



Centacare
Diocese of Wollongong



Annual Report 2007-2008



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Bishop's Report

Centacare reaches out to those in need by bringing Christ to the people and the pages of the Annual Report will show how this important mission is accomplished. This Annual Report gives witness to the work of Centacare in its service to the most vulnerable, whether reaching out to the needy in our schools, parishes, homes and many places of outreach in our Diocese.

Centacare's programs and services are rooted in the fundamental teachings of the Gospel and unite us by faith and commitment to help those less fortunate within our community. Centacare offers empowerment and dignity to poor and vulnerable individuals and families, and by doing so, becomes a witness to the presence of God.

With compassion and hope, Centacare has grown throughout the year and thousands of individuals and families across our Diocese have been helped in many different ways. I am pleased to report that there has been enhancements to Centacare's programs and services and the development of new initiatives.

Of course, the lead up to, and celebration of World Youth Day was a remarkable time in our Diocese. It was a time of building community links,

reflecting on ways to bring greater hope to our world and finding deeper meaning in the Christian message of love. I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Centacare to this momentous occasion in the life of our Church. My visit to Keelong Juvenile Justice Centre with the Cross and Icon was a highlight for me. Even though these young men have lived such disadvantaged lives, this strong reminder of Christ's love gave me some hope for the future and I felt privileged to share this time with them.

Some important structural changes have occurred in the Diocese this year. Notably, the Diocesan Committees for the Aged and People with a Disability and their Families are now permanent Standing Committees of the Centacare Advisory Council (CAC). This will ensure streamlined reporting, facilitate collaboration and reduce duplication in these important areas of the Church's mission. These Committees work closely with the Diocesan Aged Care and Disability Advocates, who continued to be jointly funded by the Diocese and Centacare to undertake vital work in our parishes.

In reviewing the service highlights and the large numbers of people served, I am pleased to be able to thank all of those

who made these services possible. Kath McCormack and the leadership team and staff, volunteers, sponsors, donors and all of those who support our work by sharing their time, talents and treasure throughout the year.

It is important we maintain our charitable organisations with integrity and accountability. The Centacare Advisory Council (CAC), staff and volunteers work to ensure the highest standard of stewardship for our programs. Centacare's staff brings energy, commitment and Christian love to their work and the CAC and volunteers graciously share their resources and talents.

I commend to you this Annual Report as a true reflection of the work of Centacare and offer my personal gratitude to all staff and supporters for their ongoing commitment to furthering the presence of Christ in the Diocese of Wollongong.

Thank you and may God bless you.
Bishop Peter Ingham

Chairman's Report

This year, the Centacare Advisory Council has worked closely with the Director and the Centacare Leadership Team in supporting the agency and its important work and Centacare continues to develop and enhance the programs and services it offers to people in need.

The Strategic Plan implementation is on track, ensuring that Centacare builds on the achievements of the past 29 years. The Leadership Team has developed goals and targets, providing a clear framework for future growth and will enhance the operating systems throughout the organisation.

As Centacare continues to grow, the need for more efficient and integrated systems, producing meaningful financial and personnel data becomes more apparent. The imminent implementation of the Greentree system, an integrated finance and accounting package, is a welcome enhancement to Centacare's operations.

Centacare's work is well supported by many state and federal government departments on whom we rely to help

deliver high quality programs and services, particularly to those who are most marginalised and devalued. Centacare is increasingly regarded as an agency of choice for government contracts, due to its strong leadership and successful multi-service program delivery. We are grateful for such levels of support.

I would like to sincerely thank Bishop Peter for his strong support of Centacare and Kath McCormack for her leadership and wisdom. I also extend my thanks to the Leadership Team for their hard work and commitment and my fellow Advisory Council members, whose skills reflect a broad range of knowledge and professional disciplines.

On behalf of the the Advisory Council, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the many individuals, parishes and organisations that support the vital work of Centacare in this Diocese.

This Annual Report celebrates a great team effort. The programs described throughout this report are a testament to the dedication of Centacare's staff and volunteers and reveals the extent



to which Centacare is able to respond to community needs.

John Driscoll

Centacare Advisory Council Members

Mark O'Donoghue
(Diocesan Financial Administrator)

John Driscoll (Chair)

Kieran Biddle
(Finance Committee Chair)

Greg Doyle

Franca Facci
Joanne Pollard

Bob Mullaney
Fr David O'Brien

Matt Waugh
Fr Vince Whiteman

Director's Report

This year was again a year of challenges and growth. The pages of this Annual Report include the usual statistical information regarding numbers of people served, hours and units of service and financial information. But it also contains the stories of individual lives that have been touched by the Catholic Church, including those served by the agency and parishes together.

