



## “A Word from the CEO”

Leigh Garrett

At this time of year we normally focus on the highlights of our work to encourage your support. You will find some of these in the following pages of this Newsletter. This year I want to focus on the ever-increasing needs of our client group and their families and children. The prison population is nearing 2700, with an increasingly high proportion of remandees, and prison facilities are stretched to the maximum. When bed numbers are tight, the Department for Correctional Services by necessity must manage its beds carefully and this regularly results in high numbers of prisoner movements between Divisions and between prisons across the State.

This is disruptive to prisoners, but it is also very disruptive to partners, families and children who wish to visit them. OARS receives funding from the Department for Correctional Services to operate the bus service to Cadell prison on weekends. This is an essential service, because people with limited incomes and no private vehicle simply find it impossible to get to Cadell and back in a day. The costs to families of travel to other regional prisons is becoming prohibitive and this can leave prisoners isolated and lonely. This is generally not good for their rehabilitation and successful community re-integration.

Government funding is not generally available to assist families of offenders and it is to this end we seek your help. Our families need assistance with the basics and this is about to become more difficult as we close our opportunity shops because of the costs associated with running them. Many families availed themselves of our good quality low cost clothing just to get them through. So our plea is to ask for your assistance to support families of offenders as they are doing the time without their loved one.

Donate to help a family to get them through this difficult time.

Leigh



## Our Vision!

### OUR MISSION:

Reduce social harm by strengthening communities and social inclusion through the provision of restorative justice services, high quality treatment and rehabilitation services, support and advocacy, at critical transition points.

### OUR VISION:

Strong communities with positive social connections underpinned by restorative practices.

### OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Social Justice
- Restorative Justice
- Community Participation
- Human Rights
- Continuous Improvement
- Advocacy
- Prison as a Last Resort.

## Our Services

- Supportive Accommodation Services
- Drug & Alcohol Counselling & Comorbidity
- Support for individuals and families, including Advocacy & Referral
- Gambling Support Service
- Therapeutic Courts Treatment Services
- Emergency Financial Assistance
- Christmas Toy Program
- Centre for Restorative Justice
- Cadell Bus
- Yatala Gatehouse Services

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## Newsletter December 2015

*The purpose of this newsletter is to keep members and supporters updated on the events at OARS Community Transitions.*

*We have many experiences to tell you about and have selected a few to share with you.*



*We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has generously donated to our Christmas Program this year. Christmas Hampers are currently being distributed to clients in our services, and a small number of toys have been received. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure funding for our Xmas Toy Program this year but we have been able to assist in small ways.*

*Your gifts will enable us to ensure that some of our clients will share some joy this Christmas and in the future.*

*Our best wishes to you all for the year to come.*

The OARS SA Board comprises:

Annabel Shinkfield (Chair)  
Robin English (Deputy Chair)  
Michael Faraonio  
Chris O'Grady  
Greg Pattinson  
Peter May  
Leigh Garrett (CEO)



Annabel Shinkfield, Chair

Dear Members and Supporters

OARS Community Transitions has continued to consolidate its financial position, continuing to build on the solid results of the FY2014-15. This financial sustainability is critical if we are to continue our services to the marginalised and disadvantaged people in our community who are trying to get their lives on track.

Our neighbourhoods become richer when they are filled with diverse, engaged people – from all backgrounds and bringing a wealth of experiences. Our clients battle enormous hardships: many fight demons invoked by a lifetime of adversity or abuse. Many are isolated by their own alienating behaviours, which are habitual after years of reinforcement.

Our services help people to take accountability for past actions and harms, and to find a different way forward. Many have lost families and friends to their own actions, and most lack the skills to rebuild. They face discrimination and stigmatisation, which create barriers to finding employment and building healthy, beneficial relationships. We often hear criticism that ex-offenders, by dint of the harm they have inflicted, do not deserve happy lives. Our response is this: the detrimental impact on our communities of *not* assisting these individuals is profound. If they can find a happy life, even one with less unhappiness, we prevent further harm: to our families, loved ones and our neighbours. Simplistically put - we all win. And importantly this reduces victimization.

As a Board we are passionately dedicated to better community outcomes and reduced harm to victims through the reduction of reoffending. We see results that prove that our programs make a difference, and stories that prove how we are helping to change lives for the betterment of all. At this time of year, we ask you to join us in making a difference. We invite you to put a collective smile on the faces of families who face a Christmas of hardship. You can donate by returning the donation slip included in this in newsletter. Alternatively, you may wish to explore a payroll deduction; even the equivalent of the cost of a cup of coffee each pay would assist. We thank our regular donors for their ongoing support; not only is it greatly appreciated, it is vital to us and our clients. We would like to wish you and your loved ones peace and happiness this Christmas, and look forward with optimism to 2016.

