



# **DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES**

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# SOUTH COASTAL PERTH





South Coastal Women's Health Services is a non-profit, non-government community based organisation, operated by and for women and their families in the Rockingham and Kwinana areas of Western Australia.

South Coastal provides women services to address their physical health and wellbeing, with a focus on cultural support and assistance.

## CURRENT SERVICES

- Well Women's Clinic
- Aboriginal Health Service – Primary Health Care
- Emotional Health Counselling
- Perinatal Mental Health Counselling
- Family Abuse counselling and legal services
- Crèche facilities
- Library
- Information and referral services
- Events – Pink Ribbon, IWD and NAIDOC week
- Health promotion activities
- Therapeutic Groups
- Support Groups including
  - Multicultural Women's Group
  - Over 55's Group (ROAGS)
  - Women with Disabilities Group (GALS)
  - Single Women United Group
  - Book club



## Why we developed strong partnerships and alliances

- In WA the State Government has been looking at how it does business with the NFP sector and introduced the 'Developing Community Services in Partnership' policy
- This policy urges state government departments to work alongside the sector in partnership to deliver services, with a shift from outputs to outcome focussed funding contracts
- The government introduced a 15% across the board increase in funding to all eligible NFP's in WA in the 2011/12 budget and commitment to a further 10% to selected services in the 2013/14 budget
- The tendering process is less challenging for larger not for profits who often have tender writers to assist
- Large NFP's have been selected to represent the sector in WA on the Partnership Forum with State Government, thereby having a direct influence on policy development, tender specs and service development
- Small and medium sized local and regional NFP's have effectively been excluded from the decision making process

- Other influences on a state and federal level have included;
  - the development of Medicare Locals and the eventual possibility that all health funding will be directed through these organisations
  - increased contractual requirements, in WA all funders require different report formats, at different times and for different purposes
  - move toward unit costing for services instead of historical funding
  - changes to awards and conditions through Fair Work Australia including a lack of definition for 'Constitutional Corporations
  - development of the ACNC and proposed tax reform in the sector
  - state and federal reforms in the mental health sector
  - changes to Hospital funding
  - introduction of closing the gap funding
  - move to a requirement for a Standard Chart of Accounts
  - increased focus on Risk management for Boards
  - in WA in particular a shrinking skilled labour force due the mining boom
  - proposed changes to local government boundaries

## How we developed partnerships and alliances

- At a local level we identified, through an extensive organisational review, the need to grow the organisation to compete with larger not for profits in the tender process
- The Board of Management encouraged a move to expand the service and take a more regional approach– this was then reflected in our new Strategic Plan
- A focus was placed on marketing the service to raise its community profile, including using social media, revamped website, new branding, newsletters, local media and community events
- We sought to develop strong relationships with all local service providers and directly sought partnerships for services that met the needs of women through; attending local network groups; seeking organisations to work from our premises; championing local forums on community issues; open days; newsletter and media articles; seeking partners for joint tenders; event planning with other organisations; hiring out our venue to community groups and programs; expanding the Board of Management; commencing an accreditation process; and linking staff to community organisations in similar roles.

## Benefits

- We now provide a broader range of innovative and flexible services and women can access many health services under one roof
- We have increased our community profile and provide best practise and considered a centre of excellence by the community
- In the past few years we were finalists in the state Community Services Industry Awards, one of our Midwives won a Midwife of the Year Award for her work with Aboriginal Women and our Aboriginal Program Coordinator won a Local Government Award for Community Leadership.
- We have been successful in tendering and are competing with larger not for profits who are not community based
- We have provided governance support and advice to other smaller not for profits, rather than 'take them over'
- We have extended our services and have a regional focus
- We have been able to offer socially isolated and disadvantaged women access to more targeted services
- We have a low retention rate, people want to work for us, partner with us and support our work



## Difficulties and Barriers

- Working with the Aboriginal 'community' has proven to be challenging – and rewarding – trying to understand and deliver from a culturally respectful perspective whilst maintaining contractual requirements
- The process is slow, takes time to develop relationships and trust with the community
- Working from a community development approach is a fundamental shift for the staff and Board and need to maintain service delivery
- It has been our experience that some large not for profits don't want to engage locally and actively compete for funding and clients
- Collaboration and consultation can sometimes require a high degree of flexibility, compromise and innovation to make it work
- Defining tangible outcomes is sometimes difficult
- Although it doesn't always work – you need to persevere

## In Summary

- South Coastal Women's Health Services has recognised the need to be more competitive whilst still maintaining a high local profile
- We acknowledged the need to embrace a 'social model' of health and be responsive to changing community needs
- We now understand the importance of having a high community profile in order to survive and thrive in a changing funding environment
- Partnerships can take many forms, can be formal and informal, long or short term and requires an investment of time and good will
- The support of staff and management is critical to the organisations success



## Current Community Partnerships

### ★ The Lucy Saw Centre (Women's Refuge)

- Multicultural Women's Group
- Extension of FFAST Counselling
- Christmas Gifts for children
- FDV Tender

### ★ KEYS (Kwinana Early Years Service)

- Keys Governance Audit
- Outreach counselling for Emotional Health and DV
- Joint tender for child health services

### ★ SCALES Community Legal Services

- FFAST Solicitor sub contract

### ★ City of Rockingham

- Pink Ribbon events
- Healthy Communities Initiative – Life at the Core
- Senior Strategic Group
- Act Belong Commit

### ★ Perth South Coastal Medicare Local

- Moodijt Koort
- Aboriginal Maternity Group Practise
- Women and Food Group
- One Life Suicide Prevention Group
- Pap Smear campaign

### ★ Bright Futures Family Day Care

- Aboriginal Playgroup

### ★ WA Cervical Screening Unit

- Outreach to Peel
- Indigenous Cervical Screening

### ★ Department for Child Protection

- Christmas gifts for children in care
- Working group on increasing foster parents
- Parenting Expo

### ★ Care Options and Aqua Jetty

- Christmas gifts for disadvantaged families

### ★ Moordijt Djeena

- Visiting Podiatry Service

### ★ Challenger Institute

- Young Parents Playgroup
- Visiting students

### ★ Bethanie Group

- Social Connector Program

### ★ Murdiperdup – Aboriginal Health Group

- Closing the Gap funding
- Maternal Group Practise program
- Remember November



# Visiting Services

Silver Chain

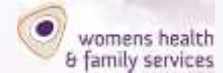


PEPISU – Women and Family Services

Cancer Council



Sexual Assault Referral Services



Incest Survivors Association



Carers WA



# Thank You

Any Questions