The Rudd Government's Social Inclusion agenda focuses on giving people the opportunity to experience a fulfilling life through participation in the economic and social life of the community. Complex problems tend to be deeply interconnected and joined-up problems demand joined-up solutions. Here at Centacare our multi-service approach is a way of ensuring that people are not met with fragmented responses. Centacare strives for this goal of authentic partnerships and as a result this was a year of increased community collaboration. Through partnerships, Centacare is able to provide valuable programs and services to help empower people to become more self-reliant and improve their life situation. The development of closer collaborative working relationships across the Diocese has also been a focal point of our work.

Our work is about creating the best possible intervention to enable people to understand that they have human rights and social responsibilities and then help them to achieve these, so they can live with dignity. This year we have put an enormous work effort into ensuring our language, culture, structures, policies and practices reflect this. Ongoing research projects, realignment of programs, focusing on outcomes and increasing levels of compliance and accountability are all indicators that Centacare is a strong, versatile and responsive organisation, relevant to the needs of the community

in the future.

Our strategic plan continues to be the framework we use to ensure sustainability and growth. It continues to guide our work and keep us focussed. We look forward to the continual review of our plans, self-reflection and innovation and change where change is needed. As the social context and needs for service change, Centacare will continue to work with the communities we serve to develop new programs and new capacities.

World Youth Day was a tremendous time in our Diocese and particularly touching for me was the day the Cross and the icon went to Keelong Juvenile Justice Centre. While we all stood with the young men in detention in the courtyard, virtually locked away from the world outside, one could not help but be affected by the atmosphere that was filled with hope. It was evident that this was special to the young men of the Centre as they rushed for photographs with Bishop Peter. It had an obvious impact on the staff of the Centre as well, with one staff member visibly moved to tears and commenting to me that she had never seen the boys be so touched by anything before.

Our continuing partnership with both the NSW and Australian Governments strongly underpinned our efforts during the year as did that of the Campbelltown Catholic Club. We are grateful for such a significant level of support. Together we can continue to create positive and lasting changes. We greatly appreciate all the sponsors and donors who have supported us through generous contributions this year.

I would like to particularly acknowledge the work of the Centacare Advisory Council, the Finance sub committee, and the members who have taken on extra responsibilities on the newly revamped Diocesan Committees for the Aged and People with a Disability



and their Families.

I would also like to thank all of Centacare's staff who work tirelessly to provide and administer services. Centacare is a family friendly organisation and this certainly rings true if we measure the number of Centacare babies born. No less than twelve (12) Centacare staff members have become parents since June 2007 and all working mums have been able to enjoy flexible maternity leave during this time.

I am of course grateful for all those who offer supporting and cooperation to Centacare. Particular gratitude to Bishop Peter Ingham for his leadership and guidance, Sr Moya Hanlen, Chancellor of the Diocese, Peter Turner, Director of the Catholic Education Office, Mark O'Donoghue, Diocesan Financial Administrator, the Centacare Leadership Team, volunteers, priests, parishes and colleagues in other Diocesan agencies.

We are most grateful for all the support we receive. We count on you continuing to journey with us, as we walk with and serve those who are most in need.

Kath McCormack (AM)
Director



Identity, Vision, Purpose & Values

Our Identity

Who We Are

Centacare is the Social Services agency of the Catholic Diocese of Wollongong, covering the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Macarthur and Southern Highlands Regions.

Our Vision

What We Want

We want individuals and families to have fulfilled and connected lives in increasingly just and supportive communities.

Our Purpose

What We Do

We work together to make a difference in people's lives by offering opportunities for growth, healing and hope.

Our range of professional programs and services offer support for vulnerable, distressed individuals and families, children at risk, detained juveniles, persons with disabilities and their carers, couples trying to live in a spirit of love, people who have barriers to rewarding work, and elderly people concerned about their health and self-sufficiency.

Our Values

What Drives Us

Centacare has been formed by the Spirit of the Gospel. We are committed to building partnerships and alliances, engaging with communities, sharing knowledge and resources and supporting advocacy.

Our key values are:

- **Compassion**
We are people who care, empathise and carry hope.
- **Respect**
We respect the dignity, diversity, cultures and beliefs of all people.
- **Integrity**
We are honest and accountable in our work.
- **Social Justice**
We value fairness, equity of access and justice.
- **Professionalism**
We work collaboratively to provide quality programs and services.

