

Safety, respect and choice for women



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Toora Women Inc. acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of this land. We would like to pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and to celebrate their ongoing contribution to Australian culture. We express our gratitude for the privilege of being able to live and work on their land.

FUNDED BY

ACT Health Directorate

National Affordable Housing Agreement and the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which are jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments.

Capital Health Network

Australian Government, Department of Social Services

TOORA WOMEN INC.

Toora Corporate Office

- P** (02) 6122 7000
- E** TooraAdmin@toora.org.au
- propertyfinance@toora.org.au

Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services

- P** (02) 6247 2399
- E** tdvhs@toora.org.au
- property@toora.org.au

Toora Alcohol and Other Drugs Services

- P** (02) 6241 7233
- E** tooraaod@toora.org.au

Toora Counselling Services

- P** (02) 6122 7070
- E** counselling@toora.org.au



Toora Women Inc.



Contents

Chair Report	2
Chief Executive Officer's Report	4
Aboriginal Liaison Officer's Report	10
Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service Director's Report	12
Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Service Director's Report	18
Counselling Service Director's Report	22



Chair's Report

Once again, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on our community and lives in 2021. Toora adapted its service delivery models, working arrangements and leadership structures to respond and manage the risks associated with the pandemic. At all times, the safety of our clients, staff and community was at the forefront of planning and managing our services during these challenging times.

Toora continued to support the women and children in our service, built resilience, informed government decision-making, and adapted procedures to maintain services in a safe and sustainable way. This ongoing planning, learning and response was overseen by the CEO, Susan Clarke-Lindfield and the Crisis Management Team (CMT). I want to particularly thank the CMT team who have always been proactive in managing through this crisis, and the ever-changing environment presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and acknowledge the additional effort and work required to respond to COVID-19, on top of their regular (already very busy) day-to-day work.

Toora built two new emergency accommodation properties for women and children fleeing family violence in Canberra. The properties were able to be purchased by Toora with the assistance of a Safe Places Emergency Accommodation grant from the Commonwealth government.

The properties were the first to be opened under the new program and will support up to 8 Canberra women and their children each year. The opening of these properties marks the first direct purchase of emergency shelters by Toora and is a significant step in the organisation's growth and maturity.

This year the Toora Board welcomed a new member, Robyn Bicket. Robyn has a lifelong interest in women's issues and gender equality. She brings more than 30 years government policy and legal experience, and a strong interest in services that go to support people who come into contact with the justice system and addressing the social determinates of disadvantage, justice system contact and violence. We have welcomed Robyn's significant contribution to the Board this year. I also wish to recognise the work of our Board Secretary, Kate Yuille. On numerous occasions this year Kate has needed to be the primary minute taker for Board meetings. This is a critical role, and after a full day of work, taking minutes of a 3-4 hour meeting is a big ask. It is a task greatly appreciated by the Board.

I would also like to thank Elgita Dajsmaili and Kristy Morris, our two Toora Advisory Forum representatives who provide direct input and feedback to the Board on behalf of front-line staff. Their contribution to the Board is highly valued – particularly as Elgita is often on-call and managing time-critical events, whilst also attending our meetings.



Toora's CEO, Susan Clarke-Lindfield, has advised that she will retire on 10 December 2021. Susan has made a tremendous contribution to Toora during her ten-year tenure in the CEO role. This includes strengthening and streamlining the Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service and Toora AOD service, including creating the Day Program and launching the Toora Counselling Service.

Toora has also significantly expanded under Susan's leadership, including successfully tendering for the ex-Inanna programs and becoming a community housing provider, forming a partnership with EveryMan, providing gender specialist treatment under the AOD DASL contract and expanding Toora's property footprint under the Safe Places program.

Her leadership, from commencing as a change agent and restructuring the organisation to build on its strengths, to more recently leading through the bushfire and COVID-19 pandemic crises, has ensured that Toora has continued to provide excellent and much needed services for women and children in the Canberra community.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Toora Board, to acknowledge Susan's outstanding leadership and hard work. She will be greatly missed, but her legacy of strong governance and reform will continue on as Toora enters its 40th year of operation with a new CEO at the helm.

Finally, I wish to thank the hardworking staff of Toora. You have had much to contend with this year, with lockdowns and changes to how you do your work; and there will be further challenges and changes ahead in 2022. However, you have also demonstrated that you are resourceful, strong, caring and the best at what you do. Thank you.

Suzanne Muir
Toora Board Chair



Chief Executive Officer's Report

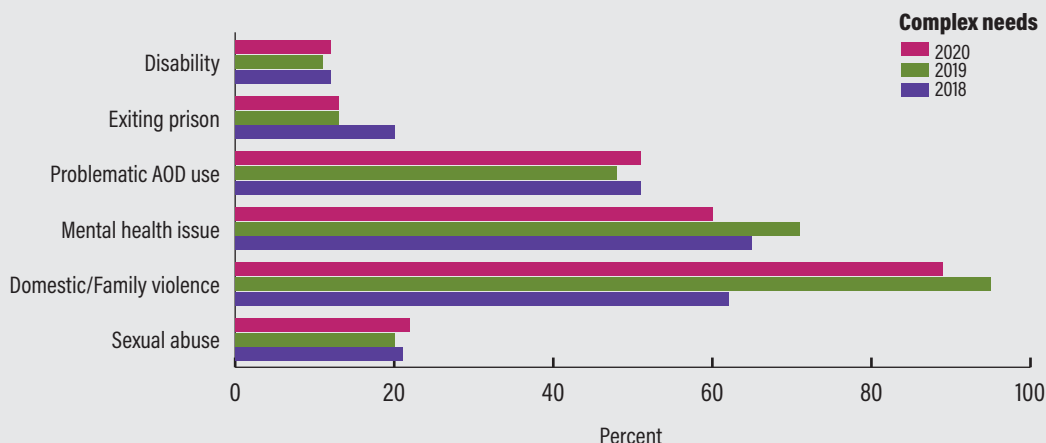
I am proud to present this report highlighting our organisation's strategic achievements during a year compounded by the COVID-19 environment in which we live.

In this 2020/21 reporting period, Toora Women Inc. provided specialist wrap-around support to 405 clients and 114 children. The number of clients supported was down by 20% from pre-pandemic times due to a lack of exit options for women leaving our services.

We continued to deliver services to women and children from varied backgrounds, with 97 clients (22%) identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and 159 (35%) from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds. Over 6% of our CALD clients did not speak English and service delivery occurred through an interpreter.

The women and children who come to our services have multiple and complex needs, often due to experiences of significant trauma such as domestic and family violence (398), mental health issues (271), alcohol and other drug use (209), sexual abuse (97), and exiting from the correctional system (60). Apart for a surge of women and children fleeing DFV due to COVID, these figures have remained consistent over the past three years.

Many clients use a variety of Toora services and programs. Over the past year, we have been working internally to strengthen our integrated service delivery systems which we call the One Toora approach with the aim of 'One Toora, One Team, One Client Journey'. Our AMC working group is a good example of this in practice and is detailed in the AOD section of this report.



Strategic Goal 1: to provide gender-specialist quality services that are holistic, evidence based and outcome focused

GENDER SPECIALIST PARTNERSHIP WITH EVERYMAN AUSTRALIA

Our Partnership with EveryMan continues to strengthen and benefit mutual clients of both organisations.

This year, fifteen designated Toora staff were trained in the Bower Place Method and the partnership's Complexity Centre is now established to support ACT residents with high and complex needs. Both the Building Respectful Families and the Supporting Partners with Strong Emotions programs lie within this Centre.

The Complexity Centre addresses a current regional gap in services for people with severe and ongoing psychosocial presentations, often associated with patterns of acute and entrenched difficult-to-manage behaviour, intergenerational violence and complex constellations of multiple agency involvement.

