over the past five years.

More detail of revenue and expenditure can be found within the financial statements.

REVENUE \$'000



EXPENDITURE \$'000

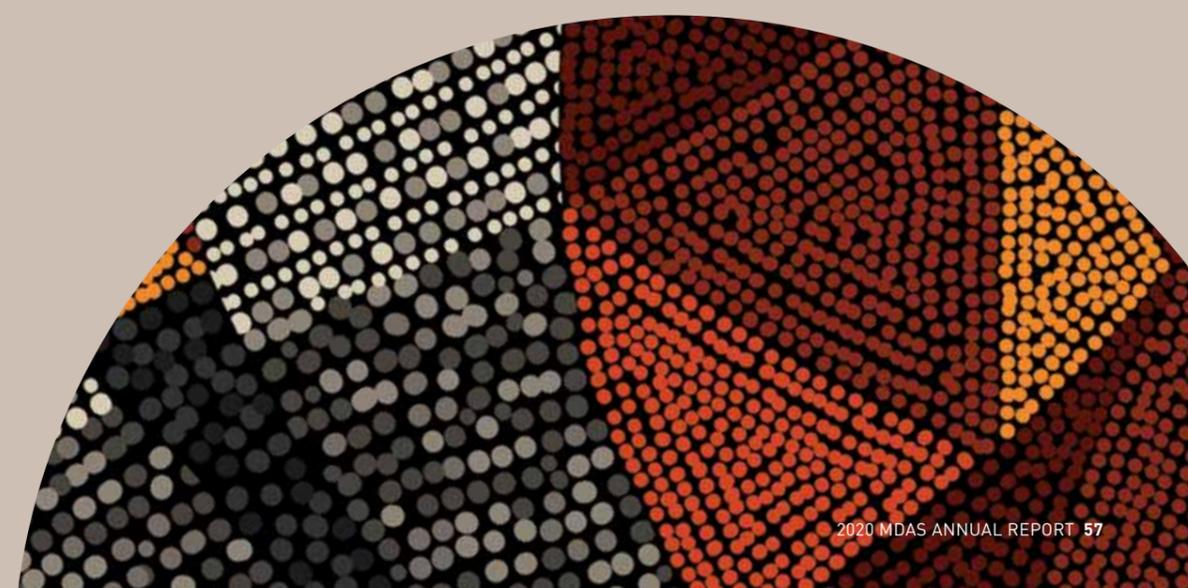
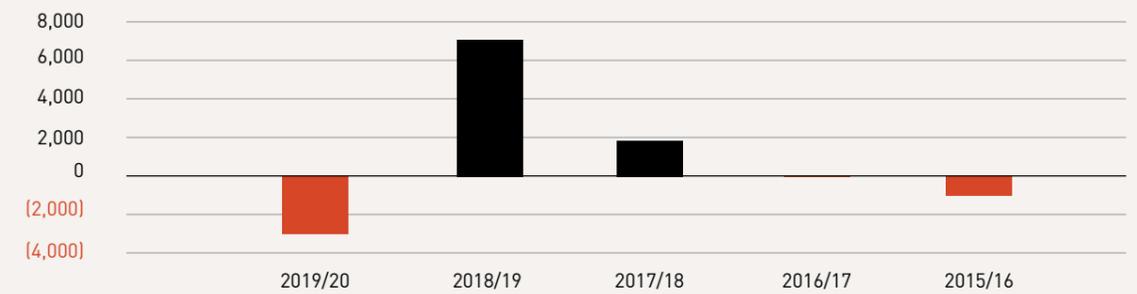


Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited is registered with the Australian Charities & Not for Profit Commission (ACNC) as a large

charity and discloses its financial performance annually to the ACNC. The financial statements and notes will this year be lodged with the

ACNC through the 2020 Annual Information Statement (AIS) process and will be available for the public.

