



# Annual Report

July 2012 to June 2013



# Index

---

Chairperson's Report

CEO's Report

Treasurer's Report

Independent Audit Report

Financial Report



# Chairperson's Report Dianne Stewart

I am very pleased to report that over the past year Carer Support has continued to operate smoothly and effectively, providing valuable assistance to our Carers who come from all

cultures and walks of life and range in age from six years old to the 90's.

A Carer is someone who provides unpaid support to family or friends, who could not manage without this help. Carers don't usually choose to become carers. It just happens and they have to get on with it. If they did not do it, who would - and what would happen to the person they care for?

Our challenges during the past 12 months have been accentuated by the National reform agenda, funding constraints and the uncertain political climate.

We officially opened our new Southern Carer Centre in February and have recently expanded into adjacent premises so that we can offer more on-site activities and support to Carers who live in the southern region. We encourage staff to rotate between both locations to maintain good communication and morale. I would like to particularly thank our fantastic volunteers, who play an important role at the new centre.

Last December we organised a two day Future Housing Forum in partnership with the Onkaparinga Council. We invited parents who are concerned about future housing options, when they may no longer be able to care for their children with mental illness or disability. The conference was well attended by Carers, Federal and State politicians, Departmental staff and keynote speakers who presented a variety of models that are currently in operation. There was a follow-up meeting in July, and the issues and questions raised have been documented and passed to the Minister.

We now have 2 staff dedicated to supporting Aboriginal Carers and their families. Their rapport with the community has enabled us to participate in many Aboriginal events and form a regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support group.

In all, we have 19 different support groups that meet monthly. These groups range from generic (by location), to male carers, parents and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups.

Feedback is always welcome and encouraged at Carer Support. We have held several Focus Groups and responses from our participants have helped frame policy and service directions. Focus Groups covering topics such as technology, young carers and future directions around Carer Centres have been scheduled for the coming year.

Carer Support now has a Facebook page that provides useful information and posts about activities and events as well as links to other websites. We hope it will also assist our members to broaden their friendships with other Carers.

In July, the Board and Management completed the first stage of our Strategic Plan for the next 3 years. This is an ongoing process as we have yet to see how the national Carer Support Centres and other Government initiatives will impact upon us.

Self directed approaches that are being introduced for Aged Care and Disability funding will provide recipients with many new options. Carer Support is committed to help Carers in making these important choices through information sessions and other assistance they may require.

There are always implications for Organisations such as ours when there is a change of Government. I would like to assure our members that their Board and Management will work vigorously to ensure that Carers continue to receive meaningful assistance.

I would like to thank the Staff of Carer Support, who give their best to provide services that are much needed and appreciated by our Carers. And our enthusiastic Volunteers, whose contributions enable us to add that little bit more.

Thank you to our Management for their leadership and example of ethical and dedicated service. And to my Board colleagues who offer their time and experience to guide Carer Support into the future. Last, but by no means least, my grateful appreciation to our CEO, Peter Sparrow, for doing an outstanding job at the helm of this great Organisation.

# CEO's Report

## Peter Sparrow



It would be reasonable to confirm that the 2012/13 year has been a difficult one for Carer Support as an established and highly valued organisation. There have been numerous changes and challenges to and from national service directions for aged care, disability and carer services that have and will continue to impact on the organisation. It is also reasonable to highlight that these reform directions have collectively led to a climate of uncertainty and change. These external service directions include but are not limited to;

- The significant extent of the planned reform agenda within the aged care sector and the potential role that carer specific organisations such as Carer Support will have into the future.
- The introduction of DisabilityCare Australia and the relationship it will have with carer focussed organisations. Included in this is how the funding and therefore support for carers in their own right will be acknowledged and allocated.
- The introduction of the National Seniors Gateway and its relationship with aged care community based organisations.
- The uncertainty over whether existing recurrent grants will continue and if so, for how long? The planned national open tendering processes for all existing HACC and NRCP grants in the near future, incorporating the yet to be established Home Support Service, will impact on this organisation.
- The planned national introduction of Carer Support Centres, replacing existing Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres, will impact on the day to day support offered to carers from existing providers, including Carer Support. The transition processes from existing to any new service structure will be critical in ensuring the continuity of support for carers is not affected in any way.
- The reduction in the Commonwealth Carelink budget for the 2013/14 year has already meant a loss of skilled and experienced staff from this program.
- The introduction of Consumer Directed Care packages, although a positive and supported service direction, will challenge how carer focussed organisations are funded and therefore how they will continue to provide targeted carer support services into the future.

These national services directions are acknowledged as positive and in the main, needed. However, the recognition of carers and the associated funding for carer support services in their own right remains uncertain, as does the future of existing carer support specific providers. Carer Support is actively involved in all of the work being undertaken around these various national directions and will continue to do so into the future. It is too difficult at the time of writing this report to determine with any degree of accuracy what may or may not eventually happen with the national community service system; however Carer Support is exceptionally well placed, skilled and experienced to deliver quality carer services into the future.