It provides intensive effort, individualised multidisciplinary support, specialist knowledge and advanced practice skills delivered as and when needed to address the chronic, psychosocial drivers of homelessness, domestic and family violence, drug and alcohol and mental health issues. ACT residents with high and complex needs require intensive support delivered for as long as is needed, rather than services limited to a fixed number of appointments or timespan.

In empowering clients to have meaningful outcomes in the areas of life which matter to them, their partnership with Centre practitioners produces other outcomes in the areas of interest for family members, communities and statutory authorities. Cycles of violence, family breakdown, statutory interventions and dependent reliance on support services are disrupted. By supporting clients to experience success in addressing their needs, the program reduces the likelihood that clients will return to homelessness, AOD and other government services.

Thanks to funding from Hands Across Canberra and the Snow Foundation, this year saw the completion of the Building Respectful Families Pilot Program which was delivered to four couples. An evaluation of the program was undertaken by the University of Sunshine Coast and their findings identified that program outcomes included 'increased safety for women and children, increased awareness of impact of family violence on others and self, improved partner relationship and enhanced parent-child relationships.'

SPECIALIST CHILDREN'S TRAUMA COUNSELLORS

On any given day at Toora, we have approx. 80-100 children in our residential services and for the past few years, We have been lobbying for funding to employ two specialist children's trauma counsellors. Once more, this year we have been unsuccessful in our attempts.

Many of these children come into our services in a state of flight or fight. They are unsettled, anxious, scared. Some cling to their mothers, others are shut down and some of the older children still wet their bed. Their trauma responses are extreme because they arrive at Toora having gone through extreme trauma. Without early intervention, treatment and care, these children carry this with them into adulthood.

Strategic Goal 2: to inform people of who we are, what we do and why we do it

INQUIRY INTO THE DRUGS OF DEPENDENCE (PERSONAL USE) AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Toora Women Inc welcomed the opportunity to provide input into an Inquiry on a proposed amendment to assist the Canberra community to move from a criminal justice based to a health-based response to personal drug use. We worked as part of ATODA's executive group to put together an overarching submission representing the sector. Additionally, our AOD Director, Rebecca Wood, wrote a submission from Toora using a gender lens on the issue.

COERCIVE CONTROL LEGISLATION

I was included in an advisory group to inform the Domestic Violence Prevention Council on early policy discussions on criminalising Coercive Control in the ACT. Coercive control is a type of domestic violence where an abuser demonstrates a pattern of controlling and manipulating behaviour designed to intimidate, isolate and control a person.

We understand that it is a complex matter to criminalise coercive control. While the advisory group supported the legislation in principle, our recommendations were that the development of any legislative reform in this space should only occur after further research, community consultation and agency training.

INCREASED CONSULTATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In addition to the increased risk and stress related to the pandemic, there have come some positive outcomes that the ACT can be proud of. Communication, support and collaborations excelled as government agencies and NGOs all came together to work toward the common goal of keeping people safe.

During peak times of risk, I regularly attended many regular COVID relate meetings including the AOD Contingency Management Working Group meeting with Health; special COVID-19 meetings of ACT AOD Executives, Women's Services Group, Domestic and Family Violence COVID-19 Roundtable; Community Sector Updates; and Joint Pathways.

Strategic Goal 3: to be a sustainable organisation with a diverse funding stream

SAFE PLACES PROGRAM

At the end of last year, it was announced that Toora was a successful tenderer for a Safe Places Emergency Accommodation grant. This program is part of the Commonwealth Government's \$78m funding package to provide additional safe places for women and children experiencing family and domestic violence.

Over 2020/21, we embarked on a steep learning curve into property development. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the building industry, we lost the original builder from the project and a replacement had to be found at the last moment. Fortunately, a major builder heard of our dilemma and stepped in to offer two townhouses that were nearing completion. He charged pre-COVID prices which was an incredibly generous offer and a testament to community support for helping women and children at risk.

The two houses are now finished and include both security and disability modifications. Due to lockdowns and Minister's availability, they were not launched until August 2021, but nevertheless timely due to a surge in women and children seeking to escape domestic violence after lockdown.



The kitchen and lounge area in a Safe Places property.

Strategic Goal 4: to ensure organisational capacity and capability to meet the needs of existing and future clients

DISCOVERY AND DESIGN PROJECT.

Toora's SharePoint site has become outdated and needs to be restructured so CentreRed IT were contracted to conduct a Discovery and Design project. Once the Discovery stage was done, they are now working on improvements to address Data Governance, Mobile Data Management and Mobile Application Management. This will be completed in the new funding year.

ACCREDITATION REVIEW

In February, we underwent another 3-year quality review. The reviewers told us that the excellent work that Toora does shone out to them and was also demonstrated through the stakeholder and client feedback. It is not all that common for an organisation to be recommended for full accreditation immediately after a review so this is something that we can be proud of. We were also told that any recommendations for improvement will be mostly just 'value adds'. The final accreditation report stated:

'Toora has much to be proud of in managing significant growth, dealing with dual hits of fires and the pandemic, retaining high-quality staff who provided continuous care and support, and commit to partnering with women for their and their children's better futures. The recommendations in the report support Toora's ethos and practice of continuous improvement. The Assessment Team findings indicate that Toora Women Inc has met the QIC Health and Community Standards requirements and recommends that accreditation be awarded.'

INCREASED CULTURAL SAFETY

There were many advances in our goal to increase cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children accessing our services. In 2020/21, we welcomed Jo Connop as Aboriginal Liaison Officer, signed an MOU for student placements with CIT's Yuruana Centre who provide tailored Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander courses, study support and cultural advice. Yuruana also delivered an 8-week accredited cultural awareness training program to staff.

KEEPING THRIVE ALIVE

In 2019/20, Leadership members of Toora and EveryMan underwent advanced coaching and leadership development training with Inqlu using the Thrive Model. The goals of the training were to:

- Develop and align the Leaders and Leadership team of both organisations to form one high performing partnership team.
- Bring about and drive enduring change in culture
- Create a new common language and framework for performance

Following on this year we continued to roll out and embed this model throughout Toora. The THRIVE model focuses on causing breakthrough performance in results for teams. By developing awareness and getting straight to any issues or difficulties hidden within teams the training provides tools to encourage change and support workability in these areas. The teams develop a shared language, promoting a safe, healthy environment for discussions which are timely and address conflicts in an assertive and transparent manner. This encourages a new team culture and promotes growth through sharing of feelings and ideas transforming teams to work together in flow creating a thriving environment.

The training focused on increasing team awareness to create effective performance. Focus is on building tightly knit and highly collaborative teams that works across the organisation and across the partnership with Everyman. The more aligned the internal teams became, the more aligned and productive the cross-program team are, and the more high-level results are produced for the organisation and for the partnership.

GENEROUS DONATIONS

This year we received over \$61,000 in donations and would like to thank the Hands Across Canberra Recovery Appeal, Bonds Hair Religion, Department of Infrastructure Social Club, Zonta Club, and Fernwood Fitness. A further \$50,000 from the Lestari Foundation was received in April which will go to next years accounts.

We are also deeply grateful for the monetary and non-monetary donations we received from individual community members. Many donors prefer not to be thanked publicly, but please know that your generous contributions have helped many women and their children throughout this difficult year.

UNIT COSTING PROJECT

Toora and EveryMan both contracted Chris Nightingale Consulting to identify unit costs for our organisations including the joint Complexity Centre programs. This is complicated work due to our multiple programs/funding sources and we're impressed with everything that they've done so far. This work is continuing into the new year when we will receive an accurate breakdown of how much it costs Toora to deliver a service per client, per hour, per property, per case management plan and more. They are also distinguishing between the costs of case management for low, medium and high complexity clients.

COVID-19 RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The crisis management team continued to meet regularly throughout the year to monitor the COVID situation and try to forecast and proactively address any upcoming risks to Toora and the clients in our care. We were fortunate in the ACT to have a respite period of COVID normal for approximately seven months before being moved back into lockdown in August 2021. In moving back and forth, the staff and clients have shown an impressive resilience.