Strategic Directions:

- 1 Improve Client Outcomes
- 2 Grow Services to Meet Needs
- 3 Realise the Full Potential of our People and Resources
- 4 Strengthen External Relationships



Children & Youth Services

Centacare works with children of all ages, who are abused, neglected or experiencing behavioral problems, offering a safe surroundings and the protection of a secure living environment. Our programs are holistic in nature and support and motivate each young person and bring out the best in them.

Children and young people are taught to treat all people with dignity and respect including themselves. In providing the following programs and services we help to develop into strong, productive and healthy adults.

OUT OF HOME CARE (OOHC)

Supported by funding from the NSW Department of Community Services.

Foster Care

This program provides crisis care for children from birth to 12 years old. Children in need of foster care are often at risk of abuse or neglect, and their parents need time out to get their lives in order.

As a result of an intensive recruitment campaign, Centacare received 82 new carer enquiries for this period. After a rigorous selection process, four new carers were recruited, trained and approved as Authorised Foster Carers during this period—two from Campbelltown and two from Wollongong.

A school holiday program was developed to improve client outcomes for children and young people in OOHC. The program is facilitated by Centacare caseworkers and involves activities aimed at engaging children and young people in care. Centacare also began development on a birth parent project to encourage engagement between birth parents and the agency. The project aims to connect birth families with the other services offered by Centacare and

helps maintain positive and strong connections with children/young people's birth families.

In 2007-08 Centacare provided long term foster care for 43 children for 14,744 nights.

Children's Access Services

This program operates in the Macarthur area to provide supervised access for children in foster care to their biological parents. Often, the parents may have been the perpetrators of violence or abuse against the children, but it is important for children to maintain contact with their parents, no matter

what situations the parents may have put them in. Such links help children build a sense of identity, and are important for rebuilding relationships and assisting in establishing positive interaction.

In total for both Access Macarthur and SWS Contact service there were 270 visits for 39 children and 48 parents. Visits in the past year have required increased travel due to the location of placements of the children, sibling groups being separated in multiple placements, and issues for birth parents increasing in complexity.

“People say you must be special to do what you do, but we're not. We are just normal people who want to make a difference.”

Ray, foster carer

Ray and Linda, who have been foster carers for the past eight years, have cared for over eight children and provide regular respite for children in long term care. They are one of over 41 Authorised Foster Carers with Centacare, 13 from the Campbelltown program and 28 from the Wollongong program, who commit their time, skills and experience along with their home and family life to children and young people in OOHC.



CHILDREN'S CONTACT SERVICE

Supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

The service is for families who are experiencing conflict or difficulties around spending time with and changeover arrangements for their children. Centacare Children's Contact Service provides a venue for the safe transfer of children between separated parents, and meaningful interaction between children and the parent in which they are spending time with.

Centacare's Children's Contact Service provides a child inclusive service in which children feel safe to develop and maintain time spent with parents after separation. Through quality case management, Centacare helps assist families in achieving self-management of contact and changeover arrangements.

This program provides ongoing training in aspects of domestic violence, sexual perpetrators grooming techniques, child protection issues, child inclusive practice, child development stages, conflict resolution, and mental health issues, and continues to work to full capacity.

In line with the Strategic Plan, this program employs people with a diverse range of skills and from diverse backgrounds to provide flexible staffing to meet families needs.

To alleviate some of the anxiety over visits, every child received a booklet providing a greater understanding of how the service operates and what to expect when they attend with very positive results. The Nowra site is now

a stand-alone a service and the introduction of more off site supervised sessions as part of the transition from supervised to changeover sessions has proven to be of great benefit to the children.

During the year strong relationships have been developed between the contact service and the new Parenting Orders Program as well the Federal Magistrates Court and key stakeholders across the Diocese.

	Wollongong 2007-2008	Campbelltown 2007-2008	Nowra 2007-2008
Assessments	33	46	9
Supervised contact scheduled	161	310	90
Changeovers scheduled	326	469	31
New Families	32	56	10

CHAPLAINCY

Supported by funding from the Department of Juvenile Justice

Centacare's Chaplaincy program provides pastoral support to youth in Wollongong's Keelong Detention Centre and Macarthur's Reiby Detention Centre. The service recognises that youth in the justice system need to be treated with compassion and dignity and helped to maintain links with their families. This year, there has been a marked increase of Young Offenders detained in NSW, making this program all the more vital.

Three Aunties continue to attend the Centres regularly. This program has the important task of kinship renewing and strengthening cultural ties and is beneficial to the well-being of the

young offenders. Given the over-representation of indigenous young people on Juvenile Justice, this program is an essential component of Centacare's services.