RESULT \$'000



FINANCIALS



Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited
ABN 54 334 685 198
Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue			
Government funding	4	24,805,458	31,364,403
Other revenue	4	2,998,177	3,280,499
Total Revenue		27,803,635	34,644,902
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense	5	19,481,563	16,463,574
Client costs and program development / delivery		5,140,975	4,868,908
Depreciation expense	9	1,202,219	682,706
Interest expense		23,770	63,201
Occupancy costs and utilities		1,608,108	1,561,872
Motor vehicle expenses		466,157	947,042
IT costs		602,691	541,959
Travel expenses		503,013	624,563
Grants returns		5,968	139,993
Repairs and equipment replacement		680,203	660,570
Other expenses		916,712	1,219,771
Total expenses		30,631,379	27,774,159
Net current year profit		(2,827,744)	6,870,743
Other comprehensive income			
<i>Items that will not be subsequently reclassified to profit and loss</i>			
Revaluation of property		-	-
Revaluation of intangible assets		80,290	110,110
Total other comprehensive income for the year		80,290	110,110
Total comprehensive income for the year		(2,747,454)	6,980,853

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited
ABN 54 334 685 198
Consolidated Statement of Financial Position
as at 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	3,780,521	9,520,692
Trade and other receivables	7	1,357,057	626,506
Other financial assets	8	794,195	835,214
Total current assets		5,931,773	10,982,412
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	26,820,077	25,041,713
Right of use	10	575,471	-
Intangible assets	10	1,099,700	1,019,410
Total non-current assets		28,495,248	26,061,123
Total assets		34,427,021	37,043,535
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	1,264,568	1,870,650
Leases	12	444,406	-
Provisions	13	1,680,819	1,365,284
Total current liabilities		3,389,793	3,235,934
Non-current liabilities			
Leases	12	134,925	-
Provisions	13	257,365	415,209
Total non-current liabilities		392,290	415,209
Total liabilities		3,782,083	3,651,143
Net assets		30,644,938	33,392,392
Equity			
Retained earnings		26,497,120	29,324,864
Reserves		4,147,818	4,067,528
Total equity		30,644,938	33,392,392

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited
ABN 54 334 685 198
Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Grants receipts		24,434,209	26,972,461
Other receipts		2,598,106	4,525,860
Payments to suppliers and employees		(29,901,282)	(26,537,835)
Interest received		102,590	96,688
Interest paid		(23,770)	(63,201)
Net cash flows from/(used in) operating activities	16b	(2,790,147)	4,993,973
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		25,907	148,734
Proceeds from sale of investments		56,980	58,983
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(2,473,682)	(2,106,641)
Purchase of investments		(48,763)	-
Net cash flows used in investing activities		(2,439,558)	(1,898,924)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of lease liabilities		(510,466)	-
Repayment of borrowings		-	(2,402,500)
Net cash flows used in financing activities		(510,466)	(2,402,500)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(5,740,171)	692,549
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		9,520,692	8,828,143
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	16a	3,780,521	9,520,692

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial report of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited, which comprises the consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, consolidated statement of changes in equity and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial report of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited, is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and, the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

Richmond Sinnott & Delahunty, trading as RSD Audit
ABN 60 616 244 309
Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation



As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the board of director's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the board of directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2020, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

RSD Audit

Kathie Teasdale
Partner
Dated: 12 November 2020



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Bendigo, Victoria
PO Box 448, Bendigo, VIC, 3552

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Auditor's Independence Declaration under Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act s 60-40 to the Directors of Mallee District Aboriginal Services

In accordance with Subdivision 60-C of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as the auditor of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited for the year ended 30 June 2020, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2020 there has been no contraventions of:

- (i) the Auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) Any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

RSD Audit

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Katie'.

Kathie Teasdale
Partner
41A Breen Street
Bendigo VIC 3550

Dated: 12 November 2020

Richmond Sinnott & Delahunty, trading as RSD Audit
ABN 60 616 244 309
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A large, vibrant Aboriginal dot painting in shades of red, orange, and black. A large black circle is overlaid on the right side of the painting, containing white text.

**We are proud and
strong descendants
of the oldest living
culture in the world.**

Thank you Team!

Well done to our entire 2019-20 team for another year of hard work and progress.