Key challenges and opportunities in the future

COMMISSIONING

All of our core funding contracts are due to expire in June 2023 and the ACT Government is looking to redesign the service systems in the lead up to this. It is anticipated that major reforms will occur with a focus on points of integration and coordination between housing, homelessness and health services. This dovetails well with our own One Toora approach, so in addition to being an active member of the collaborating design groups with the government, we will be working diligently within Toora to improve the collaborate service delivery systems between Toora AOD Service and Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service.

COMPLEXITY CENTRE

There is no limit to the potential of the Complexity Centre and our partnership with EveryMan Australia will continue to be developed.

SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN

As mentioned above, Toora's is committed to helping children in pain who come into our service. We will be increasing our lobbying efforts to secure funding for trauma counselling in the upcoming year.

PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMUNITY HOUSING CANBERRA

We were recently approached by CHC who have received a \$100,000 grant from The Big Issue initiative called Homes for Homes to support the building of 2 x 2-bedroom properties to be tenanted by Aboriginal women who are transitioning from incarceration back into the community.

CHC asked to partner with Toora to provide the support to the women during the first 12 months of their stay. Using a Housing First model, the properties will then be signed over to the women. The houses won't be built for many months and we're confident that we can source a small grant by this time to fund the case management support, most likely through the Complexity Centre.

EXPANDING TOORA'S COMMUNITY HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Toora has a strategic goal to further develop our community housing expertise and expand our housing stock. We're a registered community house provider with currently 48 properties leased from ACT Housing and two houses of our own. This year we put energy into building and strengthening relationships and networks in this sector and became members of the Community Housing Industry Association.

Community housing providers are not-for-profits who generally develop, build and manage social and affordable housing for people on low income. At the moment it is clear to us that developing and building property portfolios is well beyond Toora's expertise, but is something that the CEO and Board will be working towards in the future.

Many thanks to our team

This is my last annual report as I am retiring in December 2021. The ten years that I've spent at Toora have been the best in my career and I'm proud to be leaving our organisation in such a strong position.

I know that it's a cliché to hear people say how it's been an honour and a privilege but that's how I have truly felt about my time as the CEO of Toora. The work that staff do has made it easy to represent the organisation and I suspect that all that I've learned from them and our clients has made me a much better person. Within the backdrop of a global pandemic, staff have worked selflessly to achieve the best client outcomes and I want to take one last opportunity to thank them for everything they do.

We have a dedicated Board that works hard to provide good governance for the organisation. This year sorely tested their appetite for risk, particularly when the original Safe Places builder was lost. They come to every meeting fully prepared, every decision is considered and the best interests of Toora is always their primary focus. Thank you for the support you have given me over the past 10 years.

I am also grateful for the Leadership team. Thank you Mirsada Draskovic, Rebecca Wood, Tess Rogel, and Aghia Gunawan. We have faced untold challenges together throughout the years and a CEO could not ask for a better team. Diverse enough to have robust and well rounded debate before coming together to make quality decisions to advance the mission and vision of our organisation.

As always, I would like to thank our funding bodies—the ACT Government's Community Services Directorate and Health Directorate, the Australian Government's Department of Social Services and the Capital Health Network—who provided responsive and committed support this year, particularly during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Susan Clarke-Lindfield

Toora Chief Executive Officer





Aboriginal Liaison Officer's Report

Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO) – Joanne (Jo) Connop commenced with Toora's Domestic Violence & Homelessness Service (TDVHS) 11th January 2021. Jo came to TDVHS from the Northern Territory where she worked in the Domestic, Family & Sexual Violence and Community Services sector for the past seven years. Jo also comes with 29yrs service working within the Australian Public Service (APS) with a strong HR and Community Development background.

In the first three months, Jo focused on building her networks here in Canberra and in particular with the Indigenous community members and organisations. This would be the foundation of building & maintaining good & positive working relationships within the Canberra community and afforded the opportunity to change the perception that Toora Women Inc. was for migrant women only, but for all women including First Nations women who were escaping domestic, family & sexual violence.

ALO role includes providing support & guidance to all TDVHS staff ensuring cultural considerations and appropriateness is maintained when working with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women, children, families, communities and organisations. Jo's role also extends to support Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women accessing our service if requested – TDVHS now being able to provide

Aboriginal & Torres Strait islander women a choice, something that the Community has said has been lacking in the past.

The ALO role has played an important role with TDVHS's Coming Home Program. Since commencement with TDVHS, Jo visits AMC weekly with case coordinators and participates in Toora's AMC Working group looking at ways to improve service delivery as well as improve the community perception of Toora. ALO has built many positive relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander detainees & corrections staff and was invited by the Elders to be an active participant of the Indigenous Leadership program being run within AMC. Recently, Jo was approached & invited to be a part of the Elders Visitation Program at AMC which is a great honour and privilege.

The ALO has attended and participated in a number of community engagements and events promoting Toora Women Inc. which have included but not limited to the following:

- ACTCOSS Gulanga Program – International Women's Day
- ATSICom Sec Network Meetings
- AMC NAIDOC Cultural Day
- Launch of the Sisters in Spirit Aboriginal Corporation
- Monthly Blak Coffee Network Meetings

Since commencing in January 2021, TDVHS's ALO has built good working relationships within the community, and this has improved engagement with not only Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women wishing to access TDVHS but also improved relations with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander organisations and businesses including:

- ACT Housing (Senior Indigenous Policy Officer)
- CYPs Cultural Service Team
- ACTCOSS Gulanga Program
- EveryMan
- CIT Yuruana Centre
- Salvation Army
- Winnunga Nitmtjyah Aboriginal Health Service
- Gungan Gulwan Aboriginal Corp
- Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm
- Yarrudhamarra Creations
- Canberra Community Law – Dhurrawang Aboriginal Human Rights Program; Women's Legal Service
- Mulleun Mura – Aboriginal Justice Program
- Aboriginal Legal Aid Service
- Canberra Indigenous Business Network (CIBN)
- ABS – Centre of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Statistics – Census

With Toora now filling the ALO position, the Indigenous Reference Group has been re-established in partnership with Aboriginal & Torres Strait employees from EveryMan. This group provides cultural support, guidance and recommendations not only to the Toora Reconciliation Action Plan Committee but has input into our organisational policies ensuring a cultural lens is always being applied and considered.



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community Sector Network Meeting & Celebrating IWD – 12 March 2021

Jo was invited to speak at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Sector Network meeting to introduce herself and her role at Toora Women Inc. It was a great opportunity to meet these women including the Nanna's Group in the community who were very welcoming and supportive. This was to be the foundation of building good working relationships with the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community & sector.



Sisters in Spirit Aboriginal Corporation is a recently established organisation in the ACT with a focus on Aboriginal women. The objective of Sisters in Spirit is to establish and maintain a dedicated and sustainable ACT Aboriginal Women's Advocacy organisation. SISAC exists to enable a voice and empower women through self-determination. Respect, Rights, Recognition. ALO attended this launch and represented Toora which was so empowering being amongst such strong Aboriginal & Torres Strait islander women in the one room.

Jo has had a huge nine months working in the ALO role with TDVHS and is looking forward to the next twelve months where she continues to work in collaboration with community and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander businesses to create a healing garden space for everyone to access and enjoy.