A variety of chaplaincy activities were undertaken this year to provide care, support and encouragement to the young offenders. The chaplains have made a difference by advocating for the young people, often accompanying them to court and giving evidence, follow-up post release work, facilitating visits from representatives of diverse faith traditions, group prayer activities, bible study classes, distribution of religious resources.

Often, family members need help to cope with the crisis of having a relative in detention. In line with Centacare's holistic approach, the Chaplains have also assisted with the care and support of the families of those in residence.

The Chapel at Reiby is a significant asset, and aside from regular Sunday services, the space is proving valuable for other activities associated with the Chaplaincy, namely the rehabilitation program 'Check it Out', assisting young offenders understand their emotions and express them appropriately and memorial bereavement services.

Visits to the Centre by the general community are understandably uncommon, so the World Youth Day Cross and Icon visit was a special event. Bishop Peter carefully explained the significance of the cross and the icon and how many places in the world it had visited. He stressed to the young men that the cross represents hope and that it had especially come to them. The visit had a major impact on all the young people involved.



Family Services

Supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Marriage and Relationship Education (MRE)

Centacare helps prepare couples for marriage through both group courses and one-on-one sessions. We teach communication skills and other tools for couples and individuals to help them build healthy, stable and positive relationships built on respect, self-esteem and realistic expectations.

Partnership facilitated in a group setting. This program is designed to help couples spend time building upon their relationship, so they may have a richer, happier and more fulfilling life together.

Couples participating in this program enjoy the experience of being with others who are at the same stage of life considering or preparing for marriage. Most of the work is done as individual couples however some discussion is held in the large group. All large group discussion is more general. There is group input, but there is no expectation that couples will share anything personal.

Centacare also offers a personalised program called Prepare. This program enables the couple to meet with a facilitator alone over three 90 minute sessions.

315 people participated in Centacare Marriage and Relationship Education program in 2007-2008.

The course surpassed my expectations. The presenters were open and friendly and I learnt a lot about how to look after my relationship to ensure we have a long and happy marriage.

Stuart, MRE.

Family Relationship Education and Skills Training (FREST)

Supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Centacare offers a range of professional programs and services to assist people to develop and maintain healthy relationships, including specialist courses, such as parenting after separation, parenting toddlers, parenting teens, raising resilient kids and making blended families work.

Centacare's FREST programs promote positive parenting and non-violent problem-solving. Courses are facilitated both at Centacare and in outside organisations including schools, other family support services, migrant resource centres, special-needs children's parents groups, playgroups and childcare facilities.

New initiatives include: a specialised anger management course, No Harmony, No Harm, a twelve week course aimed at stopping harmful behaviours and increasing positive ones; Keeping Kids in Mind, is a five session program exploring the separation process, impact of separation on children and coping and management strategies; and a Young Parents Group, a group for young parents, where they can learn new parenting skills, meet new friends and develop confidence.

In 2007-2008 Centacare offered 116 Family Relationship Education courses servicing 834 clients.

Through the course I discovered a newly found ability to gain control over my emotions that were otherwise destructive to both myself and to others. I have now been given an opportunity to improve my emotional state of well being, and am able to try to get on with my life. The course also provided me with the opportunity to hear the life stories of other participants. With each day I feel more comfortable in my skin and my mind is becoming increasingly calm and peaceful, allowing me to start putting my life back together, as I would like it. I am now in control.

Paul, More Harmony, Less Harm.

Family and Relationship Counselling

Supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

The Counselling Program at Centacare provides counselling to individuals, couples, children and families that focus on family and relationship issues.

Counselling helps people address the problems affecting their relationships and Centacare's work is particularly important in times of transition, such as family breakdown, where Centacare aims to minimise the trauma and distress while respecting and promoting the needs of



all family members. Grief counselling assists those suffering loss through death, and also through family breakdown.

Partnerships are key in this area of work and Centacare works closely with a number of key organisations who also provide services for families, including Anglicare, St Vincent de Paul, Macquarie Fields Department of Housing, South Coast Pathways, Illawarra Pathways, Wollongong Women's Housing and the Family Relationship Centres.

I am very grateful to you for helping us to come to terms with our grief. I felt at home with everyone and admired them. There was a caring concern for all.

Mary, Seasons for Growth.

In 2007-2008 Centacare had 1,100 clients in the counselling program.

SCHOOL STUDENT AND FAMILY PROGRAM (SSFP)

Supported by funding from the Catholic Education Office, Campbelltown Catholic Club and fees paid by individual schools.

This program provides Catholic schools across the Diocese with counselling and groupwork services. Counsellors work with students, their families and school staff to support the well-being and development of students. The program is designed to be a specialised part of an overall pastoral care system that operates in each school in the Diocese.