Throughout the last year and as always the work of the staff and volunteers of Carer Support in delivering quality support to some 7,000 plus carers has been outstanding. To achieve this outcome for and with carers within the above climate is exceptional and should not be taken for granted or over looked.

### **Carer Services Overview:**

At the beginning of this year it was agreed that quarterly carer consultations or focus groups would take the place of a burgeoning number of advisory groups. Management met and agreed on both dates and a process for the focus groups. It was also agreed to look at the carers who fit the demographic for the topic to be discussed and to randomly select a percentage to represent the group at a meeting with the Management. The first of these sessions was held on Monday 29 April 2013 in the evening. The target group was working age carers, of which there are over 2,000 recorded on the database, not all of whom are active. Approximately three hundred carers were sent invitations and 25 carers attended the session. Two carers agreed to talk at very short notice about their own experiences as a working carer to start the session off. This really helped to break the ice and get people thinking. A set of questions were sent to the carers in advance and these then formed the basis for the discussion on the night. The feedback on the topic and the group was excellent and confirmed that carers welcomed and appreciated this opportunity to be involved.

During the year a new management structure was introduced across Carer Services. With the opening of the Southern Carer Support Centre, a number of carer support functions were separated off to that site. The leadership of each of the teams that remained at Fullarton underwent significant changes. With the increasing workload and opening of Southern Carer Support Centre, team leadership and management was changed early in 2013.

Andrea Stent took on responsibility for Raw Energy; Julie Milburn accepted responsibility for leading the Adult Support team at Fullarton as well as the CHART Mental Health Respite team. Carol Sparrow was appointed to the position of Senior Coordinator for the Respite and Information team, and David Webb moved to the newly created position of Assistant Manager, Carer Services, with responsibility of managing all the carer services delivered from the Fullarton site.

Throughout, all teams maintained a commendable focus on continued support of carers in each of their respective areas.

The Southern Carer Support Centre located at 241b Main South Road, Morphett Vale opened its doors on 4 February 2013. The centre was officially opened on 28 February 2013 by Amanda Rishworth MP, Federal Member for Kingston.

Prior to the official opening, an open day was held on 8 February 2013 for carers living in the local community to come and see what their Centre looked like and what it offered.

Some 76 carers visited over the course of the day with feedback being overwhelmingly positive. A further open day for service providers was held on 15 March 2013 when various local agency representatives called in for morning tea.

The aim of the Centre is to be more accessible to carers and their families in the southern region. The team have worked hard to create a warm and welcome atmosphere for everyone who visits. Local agencies have also used the meeting room to hold training sessions.

To identify the level of activity being generated at the Centre, between February 2013 – June 2013, 845 telephone calls were received and 334 walk-ins. Walk-ins are when carers, family members, local community people or other providers visit the Centre in person requesting information on a range of topics, talk with a staff member about what services may be available to them and then if appropriate to register with us. Or just to simply come in and say hello. The Centre has proved very accessible for the Young Adult Carers program as predominantly those registered with us live in the outer south area.

The Southern Carer Support Centre team have been involved in community forums and the Southern Services Reform Group. Team members have undertaken presentations at local groups and events. The team have also been involved in an ATSI Dementia Education session, Reconciliation Day, Nunga Tag and Aboriginal Health Day in conjunction with Closing the Gap. It is planned that early in the new financial year Carer Support will also take over the lease for the adjoining property which will double the size of the Centre and enable more groups, community events, meetings and other activities to occur.

A clear and agreed direction for Carer Support is to establish more of these locally based Carer Support Centres. All efforts will be made into the future to secure the required resources to enable these Centres to become a reality. Carer Support continued to be committed to Consumer Directed Care (CDC) throughout the year and this focus will continue into the new financial year. It is important to recognise the Governments commitment to this service direction and Carer Support is well placed to support carers and their families by working with them to ensure the desired outcomes from CDC can be achieved.

### **Respite and Information team (Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre)**

The volume of incoming calls to the Respite and Information team levelled off this year, for the first time since 2010. However, the team continued to respond to an average of well over 1,000 calls per month. The members of the team provided information to the community about services available to support older people and people with disabilities to remain living in the community; they provided information to assist people to manage their way through the residential aged care system and they assisted carers by providing respite support services.

An average of near 120 new carers were registered each month, and carers were provided with approximately 300 episodes of respite per month. In addition, the team managed ongoing packages of respite care for over 120 carers.

In May 2013, carers who received a respite service were surveyed to ascertain the level of satisfaction with the support they received. Responses were received from 219 carers (37% of carers sampled). Of these, 95% replied that they found the respite support provided to be "very helpful" (71%) or "helpful" (24%) to them in their caring role. This is consistent with feedback from previous surveys.