Jo Connop
Toora Aboriginal Liaison Officer



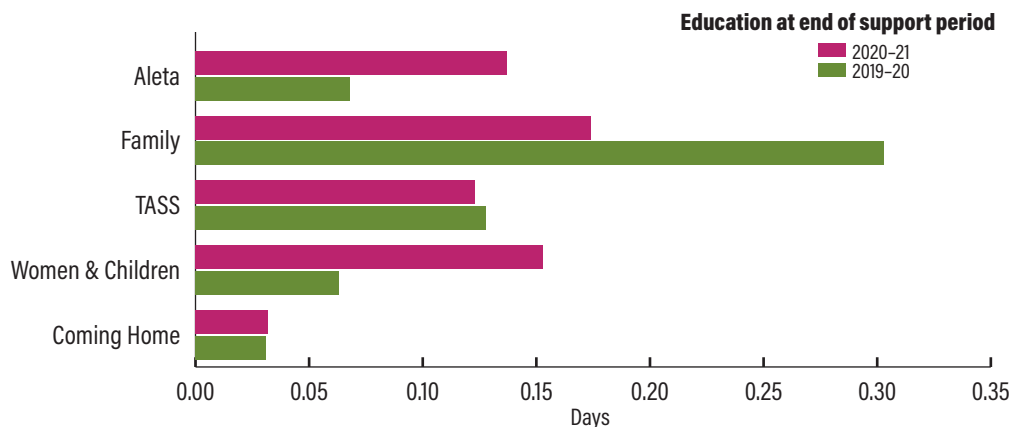
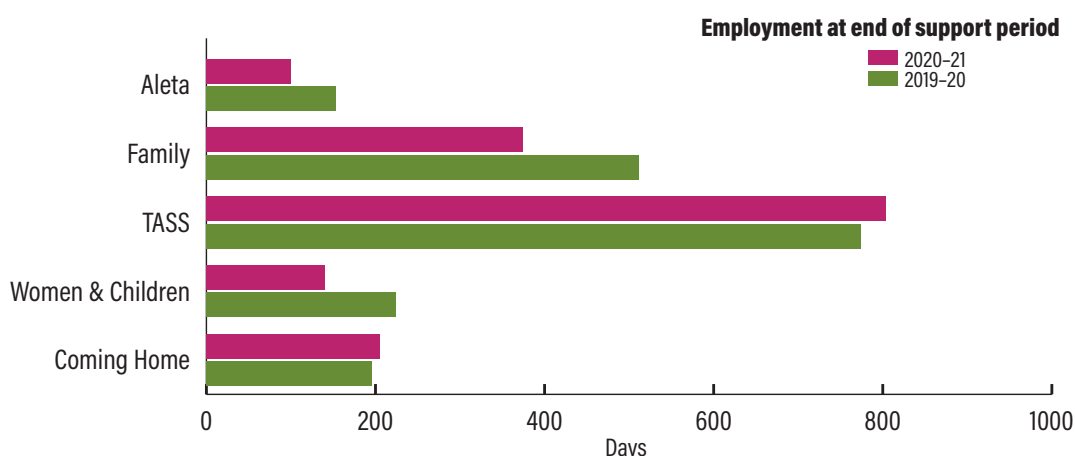
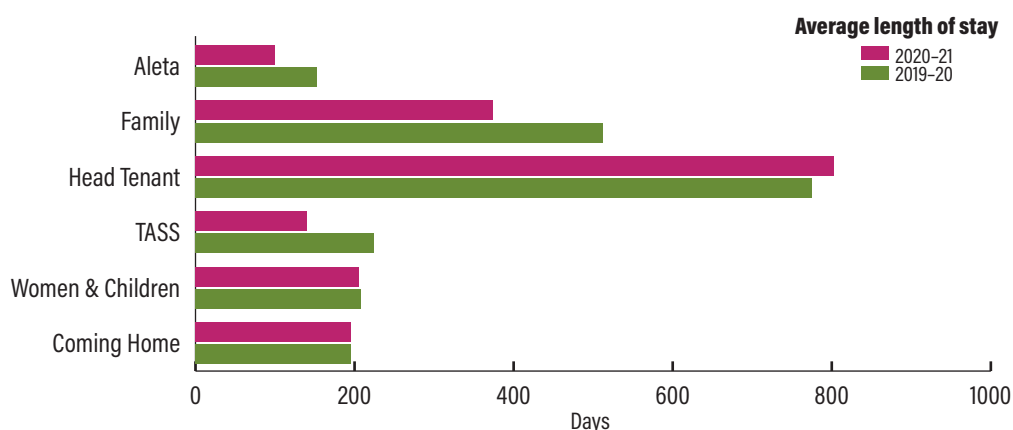
Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service Director's Report

The last few years has seen Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service (TDVHS) reporting on our efforts towards reflection, growth and adapting to change through times of crisis. In 2020-21, our focus was to enhance what we do and how we do it. Through a variety of channels such as external reviews, analysis of client data trends, staff planning days, client and stakeholder surveys and focus groups, we were able to identify key areas for improvement.

One of the key areas identified and focused on internally was the enhancement of culturally appropriate services being provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As part of our ongoing collaboration with Yurauna Centre, we undertook a cultural audit of the service, and our team also completed a CIT course in Promoting Cultural Safety facilitated by the Centre. In January we created a new position for an Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO) and proudly welcomed Joanne Connop into the role. Joanne has, in addition to her extensive cultural knowledge and practice, experience working in both community and public sectors. The ALO's role includes providing support and guidance to the team ensuring cultural considerations and appropriate service delivery is maintained when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families.

In addition to the new ALO position, we have also extended the in-house counselling offered through the specialist trauma counsellor to support the needs of women in our shared houses experiencing the impact of drug and alcohol use and mental health distress compounded by previous and current experiences of trauma. Having onsite counselling has been particularly important to fill the gaps experienced with long waiting lists to accessing mental health supports in the community. Since extending the in-house counselling to our clients in shared houses, there has been a reduction in crisis calls received by the on-call staff during out of office hours and improved capacity of these clients to engage with case management.

This year, with support from Housing ACT, another key area of achievement has been the work that our property team undertook to upgrade the condition and increase safety of the properties with new paint, furniture, built-in wardrobes, curtains, keypad locks, landscaping of gardens and installation of internet in all shared houses. This achievement was particularly responsive to the needs of the clients due to the widespread impact of the pandemic and making their time spent in their homes comfortable.



SERVICE PROFILE STATISTICS

In the last twelve months we supported 392 clients, including 111 children, through our domestic violence and homelessness programs. In 2020-21 our total client numbers have reduced due to the decreased turnover of clients. The impact of the pandemic and the increased complexity of client support needs coupled with reduced availability of safe and sustainable exit points resulted in the average length of support periods increasing by over 50% this year compared to last year.

HEIRA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REPORT

In keeping with the current trends reported by other domestic and family violence services worldwide, TDVHS has also experienced an increase in women and children escaping domestic and family violence seeking support (80% of families under family program, as compared to 70% during the same period last year and 77% under Toora Accommodation and Support Service, compared to 70% during the same period last year), and in the severity of the violence they have experienced.

In the current reporting period, 80% of all clients from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background reported the reason for accessing outreach support was for domestic and family violence. This is an increase from the same period last year where 60% of Aboriginal clients identified as experiencing domestic and family violence. Out of the 11 clients with repeat support periods in this reporting period in Aleta, 3 clients identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders and the main presenting reasons for their reconnection with the service was support for mental health concerns, domestic and family violence and financial crisis. We continue to support these clients with safety planning, advocacy and linking them to other organisations in the community.

We have continued to support CALD clients with children in residential programs escaping domestic and family violence and having no permanent residency. TDVHS is collaborating with Legal Aid Migration Services to support these clients with their immigration needs. In the meantime, we continue to support these clients and their children to have access to safe accommodation and fulfilling their basic day to day needs.

As a service providing domestic and family violence support, we have remained a proactive core participant of the Family Violence Safety Action Pilot (FVSAP) “to identify and assess the risk of harm, to improve the safety of clients experiencing domestic and family violence by collaborative action planning and service delivery.” TDVHS has been able to support clients identified to be at a high risk of harm by the pilot through holistic case management focused on safety in an outreach capacity.

TOORA ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

This year we hosted onsite barbeques that provided opportunities for the women residing in our properties to meet with the Official Visitor for Homelessness, Simon Rosenberg. It was particularly important to us that the women had the chance to meet with Simon and voice any concerns they had about having a male official visitor. This went well and after the meet and greet, Simon shared the following feedback:

“While it is early days, I can say generally that almost all residents I have spoken to had few complaints about the support they received from staff, or the conditions of their accommodation. And in many cases, there was much praise. People were generally more interested in discussing broader systemic issues, such as access requirements for other accommodations, waiting times with Housing ACT, and service availability across Canberra.”

