



Lismore & District
Women's Health Centre Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



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Lismore & District Women's Health Centre Inc can be contacted at:

25 Uralba Street

PO Box 1129

Lismore NSW 2480

Lismore NSW 2480

Tel: (02) 6621 9800

Fax: (02) 6621 8591

Email: mail@lismorewomen.org.au

Web: www.lismorewomen.org.au

Lismore & District Women's Health Centre Inc.

OUR VISION

Lismore & District Women's Health Centre Inc (LDWHC) is a community based organisation that has existed for 23 years to provide health services for women and girls from a feminist framework. Currently we offer Counselling, Women's Health Nurse, the Northern Rivers Eating Disorders Service, Lesbian Counselling, Naturopathy, the Young Women's Project, as well as advocacy, referral support and information. We also conduct projects such as Cut it Out.

Our Vision is "Vibrant health and well being for all women and girls".

Our Statement of Intent is "We empower women and girls by providing a wholistic feminist health service in a safe and respectful environment."

Background

LDWHC is funded by grants administered by North Coast Area Health Service and aims to align in part its strategic plan with the priorities outlined in the North Coast Area Health Services' Women's Health Implementation Plan. The centre continually seeks funds from other external sources and is also accountable to those funding sources.

Some of these guiding principles for our work include:

- Working with a social model of health
- Utilising a population and gendered health approach to promote health, illness prevention and early intervention
- Recognising women's experience of health and health care
- Focusing on health equity and women most at risk of ill health
- Collaborating in partnerships to advance the health of women

The LDWHC Strategic Plan 2009 outlines the principles of women's health care in more detail.

COUNCIL OF WOMEN

Chairperson

Marie Hutchinson

Treasurer

Maree Eastman

Secretary

Danielle Notara

Community Members

Natalie Bultitude

Frances Doran

Nicole Schorr

STAFF

Manager

Karuna Fielden

Bookkeeper

Robyn Colliss

Receptionists

Jenny Dowling

Amara Bartlett

Robyn Colliss

Relief Receptionists

Rosie Lee

Virginia Waters

Administrator

Gemma Canning

Women's Health Nurse

Andrea Brooks

Relief Women's Health Nurse

Jenny Hardener

Naturopath

Cindy Thummel

Generalist Counsellor

Christina Henry

Locum Counsellor

Marie Makinson

Lesbian Counsellor

Tammie Day

Locum Lesbian Counsellor

Jude Whites

Northern Rivers Eating Disorders Service Coordinator

Mim Weber

Northern Rivers Eating Disorders Service Team Leader

Susan Joyce

Young Women's Project Worker

Amara Bartlett

Cleaner

Cathy Allan

Yoga Teacher

Christina Peebles

Intern Psychologist

Christine Lee

STUDENTS

Chill Out Clinic Naturopathic Students

Dina Mateos
Bimbi Gray
Maria Minichova
Ellen Garrett
Cushla Lobb
Jennifer Robb
Shelley Robinson
Nicole Allan
Helen Smale
Sam Bass
Rebekah Conley
Sky Anderson

VOLUNTEERS

Group Facilitators

Christina Peebles
Dawn Thirlaway
Rohini Agnew
Monica Matoc

CHAIRPERSON: Marie Hutchinson

Dear friends,

I would like acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that the Lismore and District Women's Health Centre operates from, the Bundjalung Nation and acknowledge the Ancestors, the Elders, both past and present and the people. I also wish for a swift and just reconciliation process in Australia.

I am pleased to present the annual report of the Lismore and District Women's Health Centre. This is my first report as Chair of the Council. Since becoming Chair, I have had the privilege of working with staff at the centre and gaining insight into their commitment and passion for Women's Health. This report is an important acknowledgement of the work of the centre, which is due to all staff, volunteers and supporters both past and present, and on behalf of the Council of Women I would like to acknowledge and thank them all.

The report highlights the way in which the LDWHC continues to deliver a range of services within a feminist framework, including services to priority groups such as young women, Aboriginal women and lesbians. The examples provided in the report demonstrate a diverse and busy year. This has included consolidation of programs offered through the centre such as the Northern Rivers Eating Disorders Service (NREDS), provision of innovative activities such as the Refresh program, and continuation of the Pregnancy and Postnatal Group, now in its 8th year.

Collaboration is important to maintaining a vibrant and sustainable community service. We continue to extend our partnerships and work with the Lismore Family Planning Service, Women's Health Matters and ACON to improve opportunities and access to health care choices for women and young girls. A more complete list of our current partnerships are itemised further in the report. I would like to acknowledge and thank the community for your ongoing support and partnership.

The Council of Women has worked well together throughout the year and continues to be a productive and focused group. I thank them for their support and understanding of the principles of women's health care, good governance, ethical practice, and collaboration.

I take this opportunity to thank all involved in the centre. Together we can continue to work in support of enhancing and creating services for women and girls in our district.

Kind Regards,

Marie Hutchinson
Chairperson
Council of Women

TREASURER: Maree Eastman

This year the centre has reported a surplus of \$29441. This is a significant surplus which can mainly be attributed to the drawing down of annual leave and long service leave entitlements. Reductions in annual leave accounted for \$13920 of the surplus and reductions in long service leave account for \$4551. These reductions are due to the resignation of long term staff, as well the majority of staff have used their accrued annual leave in this financial year. Another significant reason for the surplus was the Ralph Lauren Pink Pony Grant this grant was offset against the Naturopaths wages to the amount of \$8440, resulting in savings in North Coast Area Health funding this financial year.

The centre has continued its risk management policies and has accrued 100% of leave entitlements. Long service leave is accrued from the fifth year of service as per centre policy. In addition a provision of 50% of personal leave is accrued due to the significant entitlements of long term staff. We have also accrued a \$4400 IT Reserve to ensure that the centre can meet technological needs as they arise.

Capital expenditure this year was confined to the replacement of the book keeper's computer and other minor purchases. The replacement of linoleum in the kitchen was the only significant repair.

The Women's Crisis Fund continues to provide financial assistance to women seeking access to termination. The minimal loss of \$212 is testament to the appreciation felt by clients, with most clients repaying in full through direct debits to their Centre Link payments.

This year the manager secured funding from "The No NGO Left Behind" project through the Mental Health Coordinating Council. This funding will be expended in the next financial year and will provide new computers, software and the recarpeting of the centre much to the delight of all staff. As well a small grant from the Northern Rivers Community Foundation will fund a refurbishment the of reception area, with the aim of making the centre a more child friendly space.

The Area Assistance Scheme "Young Women's Project" is now complete and staff were sad to say goodbye to our health promotion worker Amara Bartlett and the very successful project. The Centre will continue to participate in the "Love Bites" program run in local high schools using the remaining Cut it Out funding provided by Lismore City Council.

