

CONGREGATION OF CANBERRA CITY 2017 ANNUAL MEETING AND ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT FROM UNITINGCARE CANBERRA CITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The UnitingCare Canberra City Management Committee met eight times during 2016/17.

Members of the Committee at the end of June 2017 were Anne Butler (Chair), Campbell Macknight (Secretary), Graeme Lowe (Treasurer), Margaret Watt (Convenor of Friends of the EMC), Luti Laipoto, Carrie-Ann Leeson, Alice Ferguson, Rebecca Vassarotti and Richard Scott. Nicole Wiggins (EMC Director) also attends the Management Committee meetings.

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Staff and Volunteers

The first half of the year was a very difficult time for us because of the illness of our beloved Director, Chris Stokman who was off work from 15 August. We were very grateful to our Client Referral Officer, John McDonald for his willingness to act in the Director's position. He and our other staff member, Sarah Hill, held things together very well and their loyalty and devotion to our guests were much appreciated.

Sadly, Chris died on 11 October 2016. At its meeting on 3 November 2016 the committee adopted the following minute of appreciation:

It is with great sadness that the Management Committee of UnitngCare Canberra City records the death of our Director, Chris Stokman, on 11 October 2016. Since she began with us in 2007, Chris' concern for the welfare and interests of our guests was constant and unwavering. She combined a fully professional approach to her work with a passion for offering help to individuals in any kind of need. The many tributes which have been paid since her passing show the respect and affection she inspired across the community. We have been privileged to have had her working with us.

A memorial service was conducted in the EMC for Chris by Rev Elizabeth Raine.

The position of Director was advertised in November 2016 in the Canberra Times, the Canberra Times network, the Train for Life network and the Ethical Jobs network. Nicole Wiggins, who has a lengthy background in community work particularly in relation to drug and alcohol issues, was appointed to the vacant position and commenced work in January.

Our two long standing and experienced casual employees (Nic Watson and Nicci Haynes) continue to share the operation of the coffee cart. During the first half of the year in particular we were able to call on Nic to assist during the drop-in period and we thank him for his support and co-operation.

The EMC continues to be supported by a dedicated team of volunteers. During the year we have focused on increasing the number of volunteers to assist with absences, particularly in the winter months. The total number of volunteers supporting the EMC during the year was 47 (this is the actual number of people who have covered shifts and helped make up food packs over the twelve-month period). Most people do either one shift per week or one shift per fortnight. All new volunteers undertake initial one-on-one training with the Director.

The Director undertook training for volunteers on emergency procedures and resuscitation on 27 and 29 March and 9 June. She also developed and distributed a volunteer feedback form.

Community Hub

During the year, we have continued to focus on developing the EMC as a community hub with services provided both by the EMC in its own right and through other service providers who visit the EMC on a regular basis. Our Director is also a member of a number of community forums and other outreach activities.

Outreach by staff

Our Director undertook a series of familiarisation visits with other community groups to understand how we might work together. She regularly attends meetings of Joint Pathways, ACT Shelter, and Who's New on the Streets (the regular SVDP Street to Home meeting).

She has also met with the following:

- Restorative Justice
- ACT Shelter
- ACTCOSS
- Onelink
- Capital Health Network
- ACT Dental Clinic
- Street Law
- Sarah Patrick of Gugan Gulwan Aboriginal Youth Centre
- Mental Illness Education ACT and Mental Health Community Coalition
- Alcohol and Other Drug Organisations (ATODA)
- Nicholas Lefkaditis from Havelock House
- Canberra Connect Shopfront Co-ordinator
- Red Cross Road House
- Orange Sky Laundry
- Kippax UnitingCare
- ADRA
- GIVIT (a new charity established nationwide to match donors with charities)
- Pets in the Park Management Committee.

In addition, our Director is on the Safe Shelter Management Committee operated through St Columba's Church.