Two separate focus groups were run during the year with clients of the service:

1. to gain insight into clients experiences living in shared accommodation during the lockdown phase in the ACT; and
2. to seek feedback about the proposed new occupancy agreements.

Outcomes from the first focus group indicated that “most clients who participated did not have any significant concerns living in shared accommodation. This was because their situation in a shared house was:

- better than their previous situation
- they felt they had bigger concerns than being in a share house/pandemic and
- they were comfortable with the environment.

To ensure inclusive participation clients were offered a range of supports to assist them to understand the questions and provide feedback. This included access to TIS, online and hard copies of relevant materials, questions written in simple English and one to one interview. All clients who participated were offered gift cards to thank them for their contribution.

Over the year we have worked jointly with OneLink and Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) Covid19 Response Accommodation Program to provide support to clients with complex needs. The service has provided head tenancies to six clients under the OneLink Client Support Fund Program. While most of the head tenant clients previously have not been able to engage with any services due to the complexities of their trauma experience, use of AOD and mental health concerns, all the clients continue to have varying degrees of engagement with the service in identifying and working towards their identified outcomes and exit point once their head tenancy arrangement concludes in the next couple of months.

COMING HOME PROGRAM

In our work with women exiting prison, we continue to recognise the complex network of families, partners, children and other personal support systems who are affected by the client's journey of offending and also influence how well the clients reintegrate back into the community. With 37% of clients in the Coming Home Program having identified that they have experienced domestic and family violence, 78% having substance abuse issues and 57% experiencing mental health concerns, it is our experience that these clients often have heavy involvement not only with the justice system with multiple offences but are also involved in other areas of the legal/statutory system at the same time. With the integration of the Bower Place Methodology and the offer of longer-term support to strengthen the client's internal and external environment, we continue to support these clients with linking into supports in the community and their reintegration back into their family and community.

With 19% of Coming Home clients identifying as Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander, the ALO has been working closely with Community Elders to advocate for improved criminal justice system responses to these women, participating in network meetings and providing specialist case management support and cultural supervision to the team leaders and case coordinators of the program.

COLLABORATIONS

The collaborative partnership between EveryMan Australia and Toora Women Inc. saw the completion of the Building Respectful Families Pilot Program which was delivered to four couples. TDVHS has played a strong role in the development of this program and look forward to its ongoing use once more funding is obtained.

We have continued to maintain and build on our working collaboration with Housing ACT to be able to support our clients to exit into independent accommodation and/or in sustaining their tenancy. This year TDVHS and Housing ACT also collaborated with the Official Visitor for Homelessness to provide support for a mutual client going through an appeal process of her housing application.

We have continued to partner with Street Law to run fortnightly outreach clinics for clients. These clinics ensure timely access to legal support for our clients. The following feedback received from Street Law highlights the benefits that this collaboration has brought to the mutual clients as well as the service delivery team:

"Street Law staff really appreciate our long-standing and productive relationship with Toora, particularly the willingness of staff to refer clients to our outreach and support them through the legal matters. With the invaluable support of Toora workers who assist clients to attend appointments, share their story and collect necessary evidence, we have been able to successfully resolve client's legal problems. We appreciate the opportunity to run staff training at Toora to increase legal awareness of the work that we do and further details of the legal issues that our mutual clients face."

Our service has finalised an MOU with the Multicultural Hub to establish safe and supported referral pathways for clients from CALD backgrounds and MOU with the Women's Health Service to formalise the nurse practitioner clinics that are delivered onsite each fortnight.

This year has also seen the beginning of a collaborative relationship between our service and Families ACT to provide our staff with opportunities to strengthen and upskill their knowledge in providing service delivery to women and families with children. We have once again collaborated with Domestic Violence Crisis Service, OneLink and other specialist homelessness services to provide support to single women and women with children escaping domestic and family violence through the Christmas Housing Program.

Over the year, we have maintained close working relationships with CYPs, ACT Mental Health, Karralika, New Beginning Rehabilitation Centre, Winnunga Nimityjah Aboriginal Health Service, childcare centres and other community organisations to support clients to achieve their identified outcomes. Collaboration with educational institutions have also continued this year with CIT and Flinders University to provide providing students with work experience placements within the service.

SYSTEMIC INPUT

As a service, TDVHS continues to engage with the community to promote safety, respect and choice for women. Some key activities undertaken to ensure systemic input by the team and me during this period included:

- Representation on the advisory group to inform the Domestic Violence Prevention Council on early policy discussions on criminalising Coercive Control in the ACT;
- Lobbying to Government to recognise the needs of children and fund specialist children's trauma counsellors to work in the homelessness sector.

- Participation in a panel on domestic and family violence facilitated by Amnesty International Australia ACT/SNSW for International Women's Day.
- Continued engagement with Canberra Girls Grammar by supporting a student in her Global Politics Engagement Activity which focused on the influence of physical/sexual abuse on women and the perpetuation of gender inequality and participation of a Team Leader and Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the Canberra Girls Grammar Reconciliation Day assembly.
- Input by the team into a research project conducted by ANU sociology students on 'Public Architecture and its Hostility towards Homelessness'.
- Proactive representation in SHIP Working Group.
- Active participation in Joint Pathways Meetings and as a member of the Joint Pathways Executive
- The appointment of the Operations Manager of the service as a Toora Women Inc. representative to the 2021-22 ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Women to support and advise the ACT Deputy Chief Minister/Minister with issues that are of importance to the women in the ACT. The council also supports the government to develop and implement policies that work to improve the status of women in the ACT.

The joint provision of services by Toora Women Inc. and EveryMan Australia has resulted in another joint presentation delivered at Stop DV Conference December 2020 on *"Achieving powerful results by partnering specialist men's and women's services to address generational family violence."* The presentation also included the preliminary findings of the evaluation of the Building Respectful Families Program. Staff from both organisations have continued to collaborate with the Migrant and Settlement Services of the ACT (MARSS) to run Violence Prevention outreach workshops to men and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Five staff of the service, consisting of team leaders and senior case coordinators, joined with other staff from across the homelessness sector to complete the advanced trauma informed training provided by Community Services Directorate and facilitated by SAL Consulting. Two of the staff have gone on to complete further training and receive mentoring as Sector Champions, an Initiative of the Directorate and the Joint Pathways Committee to increase the capacity of the homelessness sector to better understand and respond to trauma.

KEY TRENDS

This year we continued to see a steady increase in the numbers of clients presenting with mental health distress and complex comorbidity problems. To address this, the service has engaged the services of an external senior mental health practitioner to provide clinical supervision to the operational team which includes the Team Leaders of service delivery and property, Child and Family Specialist, Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Housing Manager, Operations Manager and the Director. The service also continues to offer monthly external group supervision by a clinical psychologist to our case coordinators and the EveryMan Australia service delivery team. The external supervision sessions assist the team in identifying strategies to support clients with complex trauma, mental health needs and/or limited engagement. Additionally we have provided Senior case coordinators and Team Leaders the opportunity to participate in 10-week course, *Complex Clients and Families Entry Certificate* being run by Bower Place in Adelaide.

In our work with women with accompanying children, we have found that most of the children have experienced a high level of trauma. It has been our experience that when the children first arrive, they are very unsettled because of the violence they have witnessed or have been subjected to and then having to leave the environment they know and move into an unfamiliar environment. Sometimes the children move to a new school for safety reasons and lose their connection with friends as well. These children sometimes display behaviours such as being anxious and scared, not wanting to be separated from their mother, being aggressive towards their mother or siblings/other children, cry all the time, have nightmares and in some older children bed wetting.