Suzanna Aertssen
Donella Akers
Chantelle Appoo
Fredrick Apthorpe
Naomi Archer
Joseph Azzarelli
Kimberley Bacon
Ryan Bailey
Taylah Baird
Shannon Baker
Sally Barker
Yvonne Barnes
Tiarni Baskin
Marissa Bennett
Deborah Berg
Jennifer Berry
Glenn Bertalli
Aaron Paul Best
Winona Bhatia
Hine Billing
Jennifer Blackman
Jennifer Blake
Keith Blore
Jeannette Blundell
Carol Bonnett
Justine Bowden
Rianne Bowden
Steven Bowden
Samantha Brennan
Terrance Brennan
Bradley Britten
Elvie-Marie Britten
Allison Buchanan
Kerrie Burton
Jennifer Byrnes
Jacob Byrnes
Nakiah Cahill
Billie-Lee Carruthers
Shayne Carter
Kylie Cawley
Jacinta Chaplin
Andrew Charles
Alisha Charles
Madina Charles
Damien Charles
Kieaminda Charles

Ethan Chilly
Matthew Chilly
Robert Chinnian
Loretta Circosta
Tessa Clark
Kailey Clark
Quentin Clark
Wayne Coe
Karley Connelly
Becky Cooper
Katherine Crouch
Lorraine Cruse
Alida Cabbage
Rebecca Curphey
Jade Curphey
Michelle Dahlitz
Carolyn de Jong
Salvatore Deluca
Robert Dini
Alana Doe
Monica Doherty
Danielle Dougherty
David Douglas
Cassandra Duck
Kehan Dyce
Ikeya Edge
Leilani Eggmoesse
Rinwalla Eggmoesse
Dominic Eggmoesse-Smith
Roslyn Evans
Stewart Falconer
Belinda Fanshaw
Rachael Farr
Kim Faulkner
Angelika Fevaleaki
Belinda Fidura
Rebecca Fitzgerald
Brody Flowers
Joseph Fonte
Celia Fox
Matthew Fulton
Michelle Gadsby
Krystal Gadsby
Leonie Garner
Jenny Gaulke
Emma Geyer

Julia Goodes
Norma Gowers
Tiffany Griffin
Brady Hall
Blake Hall
Tamara Hamence
Margrete Hamence
Keith Hampton
Stephanie Harradine
Courtney Harvey
Jadan Havea
Briana Hayden
Skye Hayden
Kylie Henderson
Calvin Henry
Ross Hensgen
Dana Hollis
Amy Hunt
Leanda Hynes
John Jackson
Tamika Jenkins
Brendan Johnson
Georgina Johnson
Ami Johnston
Diane Jones
Simone Jones
Jacquelyn Josephs
Nathan Kelly
Pettina Kelly
Karen Kelly
Kaneesha Kelly
Erin Kelly
James Kennedy
Belinda King
Crystal Kirby
Isaiah Kirby
Harold Kirby
Ricky Kirby
Jan Michael Koopmans
Terrence Kuchel
Melainie Lambert
Melanie Lane
Jennifer Laurie
Connie Liakopoulos
Jody Little
Malinda Loats

Carol Logan
Marie Mah
Jerome Makalio Jackson
Lola Masasso
Jayde Masasso
Kelly Masters
Peter Matsumoto
Terri McArdle
Amanda McCole
Pamela McCormack
Toni McCormack
Leanne McDermott
Rachael McGann
Rhonda McInnes
Rhiannon McInnes
Jack McSwain
Alex McWilliam
Kara Merritt
Elizabeth Milazzo
Lalueni Minoneti
Joanne Mitchell
Caitlin Mitchell
Timothy Mitchell
Jacinta Molloy
Greta Monaghan
Travis Morvell
Teonie Muggeridge
Nakita Muggeridge
Sarah Nalder
Maralea Nau
Laetitia Nelson
Tahlia Newman
Glenda Nicholls
Arron Nicholls
Kristie Nixon
Carly Noll
Tariq Odegaard
Rachel Pask
Anand Patel
Manu Paul
Shiloh Peila
Brianna Peters
Ada Peterson
James Peterson
Tina Philp
Caterina Pickup