John McDonald attended the Quit Educator Inservice 2016 course at the Cancer Council Office in Melbourne to maintain accreditation. He and the Director met with Geoff Ward from CAHMA on 21 February 2017 regarding CAHMA providing outreach at EMC, including the provision of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) vouchers for guests.

Geoff attended the EMC on Wednesday 15 March to coincide with the Medical Clinic and provided NRT vouchers for guests. He aims to attend the EMC fortnightly.

The Director completed a Food Safety Supervisor course in January 2017 as a requirement for EMC Food Business registration with ACT Health.

On 16 June 2017 she was a panel member on a homelessness forum hosted by Price Waterhouse Cooper who made a \$500 donation to the EMC.

Staff Office

Our Client Referral Officers cleared and reorganised the staff office over the summer. Some new furniture has been obtained and the area now operates far more efficiently.

Services and Activities

The EMC offers the following to guests:

- A hot breakfast each weekday morning from 7.30am-8.30am. There is an outside coffee cart during this period and take away breakfasts are also available. The breakfasts are primarily run by volunteers who arrive at 7am to prepare breakfast and leave about 8.45am after washing up and tidying the Centre. All staff and volunteers have Working with Vulnerable People registration and the EMC is a registered food provider, with associated legal requirements.
- A community hub from 9am-11.30am (Monday-Thursday) and 9am-11am (Friday). Staff provide support and referral services to guests during this period. Hot and cold drinks are offered. Guests are encouraged to relax and interact with each other.
- Ongoing activities include art, an NRL footy tipping competition run each year by one of the guests and the Jumpin' Gateway Singers.

The following services are available after the breakfast session:

- showers
- laundry
- newspapers
- telephone
- computers, including internet
- emergency food packs
- scripts
- mailing address through the EMC PO Box
- lockers
- some clothes.

Bread for guests to take away is delivered once a week by St Simon's Anglican Church, Kaleen.

We are also fortunate to receive contributions from:

- Brumby's (18 loaves of sliced bread per week picked up from Ainslie by our patron, Tim Gavel)
- Capitol Chilled Foods (22 three litre bottles of milk per week)
- Bakers Delight (through St Simon's Anglican Church, Kaleen)
- Australian Institute of Company Directors (excess catered food delivered for morning tea)
- Rotary
- Lifeline Australia
- Adra Op Shop
- St Ninian's and St Columba congregations.

The EMC seeks to work closely with a range of service providers who visit the EMC on a regular basis. Our aim is to expand these services. Those currently available include:

- Outreach workers from the Street to Home program for homeless people managed by the St Vincent de Paul Society.
- Centrelink with visits each Tuesday
- OneLink (weekly)
- The Big Issue vendor support (occasionally)
- ACT Legal Aid (fortnightly)
- Street Law (fortnightly)
- Partners in Recovery (fortnightly)
- Medical Clinic each Wednesday in partnership with Capital Health Network, with support provided by the Interchange General Practice and the National Health Cooperative. Once again flu vaccinations were offered to guests from May 2017. The Clinic is promoting Mental Health Plans for guests to enable them to access free psychologist services either from the visiting psychologist on a Thursday or from another external provider
- Orange Sky laundry which sets up outside the EMC each Monday morning
- Hairdressing (this is provided by a professional hairdresser, Martine, who comes every 5-6 weeks. Guests have given great feedback about this service).
- An agreement with the ACT Dental Health Program which accepts some of our guests in need of urgent dental care.
- Vouchers to purchase clothes from ADRA in Lonsdale Street.
- Pets in the Park, a new program, which commenced on Sunday 2 April as a free veterinary service for our guests, many of whom own dogs. It is normally held on the first Sunday of the month and the number of dogs attending is increasing. Pets4Fun, a local pet grooming service, and Rainbow Paws, who provide free pet food, dog coats and leads are also involved. The fourth Pets in the Park on 9 June 2017 attracted 9 dogs and 1 rat, the owners all being EMC guests.