We have also seen an increase in children struggling at school, having learning difficulties and getting behind in their learning. Our Child and Family Specialist has received increase in requests for support for children with advocacy at school and for extra support such as tutoring. Due to limited resources available to the public schools, the children are facing long waiting lists to access support services like school psychologists and face to face tutoring. The pandemic has moved voluntary tutoring services to being provided online rather than face to face which can be barrier for the women and their children due to their other vulnerabilities.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

TDVHS along with Toora AOD have embarked on an ambitious joint project to offer a range of activities over this period and the coming months that will support clients to heal and express themselves through art and creativity. Some groups that have already been delivered in this reporting period include six-week art therapy, and eight-week Healing Through Movement. Art and craft sessions facilitated by experienced artist are also run onsite once a month for clients of both services. The project will culminate in an exhibition that will be open to the public with the purposes of raising awareness of the struggles of women and children who have experienced violence, addiction, mental illness, incarceration and homelessness.

To further enhance the services ability to provide culturally inviting spaces for clients and staff, the next year also holds plans for the engagement of an Indigenous business to work with TDVHS to create a healing garden using bush tucker/medicine plants.

In recognition of the need for in-house support for the children coming through the service to be able to link in with appropriate support from the start of the journey, we will remain steadfast in our quest to obtain future funding to employ an in-house children's therapist through applying for grants and submissions to the Government.

THANK YOU

The service could not meet the immediate and ongoing needs of the clients without the assistance of Share the Dignity, GIVIT, Pandora Op-Shop, Oz Harvest, Zonta Breakfast Club and the generosity of private donors. We recently had a private donor who having lost a loved one, donated their loved one's car with registration to a client and her four children. The client shared the impact of the donation through the following feedback:

"I just want to Thank them from the bottom of my heart! I don't think anyone will understand how much I appreciate what they have done for me and my family! It may have been something small to them but it was so huge for us! I have got my L's and have been practicing driving with my cousin and studying for my test. Even though I haven't been able to drive around properly just yet, the stress that has been taken of my shoulders is immense! I'm a single mom of 4, and I know it would have taken me so many years of saving before I'd be able to purchase my very own first car, and just like that, these beautiful souls donated their car to us. My family and I will forever be grateful! We cannot wait to start having family drives and going on new adventures together!"

Thank you to the Board and Susan, CEO, for your leadership, the Corporate team and Rebecca and AOD team for their ongoing support and efforts to improve cohesive service provision across Toora Women Inc. And thank you to every member of my TDVHS team for their passion, hard work and professionalism.

Mirsada Draskovic

Toora Domestic Violence
and Homelessness Service Director





Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Service Director's Report

With COVID-19 being the dominating factor, in a year spent creating 'the new normal', Toora AOD services have further developed flexible and sustainable support options for women and their children. The team focused on enhancing their skills and effectiveness through embracing and implementing teachings from the THRIVE training and Being Profile Coaching. Through developing trust and communication, a passionate, highly effective and dependable team culture flourished, one that radiates through in the quality of the treatment delivered to our clients.

The AOD team were the grateful recipients of a \$50,000 grant from the Lestari Foundation, to assist in expanding the Pathways from Prison program delivered in the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC). This capital increased wrap around treatment for women in custody and on re-entry to the community.

Feedback from a client who participated in the Pathways from Prison program:

"The program has been helpful to me, the skills I have learnt, and strategies implemented will help me on the outside. Having the program offer all the programs individually is great for people's recovery. The workers have been great."

In addition, the Drug and Alcohol Sentencing List (DASL) Court Diversion program continued in the ACT. The only DASL two graduates to date have been women from Toora's AOD Day Program.

SERVICE PROFILE

In 2020-21, Toora AOD supported 130 women and three children. Twenty-two clients identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is a 144% increase on last year's figure of nine clients. Of the 130 clients, most were aged between 26-35 years (49%). The number of clients reporting a history of domestic violence continues to be extremely high, with 92% of clients experiencing this, an increase from 85% last year. There was also an increase in clients reporting a history of sexual abuse (66%), which is up from 59% last year. Mental health issues continue to be prevalent in this population and were reported by 106 clients (82%), which is a slight decrease on last year.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

COVID-19 restrictions eased gradually and both Lesley's Place and Marzenna House resumed their usual program structures. At times staff had limited face to face contact with clients however the creative and adaptable alternatives that were offered still ensured clients received the intensive supports they need. The words of the clients are the best gauge of this year's achievements, as shown in this residential client's testimonial:

"I've never had much support in my life. Sometimes it feels like my mum and dad are kids and I'm the parent. Now, I get so much support from Toora staff. Support in staying abstinent from drugs. Support with my mental health and support dealing with physical health/medical appointments. I am eternally grateful to the Toora women for giving me the support no one else ever has."

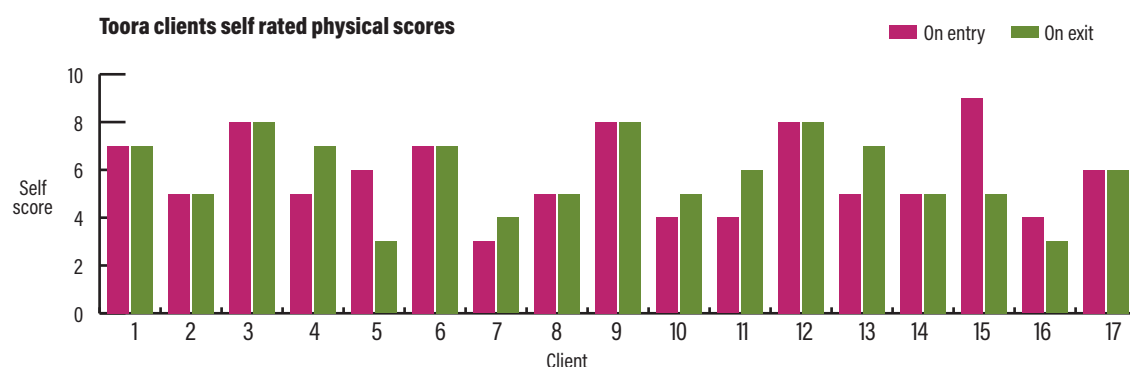
Early 2021 saw another staff planning day bringing together innovative ideas from the team. A new approach was conceptualised to align with the Toora's strategic goal of building capacity and capability to meet the needs of new and existing clients, and this was to move from a

linear model of care to a phased treatment model. Here clients entering the AOD residential services in phase one treatment could do so at either Lesley's Place or Marzenna House, greatly increasing the number of intakes and utilising beds in both houses.

Clients would move through the program and into different treatment phases without having to move houses, which can cause disruption to residents and their recovery. This would also give longer term clients the opportunity to become 'Senior Peers' and have the chance to support and guide their peers who are early in their recovery journey. To make this possible, a private space was constructed at Marzenna House, with the garage being converted into an office. The team look forward to further developing and rolling out this new model.

The data recorded below is from seventeen randomly selected residential clients and was collected using the Australian Treatment Outcomes Profile at entry and exit points of a client's treatment. On average data shows an improvement on exit for clients in regard to physical and mental health and overall quality of life.





DAY PROGRAM

The Day Program has adapted service delivery to provide recovery-focused treatments while ensuring the safety of facilitators and participants. For a large part of this year, the Day Program was offered either by remote delivery or by splitting the clients into smaller groups and running sessions twice a day. From May 2021, the Day program returned to normal program delivery.

Partnerships continued to flourish with Care Financial, Cancer Council, and Hepatitis ACT. New partnerships were established with Street Law and Legal Aid, who now regularly run sessions in the Day Program. Building stronger links with TDVHS is a priority moving forward. First steps have commenced with the Day Program Facilitators conducting outreach visits to Toora House, to inform clients there about the Day Program.