### **Carers' Hope and Recovery (Mental Health Respite) team (CHART)**

Over 370 carers of people with mental illness, Autism or intellectual disability were assisted through this program during the financial year. Of these, 138 were new to the program. While the majority of assistance was provided through services brokered through another agency, the team also worked collaboratively with YMCA to run a camp for families who care for a person with Autism. 5 carer outings and events were also organised especially for carers of people with mental illness throughout the year.

Links were maintained with other mental health services, including those funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

### **Adult Support team**

During the financial year, the Support team provided 61 activities for carers. These were attended by a total of 1,509 separate carers.

The team provided ongoing support to carers through 19 monthly groups. Of these, 11 are open to carers across the region, two are specific to male carers, two provide a focus for parent carers, two are aimed at meeting the needs of carers from CaLD communities and one is for ATSI carers.



In the period between January and June, 758 attendances were recorded at the groups, including attendances by 51 carers who were new to the groups. Throughout the year many Carer Support groups continue to meet on a regular basis.

### **Raw Energy Young Carers team**

Raw Energy provided support to a total of 89 young carers during the year. Of these, 11 were new to the program. The type of support included regular groups and activities (407 attendances by young carers), tutoring and mentoring programs, advocacy, referral, development of family support plans and one-to-one support.

Through the financial year, the team developed and extended the “taking care of yourself” component of their activity program. A themed approach was introduced for each age group, focusing on communication, personal care, self advocacy, resilience and connection with others. Young carers were supported to reflect on their circumstances, evaluate their choices, identify their strengths and weaknesses, their limits and their dreams.

The team continued to promote the needs of young carers in a range of settings, and provided a highly regarded presentation at Carers SA’s practice forum on working with young carers .



### **Volunteers**

During the year a new Volunteer Coordinator was appointed. Walter Kodakovic took up the role and in the 6 months he has been on board the extent of activity within the Volunteer team included;

New volunteers	12
Volunteer’s withdrawn	5
Total volunteers	60

Volunteer attendances:

Location/Program	No. of volunteers	Volunteer attendances
Eastern Carer Support Centre (admin)	13	205
Southern Carer Support Centre (admin and reception)	8	151
Adult Support	11	61
Raw Energy	12	76
Board members	9	54

22 Volunteers attended the volunteers day out at Monarto.

**Volunteer telephone calls to carers:**

No. of calls: 601

No. of carers called: 86

In addition to the extent of volunteer activity highlighted above, a review of the Volunteer Program was completed. Included in this has been;

- Completing new volunteer registration forms.
- Position Description updates for volunteers.
- Updating volunteer manuals, policies and procedures
- Interviewing and inducting new volunteers for the Southern Carer Support Centre and Eastern Carer Support Centre.
- Met with team leaders regarding volunteers and the Volunteer Program.
- Applied successfully for training grants for volunteers
- Organised a successful volunteers day out at the Monarto Zoo
- Attended a range of other volunteer related meetings, forums and workshops

During the year one of our most long standing, and committed volunteers 'retired' to concentrate on other things in her life. Mary Lyndon, who has volunteered her time at least on one Friday a month, sometimes more, for 22 years, 'hung up her phone'. Mary was one of our original telephone support volunteers who routinely rang carers to say hi and see if they were doing okay.



This is simply an amazing personal commitment and one that across all levels of volunteering would be hard to top.

*I can only congratulate Mary on such an achievement and on behalf of everyone at Carer Support but especially all of the many carers that she has talked to and supported over the years, simply say...thank you!*

It would be remiss of me not to include here a message from Walter to the volunteers he works so closely with;

*I would like to acknowledge all the wonderful volunteers firstly for making me welcome and secondly to thank each and every one of them for all they do and bring to Carer Support.*

### **Administration and Finance:**

A significant degree of work has continued to be undertaken throughout the past year by the Administration and Finance Teams including;

Ongoing streamlining of the day to day operations of the organisation to improve the extent of accountability and ensure the accuracy of our administrative processes.

Work continued during the past year in ensuring Carer Support met all Federal and State Government electronic financial and data reporting requirements.

Work continued with all of the Carer Services teams to look at any gaps in administrative processes and in developing strategies to overcome those gaps.

Processing and managing the significant number of invoices and accounts, new carer registrations, group attendance sheets, the myriad of bookings for all the various carer support activities and events and the day to day support needs of all teams.

Reviewed and updated all components associated with the organisations planning for and monitoring of both the brokerage and operational budgets.

Completed the full financial year external audit with our auditor, BHC Partners and formally addressed any/all recommendations outlined in the full Auditors Report.



It is evident that the extent of demand across all levels of the organisation continues to increase and additional resources will be required to enable these demands to be responded to comprehensively.