The ANU Students Union provided a 'Winter Coats for the Homeless' coat rack on three mornings in June. A total of 33 coats were given out to EMC guests.

Eight back pack beds from Backpack Beds for Homeless were ordered and distributed to guests.

The following additional activities were undertaken during the year:

- The Egyptian Coptic Church managed a give-away shop/stall in Riley Hall on 4 August 2016. They also provided an Easter lunch and food hampers on Monday 10 April. About 30 guests attended and enjoyed the hot lunch provided. A lucky door prize (a gift basket) was donated by Housing and Community Services.
- On 26 October 2016 a BBQ was held to mark the end of the football season. About 25 guests attended with Tim Gavel and Alan Tongue presenting the prizes. Another BBQ was held on 14 March 2017 to mark the beginning of the 2017 season with 50 attendees including 5 Raiders and Alan Tongue and Tim Gavel. EMC guests were pleased to have a chance to meet and talk with Raiders players.
- Staff from the Australian Bureau of Statistics were available in the EMC to assist guests with census forms.
- Christmas lunch was held again this year on 22 December 2016 with approximately 70 participants. Thank you for a great day to Sarah Hill and her team of volunteers including Nicole Lawder MLA and her staff and staff from the Housing Directorate.
- The EMC hosted a Naloxone (opioid overdose response) training session on 23 May 2017 which was facilitated by CAHMA staff. Six EMC guests attended.
- A health information workshop on Blood Borne Viruses was held on Friday 2 June 2017 co-hosted by Hepatitis ACT and The Connection. There were nine participants at this 2-hour workshop with the majority being EMC guests. Due to the success of the workshop future workshops will be held at EMC.
- Approximately 50 guests attended a BBQ on 22 June 2017 to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia. Members from UnitingCare attended and hosted the BBQ.
- The EMC library is being restocked with donations from City Church congregation and volunteers. It is proving popular with guests.
- A memorial service conducted by Rev Elizabeth Raine was held at the EMC on 17 March 2017 for Jeffery Miller, a much loved and regular long term guest.

Guest numbers

Unfortunately some of the statistics from July 2016 are missing. However in the 11 months August 2016-June 2017 9216 guests received breakfasts, an increase of 5.5 per cent on the comparable period for 2015/16. 6185 guests attended the drop-in centre in the 11 months August 2016-June 2017, an increase of 31.4 per cent on the comparable period for 2015/16.

The total number of showers taken over the 11 months to June 2017 was 587 compared with 428 in the comparable period for 2015/16 (an increase of 37 per cent) and the laundry was used on 136 occasions compared with 167 occasions in 2015/16. The decline in laundry use is probably due to visits from the Orange Sky Laundry which has a quicker turnover than the EMC. As at end June 2017, 110 guests were registered to use the mail box compared with 86 guests in August 2015/16.

More detailed statistics for 2012/13-2016/17 are in the [Appendix](#).

Safe Shelter

Safe Shelter has expanded its operations to five nights a week this year with St Columba's Uniting Church, the Salvation Army Citadel and All Saints Anglican Church providing accommodation. It commenced on 24 April 2017 and will continue through to 29 September. There were 261 guests in total for this winter after 16 weeks, i.e. 80 nights = 3.26 guests per night, compared with 71 guests over 48 nights last winter = 1.48 guests per night. There is good mutual support with the EMC with Safe Shelter referring any guests they have to the EMC for breakfasts, showers and other services. Our Director has undertaken a number of training sessions for their volunteers.

Funding

We received \$227,548 as a grant from the ACT Government Community Services Directorate for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. This was supplemented by generous donations from Friends of the EMC and other public donations totalling \$99,400 (this included a \$34,000 donation from the MBA Charity House Project) plus a contribution from City Church of \$5,000. Our largest cost is for staff salaries followed by food and consumables for breakfasts, cleaning and general administration. We finished the year with a small loss of \$5,388. Clearly we would not be able to sustain the work we do without the financial contributions from our supporters.