In 2007-2008, SSFP provided a service to all systemic schools and two congregational schools (Mater Dei and St Patricks College Campbelltown). A total of 1,126 individual students in these schools received counselling. A total of 8,620 counseling sessions were conducted. The most frequent reasons for referral to counseling were: divorce

and separation, family issues, behaviour management, anxiety, emotional issues, anger management, and grief and loss.

Groupwork remains an integral part of the School Student and Family Program.

Some of the group programs included, Rock and Water, Check it Out!, Hit the Ground Running, Cool Kids Anxiety Program, Habits of the Mind ñ Cooperative Group Games, Amazing Me, Tools for Everyday Peacemakers, Lets Be Still, Peer Relationships and Social Skills programs, MindMatters and Smooth Steps.

The counselors are an excellent support for the students at risk in our school and also provide an important role in the development of year coordinators and staff in.

Principal, SSFP.

PERSONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM (PSP)

Supported by the Federal Department for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

The Personal Support Program (PSP) provides advocacy, support, mentoring and general counselling to the most disadvantaged members of the community.

PSP staff help people who can't find work due to the severity or multiplicity of their social barriers. Rather than directly finding jobs for their clients, PSP staff address their non-vocational barriers to employment and significantly improve their level of functioning and quality of life. These may include severe drug or alcohol abuse, depression or mental illness, gambling addiction, family breakdown or the difficulty of fitting back into the community after a long prison term. Staff work with clients to help them

develop their own strengths and take responsibility for their own lives.

The program currently employs 18 staff and has more than 600 clients across the diocese. Centacare provided more than 7000 sessions to our clients over the last year.

Some of the notable achievements include the significant increase in program performance at all sites. There has been at least a 10% improvement in client engagement at each site and a significant increase in supporting clients to maintain an employment placement for longer than six months. Both of these figures have been a reflection of the superior client focussed approach that PSP provides, outperforming the other PSP providers in the diocese.

Cross program utilisation of staff has increased, proving to be a successful joint venture for the programs involved and the agency in general.

The program conducted a roadshow, visiting all complementing agencies and referral sources to share knowledge about Centacare's services to ensure appropriate referrals were delivered to the program. This not only strengthened Centacare's relationship with Centrelink and other agencies, but also facilitated better client outcomes through more suitable referrals.

The personal skills that you taught me have helped me cope with my mental illness. I am still working, and am able to tackle any problems I have a lot better. Thank you for all your help.

Tamara, PSP.

**Client names have been changed to protect their privacy.*



Aged Services

Community Aged Care Packages (CACP's)

Supported by funding from the Department of Health and Ageing

This program gives elderly people choices about how they want to live. Many elderly people want to stay in their own homes, even when they have become frail. They don't want to live in residential care, preferring to stay in the environment and neighbourhood where they feel comfortable – and which often holds many precious memories for them.

The program is tailored to individuals, to meet their particular needs. For some, that may mean having our staff visit them twice a day to provide personal care, domestic care, social support, transport and home maintenance.

In a customer service survey undertaken this year, 95% of clients said that Centacare has made a difference to their lives and without our service going into their home they would not be able to stay there.

This program targets financially disadvantaged people and those of non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) living in the Wollongong and Shellharbour local government areas. Centacare employs 39 Personal Care Assistants, who speak a variety of languages.

In the past year, this program has cared for 125 clients, providing 8,450 hours of service. Many of these clients experience severe physical and social isolation. Of these clients, 21 have no family at all, making the connections with Centacare all the more important.

Community Visitors Scheme

Supported by funding from the Department of Health and Ageing

This program coordinates volunteers who visit socially isolated elderly people living in aged care homes. Many of these people have little or no contact with family or friends or suffer isolation through disability, language or cultural reasons. The volunteers visit at least once a fortnight, sharing conversations, hobbies, interests and social activities.

Two new nursing homes have been added to the list this year. Centacare has 76 volunteers for this most important work who undertook an enormous 4,600 hours worth of visits this year.

Aged Care Advocate

Supported by funding from the Diocese of Wollongong and Centacare Fundraising activities.

The Aged Care Advocate position was developed to provide support for ageing people and their carers within parishes and within the community in this Diocese. This includes development and delivery of a framework for service delivery, liaising and networking with parishes and the broader community. Some of the activities undertaken by the Aged Care Advocate this year include: Parish Visits, Lunch Club (monthly luncheons for elderly parishioners who attend weekday masses, providing social interaction and support), Pastoral Care Training and Retreat Days.