The retained profits of the centre total \$60287 at the 30th June 2010. These reserves ensure that the centre would be able to fund any opportunities that may present themselves. Examples of these opportunities may include a move to new premises, the purchase of a motor vehicle or funding an accreditation process.

Once again I would like to thank the staff for their support in ensuring that the Council of Women are fully informed in regard to the financial position of the centre.

Maree Eastman
Treasurer

1. ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

The centre has continued to provide a range of services to women and girls from a feminist framework due to the dedication and hard work of the members of the Council of Women, a small team of staff, all of whom work part time and students on placement and several volunteers.

The centre publicly launched the LDWHC Strategic Plan 2009-2012 at the Annual General Meeting in 2009 and the organisation now has a comprehensive plan to guide its vision for the coming years.

This year the centre has made significant progress with a range of quality improvements against recommendations in its Quality Plan. The centre has developed a suite of policies and updated procedures within the organisation to provide improved services to women and works steadily towards accreditation.

LDWHC could not be the dynamic and vibrant organisation that it is, without the passion for women's health evidenced at every level in the organisation. Centre staff have stepped up to the mark on many occasions and contributed in ways that go beyond the call of duty, displaying versatility, flexibility and dedicated professionalism. For instance, Jenny Dowling, one of the Reception team co-authored a paper with the centre Manager about the Cut it Out Project. The paper was presented at the Australian National Women's Health Conference in Hobart.

Amara Bartlett and Gemma Canning designed and produced an excellent booklet on self esteem for use with young people. Several staff members, including Cindy Thummel and Amara Bartlett, have authored policies and successful grant applications. Christina Henry has developed a series of unique helpful handouts for use with clients with eating disorders.

Several staff including the Bookkeeper, Robyn Colliss and the Intern Psychologist, Christine Lee also work in reception when needed, displaying compassion and great flexibility in very different roles. Andrea Brooks, the Women's Health Nurse manages to do outreach education, despite a very tight work schedule and Frances Doran, a Council of Women member wrote a comprehensive grant application with input from the Manager.

Everyone on the team, including the governance body, the Council of Women, also contributed to the successful organisation and planning of NAIDOC Week, fundraisers and International Women's Day celebrations held throughout the year.

There have been some significant changes in staffing in the last year. The Northern Rivers Eating Disorders (NREDS) Coordinator, Mim Weber left after five years of pioneering the assessment and referral process and setting up professional networks of other allied health workers and doctors. Her passion and dedication has established NREDS as a vital service on the North Coast for people affected by eating disorders and their families. Susan Joyce has since filled this role and acts as a Team Leader enhancing an integrated approach to service delivery within the centre.

This year saw the finalisation of the Young Women's Project and Amara Bartlett, the Project Worker, will be sadly missed for her vibrant and dynamic work with young women in the community and school settings. The project provided essential health promotion and education to young people about intimate partner violence and body image and assisted the centre to reach out to young women who may not otherwise have been able to access information or support.

The centre is also grateful to Marie Makinson and Jude Whites for their flexibility and professionalism in filling locum counselling roles and enabling a continuity of service for women. The LDWHC Generalist Counsellor, Christina Henry injured her leg and was granted a years leave to recover and we all wish for her a speedy recovery. Tammie Day, the Lesbian Counsellor left the area to study and the service was able to continue seamlessly with Jude's assistance.

Old challenges still remain and these include coordinating and managing a multi-disciplinary team of part time workers, losing staff to more security and better pay rates in the public service, and the constant pressure to apply for opportunistic grants to enhance capacity.

At this stage, the future for the NGO health sector under the new proposed National Health Reform is unclear and our sector eagerly awaits the announcement of a National Women's Health Plan. More than ever our organisation will need to draw on its strengths and resilience.

2. CLIENT WORK

2.1 CLINICAL SERVICES

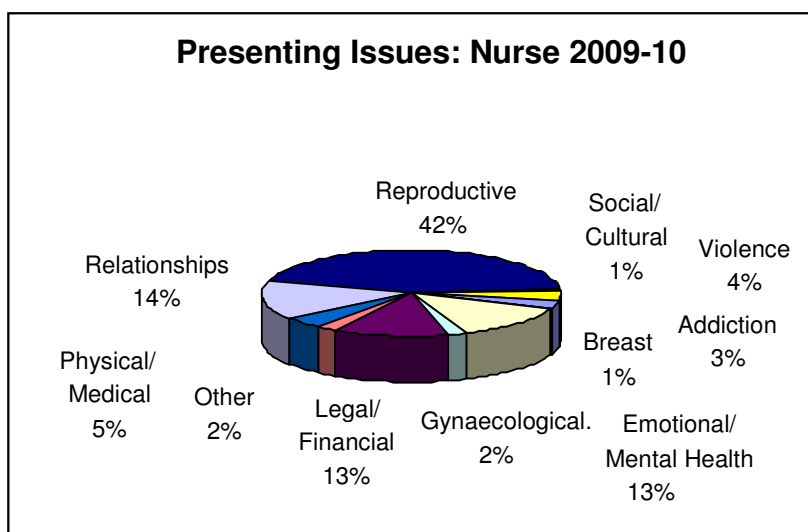
2.1.1 WOMEN'S HEALTH NURSE CLINICS

The Women's Health Nurse (WHN) works fourteen hours per week over two days and the work involves clinical consultations, group facilitation, outreach education, health promotion and networking.

2.1.1.1 Clinical Consultations

The WHN provided a total of **15 clinic days** (an average of 0.5 days per week over 30 weeks). She saw **90 clients face to face**, and had **35 phone consults / contacts**. There were **7 'fail to attends'**. The clinical consults are generally centred on sexual and reproductive health, but also cover a broad range of general health and psychosocial issues.

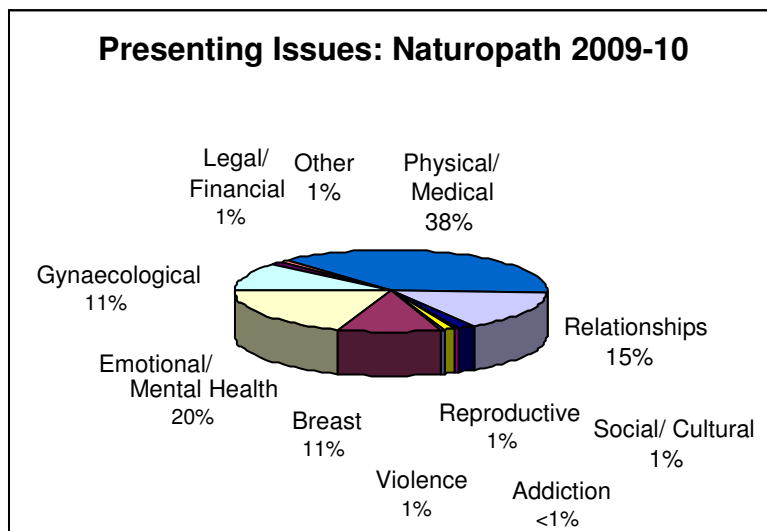
One of the WHN roles is to assist women with unplanned pregnancies to access the LDWHC Women's Crisis Fund; a no-interest loan scheme which enables women with low incomes to be able to pay the gap between the termination clinic fees and the Medicare Rebate. This is a well utilised and an important fund which we have made available to 35 women this year.