We have completed the first year of an agreement with the ACT Government for a total of three years of funding at the current level adjusted for inflation.

On 6 June 2016, the Chief Minister advised that the Government was delivering an additional \$450,000 over four years for UnitingCare Canberra City Early Morning Centre to support the Centre's capacity to extend the hours of service, develop strategies to engage with vulnerable groups and undertake business planning and service delivery model planning. On 31 July the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Yvette Berry, wrote to our Director elaborating on the Chief Minister's letter. She said we had received an additional \$100,000 per annum over three years to expand the EMC's service delivery and

to meet increasing demand. We have also been given an additional \$50,000 in 2017-18 to enable us to undertake further business planning to diversify our business model and develop strategies to engage vulnerable groups. The Director and three members of the Management Committee met with representatives from the Housing Directorate on 5 July. We explained to the Directorate our plans were to open to 3pm each day and to conduct a range of specific activities based around a theme for each day:

- Work, study, housing, legal issues and finances
- Computing and literacy
- Medical and allied health
- Mental health
- Social Activities.

The Directorate were positive about these ideas. We discussed the purpose of the additional \$50,000. It is apparent we should engage a consultant to consult with staff, guests, volunteers and other community organisations including those representing disadvantaged groups (e.g. Aboriginal people, disabled, migrant and refugee) to suggest ways in which our programs could be extended.

We are very grateful for the continuing support from the ACT Government both in terms of funding and in the interest they have shown in our work.

Friends of the EMC

In keeping with past years, Friends of the EMC have been invited to attend two major events at the EMC as well as receiving an invitation to the annual fundraiser "Jazz in the Garden".

At a morning tea marking Homelessness Week in August, the Friends of the EMC welcomed three new ambassadors - Paul Powderly from Colliers International and Boundless Canberra, Peter Barclay OAM from King O'Malleys and Board Member of "In the City Canberra", and Debbie Rolfe AM from Maliganis Edwards Johnson and the Canberra Hospital Foundation. Through their professional and philanthropic work, our ambassadors have demonstrated their ability to tap into almost any sphere of our community with enormous success. Our ambassadors have joined our Patron, Tim Gavel OAM, in talking about the work of the EMC and advocating on our behalf.

At this same morning tea, Member for Canberra, Gai Brodtmann MP, presented Certificates of Appreciation to the following key sponsors and supporters:

- Brumby's Bakery Ainslie - for providing bread for breakfast each morning;
- Capitol Chilled Foods - for providing milk for breakfast for 11 years;

- St Mark Coptic Orthodox Church - for lunches and general support;
- St Simon's Anglican Church - for coordinating donations of bread to guests;
- Master Plumbers ACT - for support through fundraising;
- Canberra Raiders - for ongoing support and encouragement;
- East Hotel - for support through staff fundraising, and;
- Andrew Kuzek and family - for support with various EMC fundraisers.

In March we welcomed the ACT Deputy Chief Minister, Yvette Berry, and other guests as our EMC mosaic was officially unveiled. Our late Director, Chris Stokman, saw the ugly concrete pillar in the middle of the EMC and in her mind it became something beautiful. This art mosaic was truly a community effort with guests, staff, volunteers, local politicians and service providers all contributing to its creation. It was sponsored by a grant from Icon Water and also received generous donations from Rivoland Tiles, Trend Australia, Bisazza Tiles and TJS Country Freight. It was created under the artistic direction of Kim Grant from Kim Grant Mosaics and we are very grateful for her hours of work and encouragement.

Through two successful grant applications we have new commercial fridges in the kitchen and updated computers for staff and guests. Our thanks to Hands Across Canberra and Andrew Leigh MP, Member for Fenner, for their assistance. We also received an unexpected windfall from the auction of the Canberra charity houses and our thanks go to the Master Builders Association and Boundless Canberra for this.