Melissa Pippin
Kathy Potter
Neive Price
Mou Rashid Bose
Jane Reid
Paul Roberts
Isabella Robertson
Kerry Russell
Tarina Sailor
Darlene Sanders
Kosha Shanahan
Leah Shanaughan
Ruchika Sharma
Margaret Sharman
Gregory Sloan
Lisa Maree Sloan
Kane Smith
Derek Smith
Dylan Smith
Robyn Smythe
Latiesha Soanes
Gloria Spencer
Donna Stacey
Judy Anne Stafford
Jesse James Staker
Raelene Stephens
Andrea Stewart
Katrina Stockman
Aroha Sykes
Joshua Symons
Kelly Taliloo
Russell Taylor
Leanne Taylor
Katina Taylor
Lois Taylor
Anthony Taylor
Zanele Thebe
Terry Thomas
Darlene Thomas
Kaitlyn Tisler
Isaiah-Levi Togo
Crystal Toogood
Jonathan Toscano
Laura Traeger
Vaasili Tuifao
Fiona Turner

Jacinta Tyers
Sherry Van Leuveren
Mincy Varghese
Jessica Versteeg
Milka Waithaka
Alan James Walsh
Kokwam Wapau
Leslie Warburton
Patricia Watson
Harold Webster
Toni Webster
Ian Wescombe
Cody Whelan
Lace Whitford
Amanda Whitton
Zachary Wilksch
Kelly Williams
Ashton Williams
Martin Williams
Michelle Williams
David Williams
Rebecca Wilson
Joanne Wright
Nathan Yates
Angela Yates
Mahalia Zeilke-Soden



OUR SERVICES

HEALTH

GP
Nurse
Aboriginal Health Workers
Outreach Workers
Chronic Disease Management
Maternal Child Health
Nurse Health Checks
Transport

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Nephrologist
Drug And Alcohol Worker
Psychologist
Maternal And Child Health Nurse
Dietician
Podiatrist
Cardiologist
Urologist
Paediatrician
Optometrist
Cardiologist
Respiratory Specialist Audiologist
Physiotherapist
Personal Trainers

CLINICS

Well Women's Clinic
Immunisation Clinic

TACKLING SMOKING AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES SERVICES

Quit Smoking Support
Boot Camps
Community Gym

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLBEING TEAM

Local Justice Worker Program
Bringing Them Home Program
Drug & Alcohol Counselling
Gamblers Help
Koori Women's Diversion
Wiimpatja Healing Centre
Mental Health-AOD (Youth Specific)
Adult Mental Health
Gambling Community
Prevention Project
Psychiatrist

AGED AND DISABILITY

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)
Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC-PYP)

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

CHILDREN'S PLACEMENT SERVICES

Aboriginal Children Specialist
Advice Support Service (ACSASS)
Home Based Care
Kinship Care
Aboriginal Family Led
Decision Making
Cultural Support Planning
Therapeutic Foster Care
Therapeutic Residential Care
Therapeutic Residential Case Management

FAMILY SERVICES

Integrated Family Services
Aboriginal Stronger Families
Family Preservation and Restoration
Parents Under Pressure
Youth Services
Koori Night Patrol
Soccer Club
Community Development Project
Youth Justice
Early School Leavers
Emerging Leaders Program
Family Violence

Meminar (Family Violence refuge)
Men's Case Management
Time out Services
Men's Behaviour Change Group
Koori Youth Connect

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SERVICES

Crisis Support
Transition Support
Aboriginal Tenants at Risk of Eviction
Koori Private Tenancy Worker
Community Housing

EARLY YEARS SERVICES

Maternity Services
Maternal and Child Health Services
Family Support Services;
- In Home support
- Cradle to Kinder
Early Intervention and Early Learning Services
- Supported Playgroups
- Circle of Security
- Collaborative Therapy
HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters)
Koori Preschool Assistant Program