As a member of the Diocesan Committee for the Aged, the Aged Care Advocate made a large contribution towards providing information and support to people who are ageing, their families and carers.

Disability Services

Supported by funding from the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

Flexible Options

This program provides support to people with a long term disability who are ageing and/or may have an ageing carer and who may be struggling physically or feel socially isolated and are looking for wider networks of friends. Personal care, domestic assistance, social support and transport is provided either Centacare.

The program provides a social support group facilitated by staff and volunteers, providing an opportunity for participants to experience social interaction with each other. The group is involved in regular activities include dinner and dancing, lawn bowls, picnics, barbeques, beauty nights, movie nights and ten pin bowling.

An extension of this social group is a travel group who this year hosted a trip to Dubbo Zoo for 35 clients. The trip fostered friendships and was a first holiday experience for many of the group, opening the groups' eyes to new experiences and challenges.

This service operates in the Wollongong and Shoalhaven and provides services to 67 clients.

Family & Sibling Support

Supported by funding from the Diocese of Wollongong and Centacare Fundraising activities.

Families who have a child with a disability are identified as being in a state of chronic stress. Research and anecdotal evidence supports the view that illness and disability affect the lives of all family members. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, Centacare utilises its untied income (from fundraising) to deliver this service Family & to help strengthen families of children with a disability.

The focus of this program is to enhance the mental health of parents and siblings with the long term aim of preserving and sustaining the family unit. The service aims to increase the availability of information and support services for siblings of people with special needs, through increasing awareness, understanding, skills and capabilities.

Some of the activities undertaken in the past year include: family fun days, Sibs Saturday Club, Music and Art Workshops and a Family Camp. These activities focus on establishing a network of sibling/s of children and parents of children with a disability to build a basis for mutual support and friendship.

This program works with the Catholic Education Office, Disability Advocate and Parish Services Team to ensure the program reaches Catholic schools and parishes.

The Coordinator also works with a group of Young Carers (children caring for a parent and or sibling due to the death of a parent, mental illness and/or disability) at Holy Spirit College, Bellambi.

Your Time – Carer Counselling & Support

Supported by funding from the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

This service support and counselling to carers who look after family members or friends who are frail aged or have a disability, with a priority to ageing carers with an ageing child with a disability. It is a collaborative effort

connecting with others, or just spending time alone. This activity was much appreciated by all attendees, who commented that the respite was just what they needed to recharge their batteries.

Centacare provides counselling & support to 67 clients across the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama LGAs.

Disability Advocate

Supported by funding from the Diocese of Wollongong and Centacare Fundraising activities.

The primary goals of the position are to assist people to achieve spiritual fulfilment, reach an optimum level of independence & self-sufficiency and to enhance the feeling of inclusion & involvement in the Church. This position continues to work in partnership with parishes and the community to build connections and support for those families seeking it.

As a member of the Diocesan Committee for People with a Disability and their Families, the Disability Advocate made a large contribution towards promoting inclusion and acceptance of people with disabilities within our parishes.

I would have to say that it is the happiest and most relaxing time we have had since my disabled daughter was born six years ago.

Mandy, Family & Sibling Support camp attendee.

between Centacare, Anglicare and Southern Council Group through the Illawarra Carers Respite Centre, highlighting Centacare's commitment to building and maintaining community partnerships.

A highly successful carer getaway was held for clients of this service. Clients, who very rarely get time for themselves, were invited to attend and enjoy the peace and tranquillity of Hartzer Park in the picturesque NSW Southern Highlands, through activities such as walking, reading, group discussions,

The work is undertaken through such activities as Parish Connection Groups, Community Advocacy, Parenting Courses, Inclusive Liturgical Celebrations and Disability Awareness Training. This year, the Disability Advocate played an important role in ensuring that members of our Diocese who have a disability were either able to attend the Pope's mass during World Youth Day or watch it as a group at St Mary's College in Wollongong.



Corporate Services

Finance & Administration

Every resource entrusted to Centacare has the potential to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families. As stewards of this multiservice agency, Centacare staff continually seeks government funding to complement, support and enhance its existing services, distributing resources to where they are needed most. Programs and costs are monitored and reviewed, donations and grants are used for their intended purposes and program budgets are reviewed regularly with corrective action taken as required. Centacare has consolidated and built on the positive outcomes of past years and maintained a focus on ensuring financial viability and balancing efficiencies with quality service provision.

Workforce Services

The newly titled Workforce Services (formally HR), area of Centacare is reflective of the philosophy that our people are our most important asset.

This year involved designing and implementing a new organisational structure capable of delivering the strategies and goals in the strategic plan as well as developing new position descriptions and assisting Executive Managers to develop their people strategies.