Nurse - Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	10
Breast	2
Emotional/Mental	46
Gynaecological/Ur	8
Legal/Financial	46
Other	7
Physical/Medical	17
Relationships	53
Reproductive	156
Social/Cultural	3
Violence/Abuse	14
Total	362

2.1.2 NATUROPATHY SERVICES

The centre's Naturopath is employed for 3 days per week and over the past 20 years saw clients with a broad range of health issues. This year there has been a completion of the gradual shift to specialised programs structured around evidence based outcomes and specific client target groups. The Naturopath now only sees women with eating disorders, post natal depression, and women at risk of heart disease or lymphoedema. All clients now agree to a set number of sessions with the Naturopath. The prescribed number of sessions may be extended at the discretion of the Manager, in consultation with the Naturopath. Women wishing to access general naturopathic consultations are now referred to the centre's Chill Out Clinic.



Naturopath - Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	4
Breast	139
Emotional/Mental	251
Gynaecological/Ur	148
Legal/Financial	17
Other	10
Physical/Medical	481
Relationships	197
Reproductive	19
Social/Cultural	7
Violence/Abuse	16
Total	1289

2.1.2.1 Refresh Project

The Refresh project began at the Lismore & District Women's Health Centre (LDWHC) in July 2009 when funding for one year was approved by the National Breast and Ovarian Cancer Centre and the Polo Ralph Lauren Pink Pony Campaign. Funding was utilised to employ a Refresh Project Coordinator / Lymphoedema Therapist for 7 hours per week. The project targeted women from the Lismore area who were in recovery from breast cancer and at risk of developing lymphoedema.

At the time there were no programs like Refresh in the Lismore area. Gaps had been identified in service provision to women who were in recovery from breast cancer and at risk of developing lymphoedema, especially those disadvantaged by low income and the distance to capital cities.

Women could either self refer to Refresh or were referred by health professionals. Clients were then offered a series of 6 one hour sessions for a nominal fee of \$20 per session which included the application and education about lymphoedema. Clients were taught self massage techniques and exercises to assist in the reduction of lymphoedema.

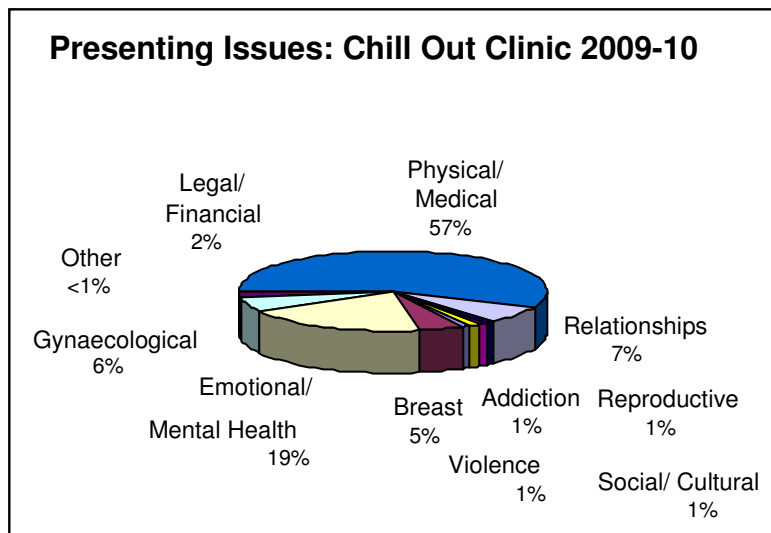
Evaluations of the project confirmed an increase in access for women to Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD) massage as well as a measurable increase in their understanding and self management of the condition. Referral sources were mainly from within the health system which confirmed the gap in service provision which Refresh managed to fill.

Refresh has now been incorporated into the work plan of the LDWHC Naturopath who will continue it as an ongoing program.

2.1.2.2 Chill Out Clinic

In conjunction with Southern Cross University (SCU), the Naturopath coordinated and supervised the Chill Out Clinics for the 10th consecutive year. This clinic offers low cost Naturopathic sessions every Thursday conducted by senior Naturopathic students from the School of Health and Human Sciences at SCU. In the past years over 85 Naturopathic students have not only used the Chill Out Clinics to fulfil their clinic hours but also to experience working in a women's health setting. Their clients ranged in age between 15 – 86 years of age and have a variety of health conditions.

During their placement the students received extensive training on working within the health system. The Chill Out Clinic received referrals from a range of services such as the Sexual Assault Unit and Community Mental Health, to Interrelate and the Casino Disability Services. The students also learned the accepted protocol for referring clients to other areas of the North Coast Area Health Service and Non Government Organisations.



Chill Out Clinic - Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	9
Breast	47
Emotional/Mental	192
Gynaecological/Ur	59
Legal/Financial	18
Other	4
Physical/Medical	560
Relationships	72
Reproductive	9
Social/Cultural	10
Violence/Abuse	12
Total	992

2.1.2.3 Chilled and Refreshed

Out of the Refresh project has sprung the Chilled and Refreshed program. On completion of the Refresh project several participants identified the need for ongoing opportunities to access MLD as well as naturopathic treatment plans to assist them in their recovery from cancer. These women can now attend the LDWHC Chill Out Clinics to receive ongoing care by the senior Naturopathic students who are completing placements with LDWHC under the supervision of the LDWHC Naturopath. Clients can opt to continue treatments with a particular student through the SCU Health Clinic.

2.1.2.4 Young @Heart

This year the Naturopath has collaborated with the Women's Health Nurse, Trish O'Brien of Women's Health Matters to conduct Menopause seminars. These seminars are part of the LDWHC Young @ Heart program which targets women most at risk of heart disease. In the seminars women are educated about the increased risks of heart disease after menopause. They are then offered the opportunity to join the Young @ Heart program which assesses their risk and formats a treatment plan, which may include herbal supplements, nutritional advice and exercise routines.

2.1.2.5 Eating Disorders

Naturopathic sessions are now offered as a part of the treatment plan for women who have been diagnosed with an eating disorder. Working as part of their health team, the Naturopath provides assistance using natural remedies for a range of issues from anxiety and addiction, to nutritional deficiencies and skin conditions. These clients are also offered the option to have a series of massages as a means of encouraging self nurturing and positive body awareness.