Friends of the EMC come from all over Canberra and support the work of the EMC in many different ways, through volunteering, donating goods or money or just calling in with a freshly baked cake. Friends are encouraged to talk about the work of the EMC to their family, workmates and friends. Strong community recognition and support have helped the EMC get an increase in our government funding. Having more Friends will help with the expansion of our services by ensuring that we maintain a robust volunteer community.

Conclusions

This has been quite a sad and difficult year with the death of our Director. However we have ended the year on a very positive note with the letter from the Chief Minister advising us of extra funding over a four year period to expand our services and to develop a business model to engage vulnerable groups that are less likely to use our services.

We are pleased that our new Director, Nicole Wiggins, has settled in very well and that our other staff and volunteers have been most supportive during the year.

Despite the closure of some public housing in the area, our breakfast numbers have increased and use of the drop-in centre and showers have increased significantly. Reasons for these increases may be an increase in the number of people sleeping rough, additional services during the drop-in period, publicity of our services through the Street to Home program and an increase in the number of nights Safe Shelter is open resulting in a flow-on of their guests to the EMC.

We have continued to live within our budget. This has been assisted by generous donations from Friends of the EMC and other public donations totalling \$45,500, an increase of nearly \$10,000 from last year, plus a contribution from City Church of \$10,000. We continue to be strongly supported by our wonderful patron, Tim Gavel, and our three ambassadors and Margaret Watt, as convenor of the Friends of the EMC. We are also very grateful for the regular donations made by our supporters.

Finally, thank you to my other Committee members for their support, sage advice and hard work.

Anne Butler

Chair

18 August 2017

APPENDIX

Early Morning Centre Statistical Reports

Breakfasts (including takeaway): 2012/13 – 2016/17

Month	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2016/17 percent male
July	711	788	741	812	n/a	n/a
August	731	798	703	691	829	85.4
September	796	793	841	754	844	85.1
October	771	759	761	764	768	85.1
November	857	787	666	741	894	82.8
December	761	661	707	771	774	81.8
January	826	666	740	778	794	81.4
February	778	684	664	896	698	78.2
March	863	699	795	877	981	74.6
April	897	715	832	936	848	77.4
May	904	695	783	823	949	78.7
June	708	655	768	708	837	76.3
TOTAL	9603	8700	9001	9551	9216	

Attendance at hub: 2012/13 – 2016/17

Month	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
July	547	494	467	574	n/a
August	712	464	524	581	625
September	398	469	553	588	654
October	642	538	487	574	652
November	709	566	493	544	785
December	390	362	383	332	593
January	475	420	423	468	571
February	618	479	553	482	631
March	496	511	602	507	706
April	490	536	552	502	624
May	594	554	552	488	835
June	419	577	571	545	698
TOTAL	6490	5970	6160	6185	7374

Other services/activities: 2016/17

Month	Hub	Shower	Laundry	Centrelink	Haircuts	Art	Crisis Food Packs	Doctor	Prescriptions	Legal (Street Law/Legal Aid)	OneLink	Choir
July	n/a	n/a	15	n/a	n/a	n/a	126	24	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
August	625	44	16	36	6	2	230	23	0	1	n/a	22
September	654	42	24	54	8	8	126	21	0	3	13	(a)
October	652	28	8	47	8	1	145	13	2	4	13	(a)
November	785	93	11	67	0	2	124	34	0	8	17	(a)
December	593	37	6	27	7	4	109	14	1	4	9	(a)
January	571	43	4	13	6	0	61	16	1	7	17	10
February	631	53	3	18	0	0	109	21	0	3	4	33
March	706	71	8	7	0	0	153	27	4	1	12	46
April	624	56	12	12	0	0	137	21	2	4	2	24
May	835	71	18	20	0	0	156	39	0	3	14	27
June	698	49	11	17	8	0	136	25	0	2	8	37
TOTAL	7374	587	136	318	43	17	1612	278	10	40	109	199

(a) The choir ceased in September 2016 and recommenced on 27 January 2017.