Work has been undertaken in relation to human resources policies and procedures, and an introduction of new people management processes and practices that are designed to position us as an employer of choice. These include: a new incident reporting and risk management system, an improved performance management system that

assists managers to cascade the objectives of the strategic plan throughout the workforce and improved fleet management practices that ensures the safety of staff on the road.

Research & Development

In line with Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan, Improve Client Outcomes, Centacare has adopted Mark Friedman's Results-Based Accountability as the means to identify and measure outcomes for our services. Friedman focuses less on program outputs (what we do) and more on program outcomes (what we achieve) at a program level. The model is being adapted to Centacare's needs and is being used to develop effective ways of measuring outcomes, tying program achievements to broader societal outcomes.

Centacare contributed to a new research study on youth unemployment in the Illawarra region, highlighting the challenges many young people face in securing meaningful work. The report titled Youth Unemployment in the Illawarra: An Investigation into the problems facing young jobseekers in our region, was prepared by the Illawarra Regional Information Service (IRIS) in collaboration with the University of Wollongong, Wollongong City Council and Bluescope Steel. This report was utilised as a tool when advocating on clients' behalf to state and federal politicians on the barriers faced by youth when they lack family support and associated networks.

Community Relations

In line with the strategic plan, Centacare has strong links with organisations for both service provision and research purposes. Centacare is closely linked with

the Australian Catholic University and the University of Wollongong, and is involved in research projects through these educational institutions. Centacare works closely with the Diocese to develop integrated communication strategies within the Church. Representatives collaborated with World Youth Day as well as specific Diocesan working parties such as interagency meetings and 'Reconnect', a campaign to encourage people to come back to the Church.

Centacare continued to build relationships with members of federal and state parliament through a number of Ministerial visits and actively responded to government policy documents such as the Senate Standing Committee on Economics on the Disclosure regimes for charities and not-for-profit organisations and the Wood Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW.

A variety of community relations activities were undertaken over 2007-2008.

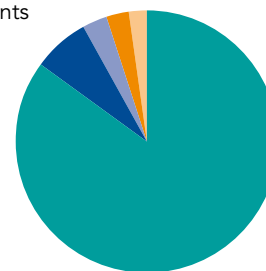
Centacare's Annual Race day was held on February 23, raising a total of \$18,000 to assist Centacare to continue to self-fund some programs. A Disabilities Open Day was held at the Wollongong Office highlighting Centacare's work in Disabilities, resulting in increased awareness by service providers about Centacare. The new-look website makes it easier for clients and supporters to understand the work of Centacare and find out more information. Staff attended a number of community expos in all regions, highlighting services and programs provided and Centacare features in a regular radio spot on a local community radio station, VOX FM.

2008 Financial Highlights

Accountability

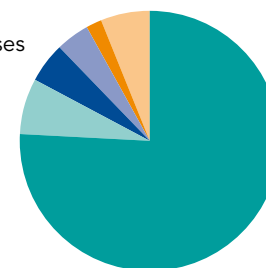
REVENUE (in thousands)	%	2008	2007	2006
government and other grants	86%	7,405	5,863	5,488
client fees	7%	569	505	499
diocesan contribution	3%	240	100	100
interest	3%	231	150	130
other income	2%	144	266	168
total revenue		\$8,589	\$6,884	\$6,385

- government & other grants
- client fees
- diocesan contribution
- interest
- other income



EXPENSES (in thousands)	%	2008	2007	2006
salaries and wages	76%	6,207	5,135	4,964
client and program expenses	7%	547	88	63
premises expenses	5%	406	309	310
motor vehicle expenses	4%	328	257	242
depreciation	2%	203	175	126
other expenses	6%	511	447	345
total expenses		\$8,202	\$6,411	\$6,050

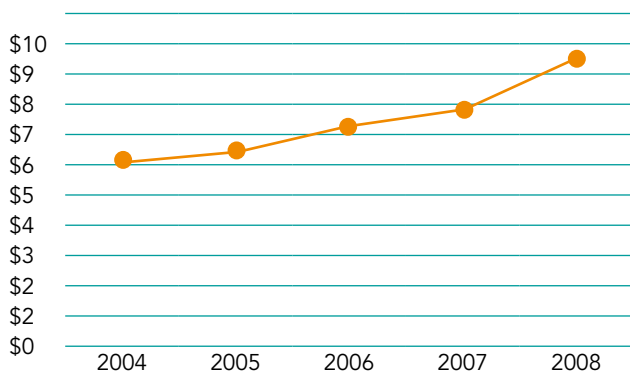
- salaries & wages
- client & program expenses
- premises expenses
- motor vehicle expenses
- depreciation
- other expenses