2.1.2.6 Bonding with Baby

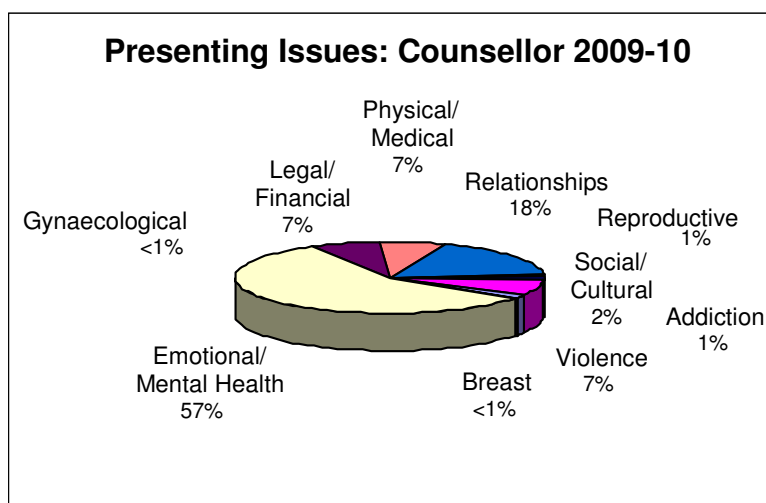
The Bonding with Baby program, operated through the Northern Rivers Family Support network, is supported by the LDWHC Naturopath who provides information sessions. She also offers naturopathic sessions to women suffering from post natal depression as natural remedies have proven very safe and effective for this condition. Women have also been referred to the St. Vincent Day Stay Counsellor, as many of the women she sees prefer natural alternatives to medications.

2.1.3 COUNSELLING SERVICES

2.1.3.1 Generalist Counselling

The LDWHC Generalist Counsellor, Christina Henry offers short to medium term counselling services to women 3 days per week covering a range of issues such as depression and anxiety, other mental health issues and drugs and alcohol. Christina uses Voice Dialogue, CBT and Sand Play Therapy to assist women explore their concerns.

Unfortunately Christina injured herself in April 2010 and Marie Makinson has acted as the Locum Counsellor since that time. Marie is both a qualified psychotherapist and counsellor and uses a Jungian framework, which includes dreamwork and sandplay, according to the needs of the client.



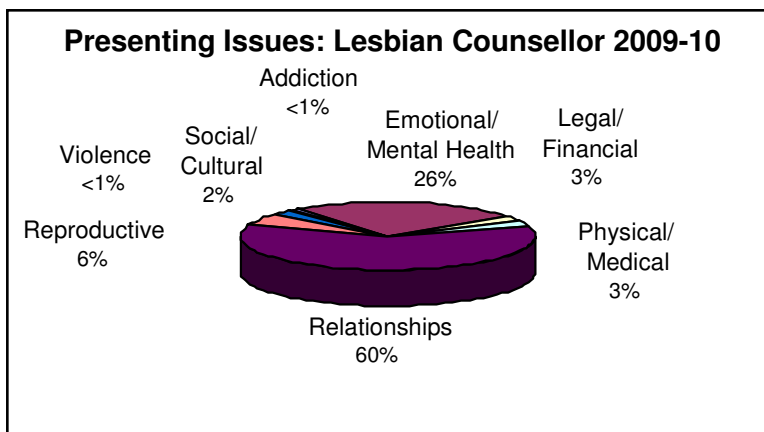
Counsellor - Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	17
Breast	3
Emotional/Mental	676
Gynaecological/Ur	1
Legal/Financial	86
Physical/Medical	83
Relationships	215
Reproductive	8
Social/Cultural	23
Violence/Abuse	82
Total	1194

2.1.3.2 Eating Disorders Counselling

Approximately half the client load for the Generalist Counsellor consists of women with eating disorders. Christina Henry provided specialist counselling to women with eating disorders until April 2010. The Northern Rivers Eating Disorders Services Team Leader, Susan Joyce has since provided this service one day per week using a range of creative therapies.

2.1.3.3 Lesbian Counselling

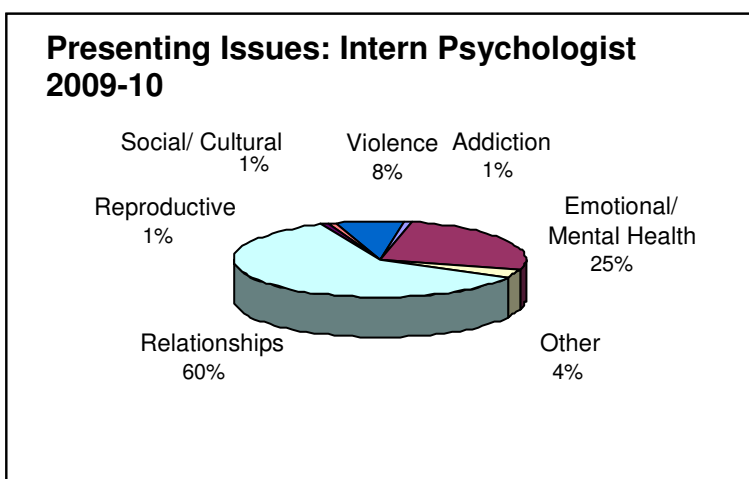
Specialist counselling for lesbians and same sex attracted women was offered one day per week through a service agreement with Northern Rivers ACON. Tammie Day filled this position in 2009 and when she left to further her study, Jude Whites was the Locum Counsellor. Early in the New Year Susan Joyce was recruited to the position.



Lesbian Counsellor Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	1
Emotional/Mental	55
Legal/Financial	6
Physical/Medical	6
Relationships	127
Reproductive	13
Social/Cultural	5
Violence/Abuse	1
Total	214

2.1.3.4 Intern Psychologist

Christine Lee has provided counselling to women on a range of issues at the centre one day each week as an Intern Psychologist and we are very grateful for the dedication and energy she brings to her work, as this has allowed the centre to offer enhanced counselling services.



Intern Psychologist Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	1
Emotional/Mental	27
Other	4
Relationships	64
Reproductive	1
Social/Cultural	1
Violence/Abuse	8
Total	106

2.1.4 NORTHERN RIVERS EATING DISORDERS SERVICE (NREDS)

2.1.4.1 NREDS Coordinator

Mim Weber pioneered the service and was the NREDS Coordinator 2 days per week until the end of 2009, when she left to take up a position in Area Mental Health. Recruitment processes took up the first few months of 2010 and the new NREDS Coordinator, Susan Joyce was employed from 12th April 2010 as Team Leader for 3 days per week. The Team Leader has several roles; she builds and maintains a network of service providers, undertakes assessments and referrals, provides consultation to parents and partners of people with eating disorders, and forms partnerships with other relevant agencies.

