



“A Word from the CEO”

Leigh Garrett

As I write this report, I think we are thankful to see the COVID19 Pandemic restrictions easing. It has been a very challenging 6 months that has required us all to dig deeply into our reserves and I have been so impressed with the capability of our organisation to rise and meet this challenge. The Executive Team, together with Henriette Travill (Chair of the WHS Committee) formed the OARS CT **Pandemic Response Team** to oversee the arrangements for operation and service delivery during this Pandemic. The developments around changing our mode of operation have enabled most of our services to continue to provide support to clients and we have been able to retain all our staff. Of course some things have changed and we have all embraced new technologies and ways of communicating, whilst keeping our social distance. Non-essential staff have worked from home, some client services were altered/restricted, however, our workers have been at the forefront of maintaining contact with clients and delivering quality services, with excellent feedback received our **Client Satisfaction Survey**.

Late last year I participated in a number of Policy Roundtables:

- **Australian Research Council Project: Governing sex offenders post-release: the role of housing assistance and its impact on accommodation pathways, reoffending and re-integration.**
- **Implementation of Gambling Reform** which passed State Parliament in Dec 2019 hosted by the **Commissioner for Consumer & Business Services**
- **Ombudsman / Uni of Adelaide Roundtable - Monitoring Detention in SA under the Optional Protocol against Torture (OPCAT).** Every service where people are detained, including nursing homes, psychiatric facilities, youth detention centres and adult prisons, will need to be monitored. We hope it will reduce the number of people who are harmed when they are detained against their will.
- A **DV Roundtable “Committed to Safety”** by Invitation from Minister Lensink and Ms Carolyn Power.

We have continued to submit innovative proposals for funding to assist with the difficult problems in our communities, including DV, mental health and affordable accommodation. These of course have been exacerbated by the Pandemic. We hope to be able to share the outcomes soon.

Leigh

Statement of Purpose

Enhancing community wellbeing by reducing offending and victimisation

Strategic Directions

Reintegration Services
Clinical Services
Advocacy
Victims & Crime Prevention
Organisational Excellence

Our Guiding Principles

Social Justice
Restorative Justice
Community Participation
Continuous Improvement
Prison as a Last Resort.

Our Services

Home Detention Integrated Support Program
NDIS
Reintegration Accommodation Services
Assistance with Care and Housing
Aboriginal Post Release Program
Drug & Alcohol Counselling
Gambling Support Service
Gambling Intervention Program
Therapeutic Diversion Courts Services
Counselling, Health and Substance Management (CHaSM)
Pre-Release Alcohol & Drug Program
Circles of Support & Accountability
Support for individuals and families, Including:
Advocacy & Referral
Centre for Restorative Justice
Cadell Bus Service
Yatala Family Centre

Corporate Services located at:
53-61 Dale Street, Port Adelaide, SA 5015
Ph: 08 8218 0700
or on the web at
www.oars.org.au



Newsletter June 2020



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 also want to take this opportunity to ask you to consider making a donation, to support our services during this Winter season and throughout the year.

The OARS SA Board comprises:

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



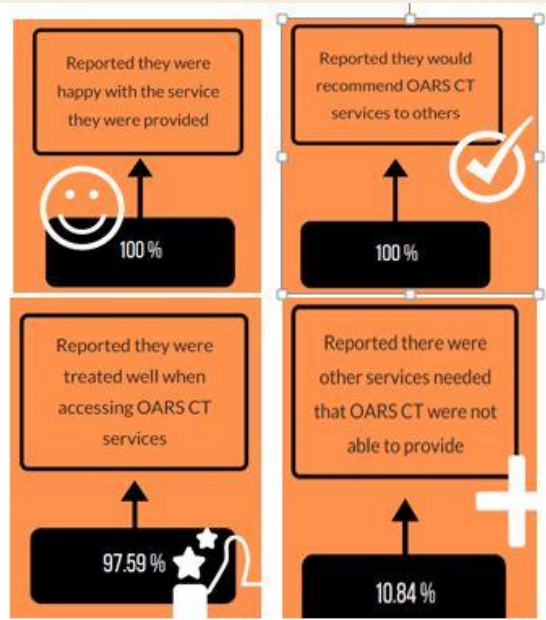
Annabel Shinkfield, Chair

Dear Members and Supporters

As has been the experience of many, Covid-19 has seen the Board switch from face-to-face to a digital format, which was as productive as it was an occasional comedy of errors. Thankfully it allowed us to maintain the continuity of our function.