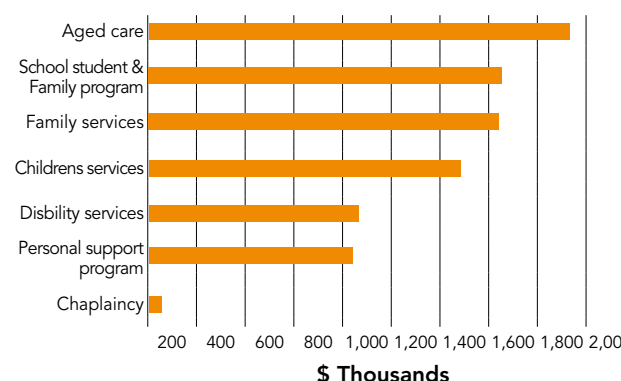
Net Surplus (in thousands)	2008	2007	2006
	\$387	\$473	\$335

Revenue Trends

In 2008, Centacare's revenue increased by \$1,705 (thousand) or 25%. Centacare was successful in securing new government funding for disabilities services of \$507,000 and early intervention services of \$368,000. Existing government funding was substantially increased in personal support services of \$296,000 and family services of \$272,000.



Funding



Financial Viability

RESOURCES (in thousands)	2008	2007	2006
property, plant and equipment	1,157	866	765
net working capital	1,247	1,153	768
accumulated funds	2,269	1,882	1,408

Minimising overheads

Performance Indicators	2008	2007	2006
corporate services salaries as % of total salaries	13.6%	14.3%	15.2%
cost of providing physical resources to staff as % of total income	9.7%	9.7%	9.9%



Snapshots

Foster Carer Recruitment

To meet the increasing demand for this important service, efforts were increased to recruit foster carers and Centacare funded a Carer and Recruitment Coordinator position, beginning in February 2008. A variety of marketing and promotional activities have been undertaken with the primary aim of recruiting and training foster carers and a secondary aim of increasing awareness within the community. A total of 45 people attended targeted Foster Care information sessions in Wollongong and Campbelltown. Shared Stories Shared Lives training, a compulsory training course for applicants, attracted 16 people attended and of these 6 applications were made.

Leaving care

Four young people from Centacare's OOH program left care during this period, one is doing a fine arts course at TAFE and is living with his foster carers, another is doing her HSC and is working with Centacare around training new carers, another moved away to live with her sibling and the other is studying. All of these young people are in regular contact or have remained living with their foster carers.

Leadership Development

The Leadership Team, plus other key personnel, participated in a tailor-made Leadership Development Program, covering an array of Leadership topics such as: exercising informed, strategic and ethical judgment, strengthening ability to relate to others and manage positive change, refining skills in analysis, flexible thinking, debate and decision making, integrating new and different leadership perspectives, reinforcing the values of the organisation and ensuring a consistent understanding and application of those values.



World Youth Day

Centacare gave in-kind and professional support in a number of other areas for WYD08, such as Critical Incident support, recruitment of families for homestays, assistance with organising and facilitating Frassati Friday, a day of social justice activities, volunteer manual and sponsorship of the Kiribati youth delegation, in conjunction with the Catholic Education Office.

New Nowra premises

Centacare began leasing a new Nowra Office in Worrigea St. This came at a critical time for not only due the expansion of the current programs but also to accommodate growth into new areas of work. This new premises ensures quality delivery of multi-service programs and will allow the parish-owned property in Shoalhaven St to become a Children's Cottage, where specialised childrens programs will be administered and delivered. This will provide a home-like environment and increase activities at the Contact service to include cooking, for those families who would benefit from these family-oriented activities.

Staff Service Awards

A number of Staff Service Awards were presented to staff in 2008, illustrating the large number of long-standing staff members at Centacare.

25 year award	1 person
15 year award	2 people
10 year award	7 people
5 year award	41 people

Locations

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Wollongong NSW 2500

PO Box 1174,
Wollongong NSW 2500

Phone: (02) 4227 1122

Fax: (02) 4226 9736

Email: enquiries@centacare.woll.catholic.org.au

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Campbelltown NSW 2560

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Fax: (02) 4628 4549

Shoalhaven:

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Nowra NSW 2541

68 Shoalhaven St
Nowra NSW 2541

Phone: (02) 4421 8248

Fax: (02) 4422 9020

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4 Creamery Road,
Albion Park Rail NSW 2527

Phone: (02) 4257 8220

Fax: (02) 4257 8230

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