Recognising this situation all future submissions for additional carer services will continue to include a component targeting the required resources in order to manage and respond to these demands in a positive and proactive manner.

### **Work, Health, and Safety**

From 1 January 2013 South Australia's Work Health and Safety legislation – which incorporates the Work, Health and Safety Act

2012 and the Work, Health and Safety regulations 2012, came into effect to align with other states of Australia and bring in nationally consistent laws. On 29 November 2012 the Board, Management, team leaders and WH&S committee members all completed mandatory training in respect to the new legislation and the legal compliance obligations.

The WH&S committee has had several new members elected following the resignations of other members. During the year several organizational assets were replaced or repaired to ensure compliance. Included in this have been repairs to office chairs, the air conditioning systems were fully maintained, ergonomic assessments were completed for all new staff and any staff member re-locating to a new area.

Carer Support recorded 8 incidents or near misses during the year. All required actions were undertaken and all were satisfactorily resolved. Carer Support CEO completed a Work, Health and Safety compliance survey in April 2013 to Safework Australia. No major injuries or workplace accidents were recorded during the year. This is an outstanding result.

### **Summary and Acknowledgments:**

I would like to acknowledge the carers and their families who allow us into their lives. All we do and are funded to do is because these people trust us with their personal details; allow us to know their situations, warts and all. They enable us to do our jobs in supporting them. They invite us into their homes. This trust and acceptance must never be taken for granted. Thank you to all carers and we look forward to walking with you through your caring journey into the future.



I would like to thank our patron Ms Ali Carle for her ongoing support of all we do here at Carer Support. Ali's willingness to attend any events is greatly appreciated.

I would like to thank and congratulate all of the Board Members who give their time to ensuring Carer Support is governed well and that its overall purpose in supporting carers is valued and built upon at every opportunity.

I try not to mention individual people because collectively the staff and volunteers of Carer Support are the best and do an outstanding job. However, I do need to mention how fortunate Carer Support is to have both Mandy Toczec McPeake and Gavin Dennien as members of the Executive Team. The leadership they provide to their various teams and the work they do on a day to day basis in meeting all the many demands, pressures and challenges is outstanding and their commitment to all that Carer Support aims to achieve is beyond reproach.

I can only thank and congratulate them for all they achieve. I would also like to say thank you to each of them for their support, encouragement and trust in me as CEO. I would like to thank Karel Oake for all her support of me as Executive Assistant. Karel joined us quite late in the year and does a great job of keeping me organised, informed, and on time. Similarly, the work Karel does in supporting the Board and the Executive Team in general has been excellent. I would also like to acknowledge Nicole Jones.

During the past year Nicole has been the EA to Executive Manager of Carer Services, Mandy Toczec McPeake, then EA to the CEO and finally back as EA to Mandy. Thank you to Nicole for all that has been achieved during the year.

I would like to say here, a big thank you to Donna Musarella. Donna established the role of EA to the CEO many years ago and did an outstanding job. Donna left to have her first baby and resigned before she was due to return from leave. Donna had been with Carer Support for just over 10 years and was a huge part of the evolution of Carer Support.

A huge thank you to all the members of the leadership team who have achieved so much in supporting each of their teams throughout the year. Regardless of what is happening outside of the organisation these people just get on with ensuring carers can access the support needed in the least intrusive manner possible and work with their teams to simply make it happen. This is a wonderful outcome and I must acknowledge and genuinely thank each of them for all they do.

All of the staff regardless of the role they have within their teams are simply the best and achieve so much for and with carers. What an amazing group of people and what they do each and every day is just outstanding. Thank you to every single one of them. The volunteers who contribute their time and bring so much to Carer Support are wonderful and as I say each year, we would not and could not do what we do without them. Thank you.

I would like to acknowledge both the Federal and State Governments for providing the various grants to us which enable us to provide the support to Carers. Without this commitment via the grants Carer Support could simply not do what we do.

Once again and it seems normal practice these days to highlight, that the new financial year will bring new demands and many additional challenges. The extent of reform from within the aged care, disability and/or carer services sector that will continue into the new year will bring with it new challenges and opportunities to support carers and their families. Carer Support is exceptionally well placed to meet all of these challenges and together with carers and their families can ensure that the support required can be accessed in the most efficient and meaningful way possible.

In making sure the access to support for carers occurs and that duplication is avoided at every possible level, Carer Support cannot work in isolation from other providers and individuals. I would like to acknowledge all the other providers who have worked with us during the year, for their commitment to carers and their willingness to work with us in partnership.

Carer Support continues to be a leader in South Australia in delivering quality support to carers and their families. Times are changing in how services can be accessed and provided. Carer Support will continue to support carers to access the support they need when and how it is needed, now and into the future. Where we undertake this work and in what ways, may alter, however as I stated last year;



***Our commitment to carers remains stable and unwavering.***