2.1.4.2 NREDS Networking

The NREDS Team Leader facilitates the Eating Disorders Network Meeting, which invites practitioners from a variety of health backgrounds to meet and discuss eating disorder issues every six weeks. These meetings provide an informal supportive arena where practitioners

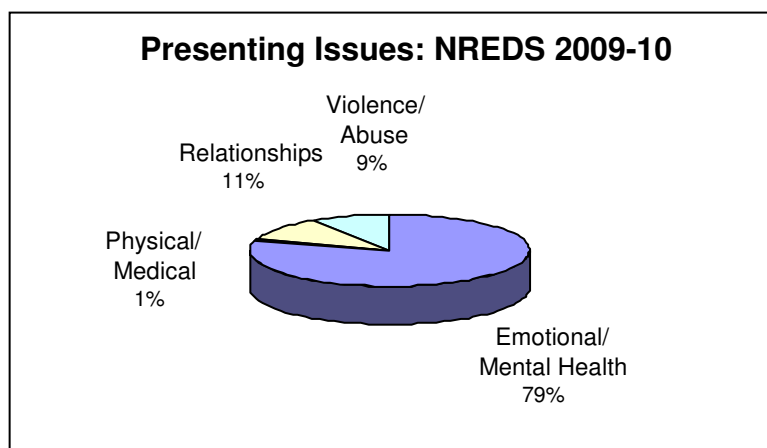
can discuss individual clinical practice, present case studies, discuss diagnostic issues, and keep up to date with changing health policies, current research, and training opportunities.

The NREDS Team Leader carried out further networking through visiting the nearest eating disorders services in Brisbane, the Eating Issues Centre – ISIS – and Eating Disorders Association (EDA) where both services provided updated resources for NREDS to adapt for its own use in the coming year. The NREDS Team Leader has attended regular interagency meetings facilitated by Lismore Council, and Community Mental Health – NGO and Mental Health partnership. Susan has also talked about eating disorders at the group New Beginnings.

2.1.4.3 Building Quality Service and Resources

Several meetings with Trent Taylor, Manager of Clinical Partnerships in Mental Health Services, at the North Coast Area Health Service have taken place with the NREDS Team Leader and LDWHC Manager. The result of these meetings was the realignment of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) to the work that NREDS undertakes. The eating disorders resources are consistently being updated through downloading new research articles and adding these to the resource files.

Some of this new research relates to the recent identification of obesity as one of the four most prevalent health risks in Australia and the suggested inclusion of obesity under the eating disorders umbrella. Other research includes new effective methods of working with eating disordered clients and assisting parents to work with family members with eating disorders. The current eating disorders assessment practices has been reorganised into three sessions offering an initial consultation, an eating disorders assessment, and a review session.



NREDS Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	7
Emotional / Mental	121
Physical / Medical	1
Relationships	17
Violence / Abuse	14
Total	160

2.1.4.4 Publications

The NREDS Team Leader Susan Joyce, together with Young Women's Project Worker Amara Bartlett were featured in the Lismore Echo in May 2010 to celebrate "No Diet Day," which promotes awareness of how dieting can trigger eating disorders. The monthly magazine "GP Speak" featured a half page article on NREDS and pictured Susan Joyce in the June 2010 issues. The article provided an outline of NREDS and encouraged GPs to make use of the NREDS service.

2.1.4.5 Professional Development, Training and Research

It is imperative to the role of NREDS Team Leader to keep informed of broader service provision, together with current debates and research around eating disorders. Susan Joyce

attended the biannual Eating Disorders Conference "Eating Disorders: Meeting the Challenge" which was held in Sydney in May 2010. The conference featured keynote speakers internationally renowned for excellence in the eating disorders area. Susan also attended training by Canadian Associate Professor Josie Geller on "States of Change" and "Motivational Interviewing" and further training by Dr Sara Maguire the state wide Coordinator for Eating Disorders within NSW Health. Susan is undertaking further studies through a Masters Degree in Public Health Leadership which offers research opportunities within workplace clinical areas, this training will positively impact on the development of NREDS.

2.2 GROUP PROGRAMS

2.2.1 PREGNANCY AND POSTNATAL GROUP

This group is now into its 8th year, and continues strongly. It is an ongoing, open weekly group, comprised of a yoga class, followed by a facilitated group session based on a three month program which the WHN develops. The group circle is co-facilitated by the WHN and the Yoga Teacher, Christina Peebles. There are guest speakers invited from the community to present on a wide range of topics.

The group enables women to focus on their pregnancy and their baby, and to develop strong support networks. Women attend sometimes for months of their pregnancy and for up to six months after the birth. Our numbers have increased on last year, with **736** women attending the 51 group sessions, an average of 14 – 15 each week. These numbers also include the partners who are included in the program up to eight times per year.

The WHN has supervised an African volunteer, Monica Matoc who has attended at various times during the past 2-3 years when her study schedule and family commitments have allowed. She has contributed her wisdom and experience to the group and has increased women's understanding of other cultures.

There were also three medical students studying an obstetrics term through the Northern Rivers University Department of Rural Health, who attended the group for a session each, and a 4th year Naturopathy student who attended for a number of weeks, who all gained valuable perspectives on pregnancy and postnatal issues.

The WHN refers internally to practitioners at the LDWHC and also to a wide range of health and social services externally. She refers frequently to the Lismore Community Midwifery Service which provides a valuable choice for low risk pregnant women to have continuity of care with a midwife.

The feedback from the annual evaluation of 10 participants of the group was positive. All of the women responding stated that they gained more confidence with their pregnancy or with mothering as a result of attending the group. Women enjoyed the yoga and the variety of subjects covered in our group sharing/education and the group program planning benefits from their feedback.

Some of the comments from the evaluation were:

'A very positive group, thank you'

'Great to meet more mums and mums to be'.

Larisa Barnes, working as a Research Clinician through the Northern Rivers University Department of Rural Health did a qualitative evaluation of the Pregnancy & Postnatal Group

as part of a project titled "Mothers' perceived health and well being benefits of belonging to pre and postnatal support groups in the Northern Rivers NSW area". The feedback was positive and comment was made on the wholistic nature of the group. Women's emotional, physical, spiritual and social health was supported and the group also provided valued mental stimulation/education.

The venue for the group changed in April this year to the Lismore City Hall Fountain Room and there are many advantages to the move.

2.2.2 OUT OF THE BLUES PROGRAM

In partnership with Women's Health Matters the Generalist Counsellor co-facilitated with Helga Jolley a 6 week group for management of depression called "Out of the Blues". Nine women started the program and 2 of these women were unfortunately hospitalised during the course, so were unable to continue. Group participants reported positive improvements in their lives fairly immediately. The program is varied, informative and experiential and the group sharing was also a very enriching part of the success of the group.