Warm regards,  
**Annabel Shinkfield**  
Chair

## UPDATE ON OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

*OARS COMMUNITY TRANSITIONS endeavours to provide an array of creative, compassionate and relevant services for its clients. A brief list is included on the back of this brochure. We have pleasure in providing this half-yearly update for your information.*

July signaled the commencement of a new organisational structure, which has reshaped the focus of service delivery into two Divisions, each with a new name, and the creation of the new division to manage resources: They are:

1. **Re-integration Services Division** (renamed from Supported Accommodation Services)
2. **Clinical Services Division** (an amalgamation of several Therapeutic Teams into one Division)
3. **Resources Division** (created with Tim Tonkin as the newly appointed Manager Resources)

This is the final change of a process that has been in train for several years. **Dot Stagg's** position is now known as **General Manager Services**. Dot continues to operate all client services.

Laura Capozzi has been appointed as the new **Manager Clinical Services**. This Division will bring together all services that operate as interventions by changing thinking and behaviour, and the **Re-Integration Division** brings together all staff case managing clients with the express purpose of assisting re-integration back into the community and reducing repeat offending as a result of homelessness. The two Divisions will work closely together and the intended outcome is a more holistic service with almost invisible boundaries between the two. The Divisional names now reflect the intended outcomes rather than a "Program Name". The **Resources Division**, although newly created, has existing staff, and some minor changes have been implemented to improve internal service support. Tim has quickly settled into the new role and has been able to further streamline processes and systems to ensure speedier management reporting. Tim's role also encompasses broader non-accounting responsibilities of Risk Management, HR, Worker Health and Safety, ICT and Quality Improvement.

It has been a very busy six months for all divisions. Regional staff visited Adelaide in July for the 'All of OARS' meeting and also to attend their bi-annual 'Professional Development' days. The **Comorbidity Project Worker** completed **staff skill audits**, and a **Planning Day** was held in November.

**Service highlights** include:

- The new **COSA (Circles of Support & Accountability)** program became operational. Volunteers underwent training by the Project Worker and a former practitioner from Owenia House/SOTAP (Sexual Offender Treatment Assessment Program). Referrals are now being received.
- The re-opening of the **Boomgate Family Centre** at Yatala Labour Prison has been positive, with many visitors accessing the service. A number of **students**, who have also been doing their Community Service Certificate/Social Work Degree placement in our **Emergency Assistance and Clinical programs** are also volunteering their time at the Boomgate. A Christmas Party will be held on 12th December. There will be lollies and presents for the children attending and a sausage sizzle for everyone.
- Our **Hostels** continue to support clients recently released from prison to give them new hope. A recently developed **vegetable garden** is proving a winner at **Christie Downs**, and **cooking classes** are now on the Agenda. The **Mt Gambier Hostel** is now also establishing a veggie patch and the **Pt Augusta Hostel** is considering Literacy/Numeracy interventions for clients. Unfortunately, our **Berri Hostel** was temporarily closed due to a white ant problem. Housing SA Maintenance are currently effecting the required repairs and we will reopen soon.
- **SMART Recovery groups** commenced in **Cadell Training Centre** in February 2015. These groups operate on a monthly basis until Dec 2015.
- An exciting **new Court Diversion Pilot Program** has commenced. The **Gambling Intervention Program** will endeavour to divert people with gambling related offending issues away from incarceration and into therapeutic programs, reducing recidivism. 25 lawyers attended an information session and OARS CT is providing a case management role for clients.
- We continue to offer a number of **groups** to assist clients. These include: The **Domestic Violence Abuse Prevention Program**, **Safe Relationships Groups**, **Drug and Alcohol - Relapse Prevention Groups**, **Moral Reconation Therapy Groups (Drug Court)**, **Stay Quit Groups**.
- Our work in the **Restorative Justice** arena has also continued with training in various schools (both Regional and Metropolitan), as well as Police Prosecutors and Government Agencies (including Housing SA). We hope to develop these services further in 2016.
- Over recent months we have closed our remaining **Opportunity Shops** and the **bookshop at Christies Beach** will also close in December. This follows an analysis of ongoing costs and our decision not to commit to the renewal of leases. We express **our heartfelt thanks to donors and volunteers** who have given generously over many years.
- **Christmas Hampers** are currently being distributed to clients in our services. **Unfortunately, we were unable to secure funding for our Xmas Toy Program this year, but we have been able to assist in small ways.**

### Opportunities to Assist Us:

- If you are an Employer and would be open to exploring the potential of employing ex-offenders, we would be delighted to hear from you.
- We have a number of support services available on a Fees-for-Service basis. Please contact Dot Stagg on 8218 0700. We can provide support for clients with multiple complex issues, including: Gambling Support Service, Drug & Alcohol Counselling/Treatment, Pre & Post-Employment Support, Restorative Conferencing, Staff Training tailored to your needs.
- We are currently experiencing high demand for our services and your donation to our Christmas Appeal would be greatly appreciated.

### Quality Accreditation Update

Our Quality Mid-Cycle Review took place in December 2015. Whilst we are accredited until May 2017, this review ensures we are on track and continuing to improve our organization with identified and sustainable changes that will enhance our service in the future.