COLLABORATIONS

Toora AOD has continued to partner with EveryMan Australia to run the Supporting People with Strong Emotions (SPSE) and Building Respectful Families (BRF) programs. Some AOD staff have received training with the Bower Place clinic in Adelaide, to further embed the methodology and give a shared language across services. This methodology is used in the Complexity Centre programs and focus on enhancing resources in this area to be able to filter more clients into this cross-service specialised treatment. In line with this, Toora AOD, TDVHS, and EveryMan have created a regular Community of Practice group that meets monthly to collaborate on client care.

To help coordinate supports for women in the AMC, an AMC Working Group has been created between Toora AOD and TDVHS, with a member from each

service jointly visiting the female detainees in the AMC each fortnight. This has created a stronger bond between the two services and has helped build our brand in the community. With a cohesive partnership and clear pathways for support this has been met with resounding approval by the women. The number of detainees engaging with Toora AOD has more than doubled in only a few months. An MOU has been developed with Tanya Keed at Clybucca Dreaming, to collaborate on culturally safe, appropriate care pathways for Indigenous AMC and community clients.

To ensure the team are able to adequately meet the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, the Toora AOD team completed Cultural Safety training with the Yurauna Centre and took part in a Cultural Audit of the service

SYSTEMIC INPUT

As the Director of Toora AOD and Clinical service's sits on the Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs Association's (ATODA) Executive Group and is a member of the ATODA Board of Directors, Toora has significant input in the AOD sector in responding to political and social issues. Toora AOD completed a submission to the ACT Legislative Assembly Inquiry into the Drugs of Dependency (Personal Use) Amendment Bill, and this was recognised by ATODA for its evidenced-based, gender specialist and client focused approach. Toora also contributed to a further submission to Government for the inquiry on the issues of Fetal Alcohol Disorder Syndrome (FASD) which was praised for its sensitivity and clear advice in removing stigmatization. Moving forward, Toora AOD will be contributing to the planning process for the future commissioning of AOD services.

KEY TRENDS AND GAPS

With increased access to alcohol and decreased access to other substances due to border restrictions, there has continued to be a marked increase in client alcohol use. Clients are reporting higher anxiety and depression levels this year, citing isolation and limited contact with family, friends and service providers as key factors.

In line with the rise of mental health concerns, the complexity level of clients engaging with Toora AOD has steadily been increasing. All clients are assessed prior to entry into any programs and a risk matrix is completed. There has been a significant increase in 'red' rated clients, with complex AOD, mental health, trauma and legal issues. This increases the time needed to work with each client and highlights the need to keep the AOD team upskilled to best support these women.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In the year ahead, the Toora AOD team plan to implement the phased treatment model for the residential rehabilitation houses, to reduce bottlenecks in programs and ensure women who seek treatment can access it in a safe, timely manner.

Toora AOD will continue to build on recommendations in the Domestic and Family Violence Capability Assessment Tool (DFVCAT) project, to create an evidence based AOD/DFV program that can be a leader in this field. Toora AOD is well placed to develop such a program, to help build capacity in this area.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank the AOD team for continuing to offer unwavering support to our clients. In the face of a year of extreme upheaval day after day, the team thrive and are a shining demonstration of effectiveness and commitment to the mission of Toora.

I would like to thank the Board, our CEO Susan Clarke-Lindfield, our Team Leader Nicole Ter Horst, TDVHS and the Corporate office for their support throughout the year. I would also like to thank ATODA, the Lestari Foundation and the broader AOD sector for their support. Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to our clients, for entrusting us with walking alongside them on their recovery journey.

Rebecca Wood

Toora AOD and Clinical Services Director



Counselling Service Director's Report

Flexible working has been a huge strength of Toora Counselling Service this year. After the COVID-19 pandemic changed life as we know it, the service has been responsive and adaptive to continuous new and changing client needs. Counselling continued to be offered both remotely and face-to-face.

Our counsellors continue to add new methods and skills to their counselling delivery. This year, one counsellor completed a certificate in Art Therapy giving clients access to this therapeutic treatment in their 1:1 session. This has provided a new dimension to treatment and has been instrumental in assisting some clients with re-ordering trauma reactions.

Client Quote: "I have found the content, methods and techniques practical and hands on which lend to my learning style well. The delivery has been at a pace that is manageable and allows me to apply myself. I have found it effective and feel safe at the counselling."

Further to this our other counsellor attended a Dialectic Behavioural Therapy (DBT) course to enhance their counselling skills and enable them to provide a DBT group program to Toora clients. This helps clients to work on developing their own skills in their recovery, these include their emotion regulation skills, mindfulness, problem solving and more. Group delivery plans have been developed for both groups and delivery are planned to commence when government deems group facilitation safe in the current COVID climate.

The Counselling Service also made changes to the counselling office layout to provide a culturally sensitive arrival area, with posters which appropriate.

Client feedback (below) shows the value of Toora AOD Counselling Services.



SERVICE PROFILE

In total, 726 appointments were booked this year. Of these, 442 were attended, 189 were rescheduled and 99 were, without notice, not attended. Attendance decreased slightly from 65% in 2019-20 to 61%.

Of the 83 clients referred to Toora AOD Counselling Service, 62 engaged in therapy. Their median age was 38 and ages ranged from 18 to 62. This is consistent with 2019-20 figures. This year, 20 clients had been residents of other Toora services. Fifteen had spent time in Corrective services. Ten had attended the Healing Trauma Group. Thirty-seven reported childhood traumas. Forty-seven (75%) reported past or present domestic and family violence.

Due to COVID-19, in 2020 the Healing Trauma Group was delivered one-to one over the telephone on a request basis, then face-to face with a group in May 2021. The group is delivered over six sessions and focuses on overcoming the ongoing, and often hidden and misunderstood, effects of trauma. This year, 13 clients began the program; 7 graduated. We continue to offer this program in conjunction with counselling for clients who are unable to attend a group and we are commencing delivery by group face-to-face and by group in a zoom setting, to meet the various needs of clients. Feedback about the Healing Trauma Group continues to be incredibly positive.

COLLABORATIONS

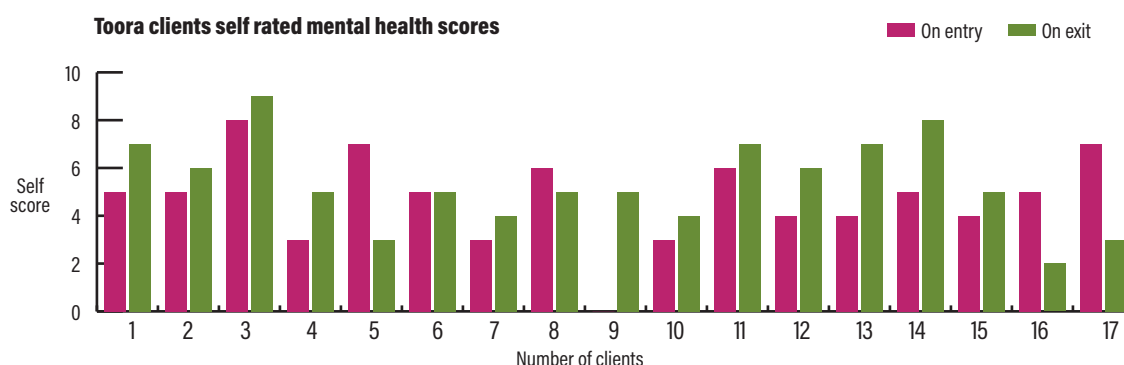
Prior to the COVID lockdown, the Counselling Service was concentrating on networking with other organisations. The ACT Women's Health Service invited Toora's counsellors to their team meeting where we were greatly welcomed shared information on our AOD services. Post-lockdown, we have collaborated and agreed to include external visits from one of their registered nurses to provide "well women's awareness information sessions" to our Day Program groups.

Counsellors have attended the following training: Certificate in Art Therapy; Certificate in Dialectic Behaviour Therapy; Online seminar (2 days) in Navigating Complexity in Alcohol and Other Drug settings; Workshop (1 day) review of treating clients with borderline personality disorder.