2.3 OUTREACH EDUCATION

2.3.1 YOUNG WOMEN'S PROJECT

The Young Women's Project (YWP) was a NSW State Government Area Assistance Scheme Project which was funded and continues until May 2010 due to extra funding from other sources. The project aimed to provide group programs and outreach education to young women focusing on the prevention of eating disorders and intimate partner violence. Since May 2010 the Young Women's Project Worker has been able to continue doing outreach education through the Love Bites violence prevention program in high schools, through a grant from Lismore City Council.

2.3.1.1 Group Programs

During 2009 and 2010 the Young Women's Project Worker facilitated

- A four week program on self esteem/body image and healthy relationships to 18 girls in Year 9 from Woodlawn College
- A six week self esteem program for 6 young women clients with disabilities and mental health issues with On Q Employment Services.
- Four self esteem/body image workshops at Evans River Central School for 107 girls in Years 7, 8, 9 & 10.
- A four week program on self esteem/body image to 18 girls in Year 10 from Woodlawn College

These group programs designed by the Young Women's Project Worker were interactive and encouraged group participation, and discussed healthy versus unhealthy relationships, body image, media literacy, impacts and influences on self esteem, boundaries, self care, relaxation, goal setting and assertive communication skills. They were very well received by the participants and there was a demand for these programs that could not be fulfilled when the money for the project ran out.

2.3.1.2 Outreach Education

The Young Women's Project, as part of the multidisciplinary Love Bites team facilitated the violence prevention program Love Bites to Year 10 students at Lismore High School, Casino

High School, Kadina High School, Richmond River High School and Nimbin Central School. This provided education on violence prevention within relationships and sexual assault education to approximately 295 young women in 2009. During 2010 the program was provided to approximately 188 girls in Year 10 from Lismore High School, Kyogle High School and Casino High School.

The Young Women's Project Worker attended the 'Splendour In The Grass' national youth music festival with an information stall and photographic exhibition, the content of which was created by young women as part of the Young Women's Project in 2008. The images taken by the young women showed the theme of empowerment. 87 women were surveyed around body image perceptions and how support is accessed. Hundreds of 'Empowered' resources were handed out.

2.3.1.3 Resources

2000 colourful tote bags were produced as part of the Young Women's Project in 2009. These were printed with images from the 'Empowered' photographic exhibition created by young women in 2008. Hundreds of these bags and posters have been distributed.

The Young Women's Project Worker, in conjunction with the centre's Administrator, designed and produced a Self Esteem booklet, of which 1000 copies were made and widely distributed.

2.3.1.4 Partnerships and Community Development

The Young Women's Project Worker attended:

- The Love Bites National Conference in Sydney which offered best practice examples in violence prevention with young people
- Service delivery consultations at the Lismore Women's Resource Centre, and 'Finding Common Ground' (youth service provider consultation on the creation of a leadership program with the aim to bridge gaps between young people of different cultures in Lismore)
- Six Love Bites Interagency meetings and delivery of the program in conjunction with sexual assault services, child and family health services, domestic violence services and school counsellors
- The Youth Service Promotion, as part of Youth Week 2010, with the 'Empowered' photos displayed and resources distributed

2.3.2 BONDING WITH BABY

The Naturopath has continued a partnership with Lismore Family Support Network to provide outreach education twice a term to their Bonding with Baby Program, which assists women with post natal depression. The centre Naturopath, Cindy Thummel attends sessions and assists women with nutritional advice in an informal setting.

The WHN facilitated two sessions providing education on sexual and reproductive health to mothers with babies aged 0-18 months. This collaboration is with the Lismore Family Support Network

2.3.3 ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S WELLBEING

The Naturopath and two of the naturopathic students from Southern Cross University attended one of the Aboriginal Women's Wellbeing sessions offered through the YWCA,

offering pampering in the form of hand and foot massages. They also supplied the women with answers to a broad range of their health questions.

2.3.4 ABORIGINAL MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH STRATEGY

The WHN has provided education sessions with Aboriginal women involved in the Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Strategy in Kyogle. These sessions will recommence next year in collaboration with the midwife coordinating the program. Due to unforeseen circumstances no sessions occurred this year. The program is organised through the Kyogle Family Support Network.

2.4 SPECIAL EVENTS

2.4.1 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2010

International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated with a one day Art and Healing Workshop facilitated by Rohini Agnew and Dawn Thirlaway. The workshop was attended by 19 women of diverse backgrounds who enjoyed learning to use a range of creative processes such as ceramics, painting and movements to express themselves. Feedback from participants was very positive with 18 out of the 19 women attending ranking the workshop as 9, on a scale of 1-10. The workshop was funded by a grant from the NSW Premier and Cabinet, Office for Women, administered by Lismore City Council.

The centre also held its annual fundraiser on IWD with a screening of "Alice in Wonderland" in 3D held at the Lismore Birch Carroll and Coyle Cinema. There were some great characters in costume attending and the centre also conducted a community survey which was completed by 39 women. Annual surveys such as this provide invaluable information which assists in the centre's planning for service delivery and quality improvement practices.

2.4.2 NO DIET DAY 2010

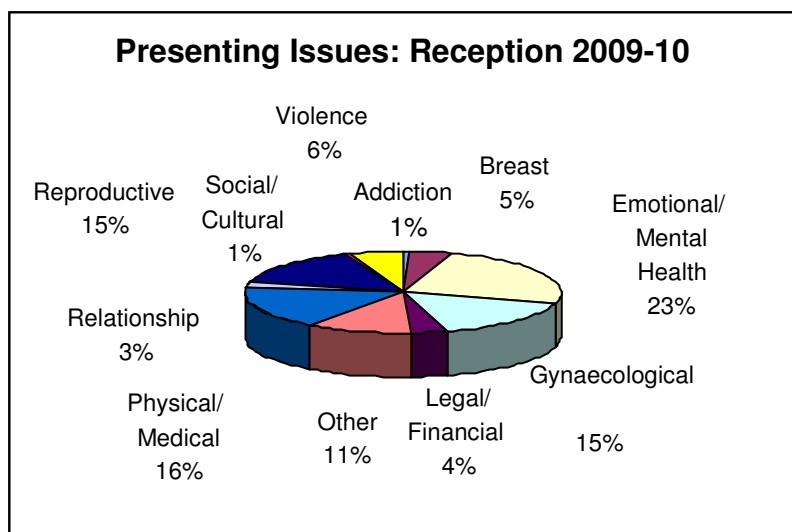
The Young Women's Project Worker Amara Bartlett and Jenny Dowling organised an information stall in the Lismore CBD as part of the centre's annual campaign to promote International No Diet Day. This day aims to promote healthy body image awareness, which research shows is an important factor in the prevention of eating disorders. An article was written for the local paper, 'The Northern Rivers Echo' to support the event.