We're pleased to welcome Jessie Byrne to the Board of OARS SA. As well as being Principal of her consulting service, Jessie has been employed by the Energy and Water Ombudsman SA, SACOSS, University of Adelaide, and is a PhD Candidate. Jessie attended Board meetings as an observer, where her contributions and skills were greatly appreciated. We are privileged to have her on board.

The Board appreciates and recognises the dedication of OARS staff and volunteers, evidenced by outstanding results in a recent Client Satisfaction Survey (Jan-March). 83 Survey recipients accessed 137 services, with 35% accessing 2 or more services. Highlights are below:



I hope you will join us as we work to close the gap of those other services identified, particularly during the winter season; tough enough on a normal basis but made all the harder with the disadvantages experienced by so many as a result of Covid-19.

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.

- **NDIS Registration (NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission).** Our Registration with NDIS Commission was finalised and approved. Discussions were held with the Complex Support Needs Unit of NDIS in relation to a number of forensic clients being referred to OARS. This unit provides specialised support for participants with a disability and who have other challenges impacting their lives such as mental health issues, incarceration or homelessness, and need a higher level of specialised supports in their plan. We are now receiving referrals to OARS for Specialist / Support Coordination and Behavioural Support.
- Our **Reconciliation Action Plan** was completed in late 2019. Our vision is that reconciliation is a personal and value-based experience for all Australians, in light of shared respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands, cultures, heritage languages and communities.
- **Pre-Release Program.** Late last year, group work commenced in the Adelaide Remand Centre (ARC), to rave reviews, and encouraging feedback from Serco staff, who have taken over as Private Providers of the ARC. This program has continued during the pandemic, but unfortunately some of our other services within the prisons have been put on hold.
- The evaluation report on COSA was released.
- **The Centre for Restorative Justice (CRJ)** has had to delay a number of projects due to the Pandemic, including working with a major Private Company, providing a change program for a school, open training sessions and an innovative project with UniSA. All are rescheduled until later in the year. **Our Student, Leah,** however is undertaking some **research** on current use of **Restorative Practices in schools with surveys being sent to UK and SA schools..**
- **Funding extensions** have been received for most of our current programs.
- **Emergency Assistance.** Due to loss of Govt funding, the remaining Emergency Assistance vouchers and bus tickets were all issued during 2019.
- **DCS – Case Management Innovation Lab:** In January DCS advised they were doing a review of their Case Management System and discussed ways in which we could be involved. Our employment outcomes relating to clients achieving their driver's licence was exceptional.

Good News Story –Reintegration Services

The good news stories are evidence of how the teams at OARS work alongside our clients to create new stories – of hope, courage and achievement. In telling these stories, we can help to overcome community perceptions, and change attitudes towards ex-offenders. Here's another example of one from the Port Augusta Reintegration Accommodation Service:

A client was assisted by the Senior Case Manager with transport, support letter & Court support in Port Pirie Magistrates Court in March 2020. The client pleaded guilty to all charges and in his summing up, the Magistrate stated that he had been considering placing the client on a Community Service Order to report to the Department of Corrections, but due to the ongoing support from OARS staff and the progress that was made, the Magistrate decided that this was not necessary. The Magistrate complimented the client and OARS on the changes to the behaviour of the client and stated that it is credit to both parties.

How to Get Involved:

- We are experiencing high demand for our services and your **donation** would be appreciated.
- Our **Family Centre at Yatala Labour Prison needs more volunteers** for Saturday mornings. If you are able to assist, please call Scott Patrick on (08) 8249 0702.
- 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.

Quality Accreditation Update

- Accredited until October 2020.
- Quality Improvement Council Health & Community Services Standards
 - National Standards for Mental Health Services (NSMHS)
 - Accreditation Audit scheduled for June 2020.

NDIS

Work was completed to become a registered NDIS Provider.

Good News Story OARS Drug & Alcohol Treatment Services

A client who had been in a revolving door of prison and support with some type of supervision order since he was 14 years old, (for the past 22 years) and has never completed a supervision order successfully, has now achieved all but one of his treatment goals including the following:

- Left a long-term abusive relationship with the mother of his children & established healthy boundaries.
- Rebuilt self-esteem.
- Gained casual employment and was promoted to supervisor in under two months (full-time).
- Regained full custody of his two sons.
- Is abstinent from all substances, including pharmacotherapy.
- Is now saving for a house deposit!!
- This client had one final treatment goal to achieve: To no longer be on a supervision order. On the 18th December he completed parole and is completely free.
- This was his first Christmas where he was not incarcerated over Christmas. He had the money to spoil his kids and watch them open their presents on Christmas morning.