KEY TRENDS AND GAPS

The primary drugs of concern were methamphetamine (32%), alcohol (37%), cannabis (6%) and heroin (8%). Compared with 2019-20, methamphetamine use decreased slightly while cannabis use remained almost the same. The biggest difference was the 6% increase in alcohol use and a slight increase in heroin use.

Many clients presented with multiple mental health issues. As with previous years, the most reported conditions were depression and anxiety, the rates have had a notable increase this year.



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The world is changing, and Toora Counselling Service commits to change accordingly with it. We plan to continue to grow and adapt to meet the changing needs. We are devoted to supporting the needs of vulnerable women and providing a safe environment for all of our clients. The new financial year sees the launch of the DBT group program and then Art Therapy Group Program increasing Toora's range of therapeutic groups.

The COVID-19 Pandemic slowed down advances in moving the service forward to meet a level 5 capability score in the Domestic and Family Violence Capability Assessment Tool. We shall resume our goal this year of determining what training and resources are needed for the service to move forward as a DFV Integrated Care Service that is capable of providing interventions with AOD and DFV focused content, effectively addressing both issues.

The year also saw a pause in our ability to offer placements for students from the University Canberra. The future focuses on not only restarting these placements but growing opportunities for the new and upcoming counsellors and psychologists of Canberra.

THANK YOU

Another year and the Counselling team continue to deliver outstanding supports to the vulnerable women of Canberra and beyond. Even through a year of struggles across the world, the team showed up, day in and day out to offer gender specialist, holistic and high-quality treatments to our clients. Thank you for being forever flexible and magically creative in ensuring not a single client was left behind during such times.

"Very positive experience. I was in depths of despair when I started and was given the space to explore my emotions and behaviour in a non-judgemental safe space. I was amazed at what issues came to the surface, all the pain I had been suppressing with alcohol. I couldn't face my emotions."

"Being able to express thoughts anger etc without judgement."

"I believe the assigning of you as my counsellor has also been a great pairing for me as I find it much easier to listen to what you say and respect your knowledge which is something I have struggled with in the past with other counsellors."

"So far I have found my counselling sessions useful and relevant."

I would also like to thank Toora AOD Service, Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Service, CYPS and ACT Corrections for your contributions to wrap around client supports.

Rebecca Wood

Toora AOD and Clinical Services Director

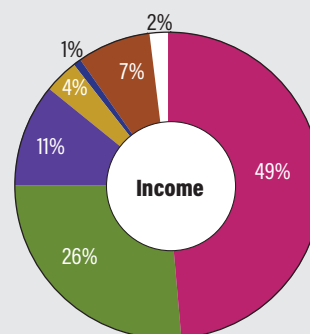


Treasurer's Report

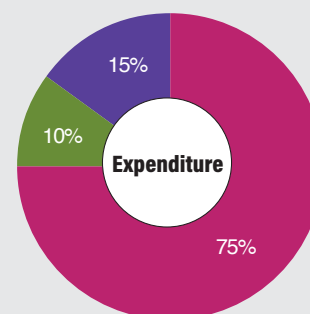
This year has been an exciting year for Toora Women Inc. We received the Safe Places capital grant and we were able to finalise the purchase of the two townhouses that were referred to in last year's annual report. The purchase was a long-drawn-out process so the financial impact on our income will only be felt in the coming year. However, as Toora received a capital grant this is shown in the income statement, which is why Toora appears to have such a large profit this financial year. This grant is a one-off and was used solely for the purpose of purchasing the town houses. As Treasurer it is gratifying to see the rewards of our strong financial management over the last ten years bear fruit.

Our income continues at a steady state and yet again we were fortunate enough to receive COVID-19 subsidies to assist during these difficult times. The pandemic did, however, mean that the finance team was busier than usual dealing with all the additional work that was required processing all the additional receipts and payments whilst working from home.

It is always a balancing act in Toora as most of our funding comes from government grants and almost three quarters of our expenditure is spent on staff related costs. This does not leave much margin. So we have to budget carefully and have adequate controls on our expenditure.



Financial year ended 30 June 2021		\$
Domestic Violence & Homelessness Service		3,182,533
Alcohol and Other Drugs Service		1,592,146
Covid-19 Subsidy and Stimulus Package		77,292
Donations		37,382
Rent and other contributions		598,929
Bank interest & other income		127,656
Total		\$ 5,615,938



Financial year ended 30 June 2021		\$
Wages & Employees benefits		4,280,830.00
Property expenses		
(including offices rent and maintenance)		544,035.92
Admin and operating expenses		884,079.08
Total		5,708,945.00

The budget process is working well. The Directors meet with the CEO and the financial controller regularly so that we can prepare and monitor the budgets for each service to ensure that we are keeping on track and spending within our means. The finance sub-committee meets monthly and we have also approved a four-year financial forecast which will allow us to manage Toora in line with our strategies.

Due to COVID-19 the payroll program mentioned last year is still not implemented. It is expected that implementation will be early in 2022.

Once again, the audit went smoothly. My thanks to the auditors for their assistance both with the audit and throughout the year. The annual audit is now a seamless process.

I would also like to thank all the Toora Women Inc. staff for their hard work in making Toora the financially sound organisation that it is today. The finance team is always ready and willing to provide information when requested and can always be relied upon to assist me. This makes my job as treasurer so much easier.

My final thanks are for the other Board members who make Board meetings a delight and are always interested in matters financial.

In summary this has been another good year for Toora Women Inc financially. We have moved a step forward with ownership of the two houses and I am looking forward to the next step in our exciting future.

Thank you all

Gail Freeman, FCA
Toora Treasurer

If you wish to view a copy of the audited accounts, please contact the Corporate Office at Toora, (02) 6122 7000 or email TooraAdmin@toora.org.au



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TOORA WOMEN INCORPORATED

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Toora Women Incorporated (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of profit or loss, statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the committees' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Toora Women Incorporated has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (the ACNC Act), including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-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 registered entity in accordance with the ACNC Act and 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.

Emphasis of matter

We draw attention to Note 1(p) of the financial report which notes the outbreak of COVID-19 as a global pandemic how this has been considered by the directors in the preparation of the financial report. The impact of COVID-19 is an unprecedented event, which continues to cause a high level of uncertainty and volatility. As set out in the financial statements, no adjustments have been made to financial statements as at 30 June 2021 for the impacts of COVID-19. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the committee determines 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 committee is responsible for assessing the ability of the registered entity to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The committee are responsible for overseeing the registered entity's financial reporting process.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TOORA WOMEN INCORPORATED

Auditor's Responsibility 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.

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 registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee'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 registered entity'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 registered entity 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 committee 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.



Jamie Glenn, CA
Registered Company Auditor
BellchambersBarrett

Canberra, ACT
Dated this 28th day of October 2021



p (+61 2) 6239 5011
e admin@bellchambersbarrett.com.au
Level 3, 44 Sydney Avenue,
Forrest ACT 2603
PO Box 4390 Kingston ACT 2604
ABN 14 942 509 138
bellchambersbarrett.com.au

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER S60-40 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE COMMITTEE OF TOORA WOMEN INCORPORATED

As lead auditor of Toora Women Incorporated, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021 there have been no contraventions of:

- i. the auditor independence requirements as set out in 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.

Jamie Glenn, CA
Registered Company Auditor
BellchambersBarrett

Canberra, ACT
Dated this 28th day of October 2021





Services and Programs

Corporate Office

- Executive
- Finance
- Marketing and Communication
- Policy, Quality Assurance and Risk

Toora Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services

- Heira Domestic Violence Program
- Women and Children's Program
- Families Program
- Toora House Supported Accommodation Program
- Coming Home Program
- Aleta Outreach Program
- Safe Places Program
- Head Tenant Program
- Property Management

Toora Alcohol and Other Drug Services

- Toora AOD Day Program
- Lesley's Place Residential Program
- Marzenna House Transitional Program
- Toora AOD Outreach Program

Toora Counselling Service

- AOD Counselling

www.toora.org.au