2.4.3 NAIDOC WEEK

Staff provided an information stall and fun activities including clay work for children and manicures for women to celebrate NAIDOC Week 2009. It was great to join a huge crowd of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Heritage Park celebrating culture and survival.

2.5 CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

2.5.1 Presenting Issues at Reception



Reception - Presenting Issues	#
Addiction	12
Breast	108
Emotional/Mental Health	578
Gynaecological/Ur	380
Legal/Financial	86
Other	260
Physical/Medical	384
Relationships	67
Reproductive	347
Social/Cultural	14
Violence/Abuse	134
Total	2370

2.5.2 Individual Occasions of Service July 2009 – June 2010

LDWHC Inc. Client Contacts	Appointments	Drop-ins	Letter/E-mail	Phone	Other	Total # contacts
Reception	3	209	9	1642	-	1863
Practitioners						
Chill Out Clinic	168	2	-	3	-	173
Naturopath	210	2	1	60	38*	311
Counsellor	186	-	32	139	-	357
Lesbian Counsellor	48	-	-	-	-	48
Intern Psychologist	53	-	-	-	-	53
N.R.E.D.S.	46	-	-	13	-	59
Nurse	84	6	-	35	-	125
Total #	798	219	42	1892	38	2989
Total Apr - Jun 10	157	51	2	480	10	700
Total Jan - Mar 10	173	60	25	552	4	814
Total Oct - Dec 09	227	58	5	365	10	665
Total Jul - Sep 09	241	50	10	495	14	810

2.5.3 Individual Occasions of Service by Quarter

Practice	Apr-Jun	Jan-Mar	Oct-Dec	July-Sept
Reception	497	531	369	466
Chill Out Clinic	54	16	42	61
Naturopath	71	72	85	83
Counsellor	16	131	89	121
Lesbian Counsellor	-	26	19	3
Intern Psychologist	-	2	24	27
N.R.E.D.S.	40	-	10	9
Nurse	22	36	27	40
Total #	700	814	665	810

2.5.4 Group Work & Outreach Education: July 2009 – June 2010

Group Name	Facilitator	# participants
Love Bites	Amara Bartlett	294
Positive Body Think	Amara Bartlett	123
Harmony Day	Amara Bartlett	107
Self-Esteem Group	Amara Bartlett	42
# occasions of service	Amara Bartlett	566
Pregnancy & Postnatal Group	Andrea Brooks	744
Bonding with Baby	Andrea Brooks	11
# occasions of service	Andrea Brooks	755
Lismore Breast Cancer Support Group	Cindy Thummel	6
Byron Bay Breast Cancer Support Group	Cindy Thummel	5
Palliative Care Conference	Cindy Thummel	25
Aboriginal Women's Wellbeing Group	Cindy Thummel	14
Menopause	Cindy Thummel	10
# occasions of service	Cindy Thummel	60
Out of the Blues	Christina Henry	40
# occasions of service	Christina Henry	40
Total # occasions of (Group) service	LDWHC Inc.	1421
Total # occasions of individual service	LDWHC Inc.	2989
Total # occasions of service 2009-10	LDWHC Inc.	4410

2.5.5 Total Occasions of Service Demographics: July 2009 – June 2010

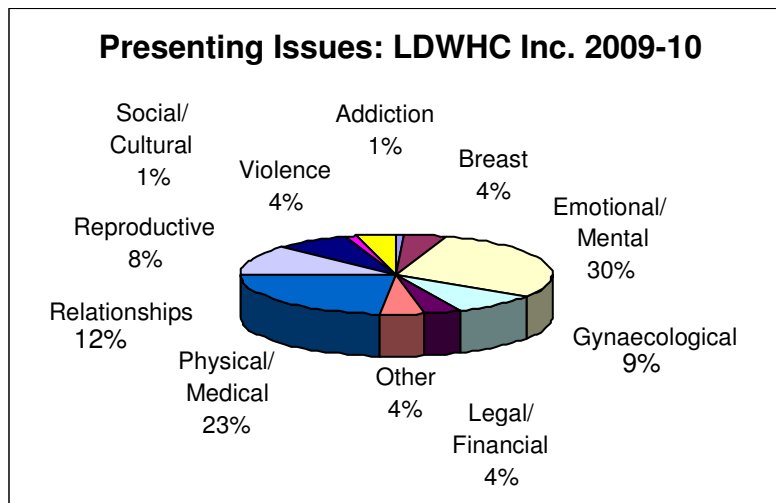
Activity Type	# Occasions of Service
Reception	1863
Chill Out Clinic	173
Naturopath	311
Counsellor	357
Lesbian Counsellor	48
Intern Psychologist	53
NREDS	59
Nurse	125
Total # occasions of service: Individual	2989
Total # occasions of service: Group/Outreach Ed.	1421
Total # occasions of service LDWHC 2009-10	4410

2.5.6 Client Demographics: July 2009 – June 2010

	# clients	% of total
# of registered clients	280	100
# new clients	195	70
# clients on low income	206	74
# clients in employment	84	30

2.5.7 Presenting Health Issues – top 20

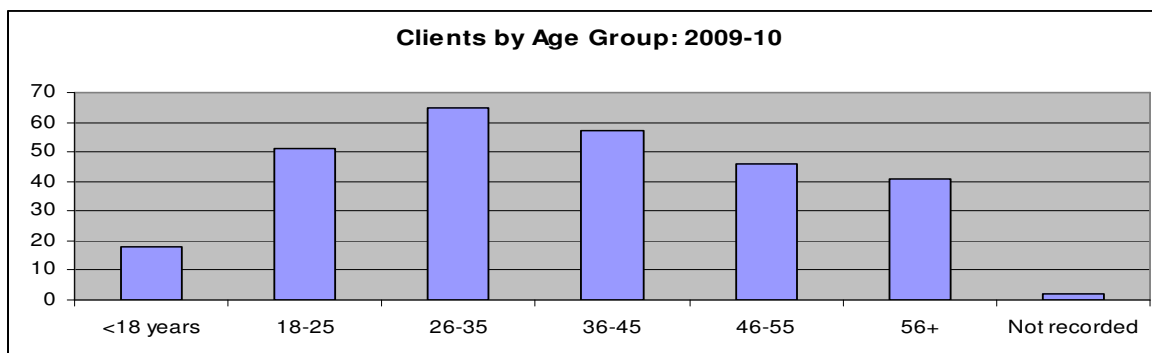
Presenting Issue	#	Category
1. Stress	373	Emotional/ Mental Health
2. Mental Health	343	Emotional/ Mental Health
3. Disordered Eating	341	Emotional/ Mental Health
4. Health Other	289	Physical/ Medical
5. Relationships	214	Relationships
6. Other	210	Other
7. Family Issues	201	Relationships
8. Depression	191	Emotional/ Mental Health
9. Anxiety/ Panic Disorders	171	Emotional/ Mental Health
10. Musculoskeletal other	159	Physical/ Medical
11. Pregnancy - termination	158	Reproductive
12. Trauma – emotional	155	Emotional/ Mental Health
13. Pap/ Cervical screening	153	Gynaecological/ Urogenital
14. Gynaecological general	152	Gynaecological/ Urogenital
15. Lymphoedma	135	Breast
16. Self Esteem	133	Emotional/ Mental Health
17. Contraception - general	130	Reproductive
18. Financial Problems	126	Legal/ Financial
19. Violence - DV	123	Violence/ Abuse
20. Nutrition	121	Physical/ Medical



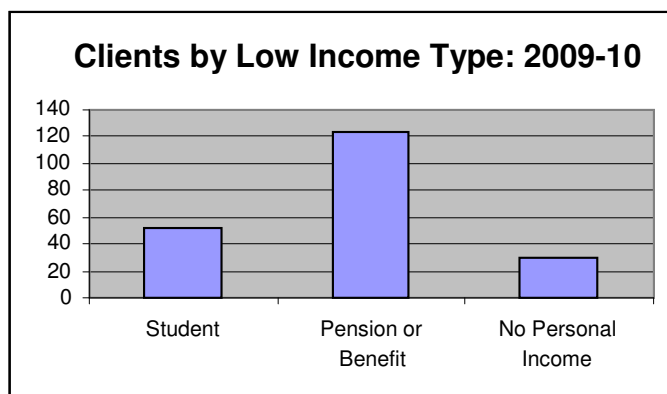
Category of Health Issue	# of presentations
Addiction	61
Breast	299
Emotional/Mental	1946
Gynaecological	596
Legal/Financial	259
Other	285
Physical/Medical	1532
Relationships	812
Reproductive	553
Social/Cultural	63
Violence/Abuse	281
Total no. of health issues presented	6687

2.5.8 Clients by Age Group

Age Group	<18 years	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56+	Not recorded	Total no. of clients
2009 -2010	18	51	65	57	46	41	2	280

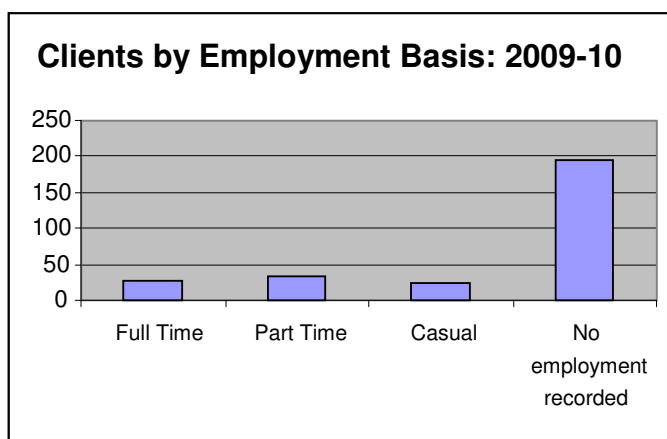


2.5.9 Clients by Low Income Basis



Low Income Type	2009-10
Student	52
Pension or Benefit	124
No Personal Income	30
Total # low Income	206
Total # clients	280
% total clients with low Income type (approx)	74

2.5.10 Clients by Employment Basis



Employment Basis	2009-10
Full Time	27
Part Time	33
Casual	24
Total # employed	84
No employment recorded	196
Total # clients	280
% total clients in employment (approx)	30

3. PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Our primary partnership is with our funding body, North Coast Area Health Service and we participated in the Regional Women's Health Network Meetings, chaired by Area Women's Health & Domestic Violence Coordinator, North Coast Area Health Service, Leonie Short on a bi-monthly basis. Leonie has continued to provide cheerful ongoing support, information and advice to the centre, despite being located a long way away in Port Macquarie.

The LDWHC Manager attended the NGO Forum organised by the Area Manager, NGO Contract Coordination, Peter Scolari and the subsequent excellent training and network opportunities provided through this format. A new relationship was forged this year with Trent Taylor, the Manager of Mental Health Clinical Partnerships, NCAHS Mental Health Services, and his assistance and practical advice has been invaluable.

The LDWHC Manager continued as a Community Representative to North Coast Area Health Service's Health Services Development Committee with increased appreciation for the complexity of their planning and accountability processes.

LDWHC continued our close relationship with the peak body, Women's Health NSW (WHNSW) and the LDWHC Manager was elected to the WHNSW Board for another term and attends these meetings in Sydney every 6 weeks. The centre gains a great deal of support and information from this close connection with our pro-active peak body, for example LDWHC's demographic data is generated through a database program that WHNSW operates across its 22 members centres in the state.

The centre was pleased to continue the successful partnership with Northern Rivers ACON, which enables LDWHC to provide a counselling service for lesbians one day per week. A Service Level Agreement is in place with Northern Rivers ACON and it is a delight to have such cooperative and interested neighbours.

The partnership with Southern Cross University's School of Health and Human Sciences has continued with the placement of students in the Chill Out Clinics (see 2.1 Clinical Work, Naturopathy Services).

An allocation from Lismore City Council's Crime Prevention Plan budget also made a wonderful International Women's Day Celebration possible this year and also contributed to costs for the LDWHC Manager to present a paper at the National Women's Health Conference in Hobart on the Cut it Out Project.

NSW Rape Crisis Centre now has a contract with the centre to provide counselling one day per week for adult survivors of child sexual abuse. Therapy is offered for up to a year for women and is this is a free service. The service has provided much needed long term support women undertaking recovery and healing and has extended the range of services offered at the centre.

The centre successfully applied to the Northern Rivers Community Foundation for a small grant to improve the reception waiting area for clients. This enabled the centre to improve the safety and access for mothers with prams. We have refurbished the area and created new shelves with toys for older children who sometimes attend the centre with their mothers during school holidays. We are very grateful for the assistance of Donna Lloyd, Access and Equity Officer from NCAHS, and for the invaluable input from the students and Wendy Boyd, Lecturer in Early Childhood Education and Care at Southern Cross University.

The centre was also successful in obtaining a grant from the Mental Health Coordinating Council under their "No NGO Left Behind" grant program. This has enabled the centre to improve the physical amenities and safety of the building, and improve IT technology to allow in-house maintenance of our website. The grant also enabled the planning and provision of a Women's Health and Well Being Forum to be held later in 2010.