



“A Word from the CEO”

Leigh Garrett

The last six months has been a time of great change as both **State and Federal elections** have been held. They both resulted in a win for the Labor Party, and a change of government. We have been busy sending information regarding our services to the relevant new Ministers and we have been pleased to meet with the SA Ministers for Correctional Services, Child Protection, and Human Services. I look forward to meeting with the Minister for Education later this month, and the new Attorney-General in July. We hope the new Federal Government can quickly resolve the housing crisis in this country.

Home Detention Integrated Support Service (HISSP). Recent information from the “Report of Government Services” clearly shows that SA leads the country in recidivism data. Recidivism is now 39% in SA which is the lowest figure I can ever remember in Australia. OARS CT has been a significant contributor to this through our HISSP Program.

I have been appointed to the **State’s high-level homelessness reform committee (Alliance System Steering Group)**. This ensures OARS CT has strategic input into the homelessness alliances which have been operating since July 2021. OARS CT services are not part of the alliances, and this provides us with an avenue to contribute to development and improvements necessary across the sector for our clients.

The **Centre for Restorative Justice** has been busy developing a new website and recently released an “Intro to RJ” e-training which went live for the public on 28th April 2022. Please check it out at <https://www.restorativejustice.com.au>

We are considering developing an **OARS CT Think Tank** that could meet 3-4 times each year to assist us with policy development and explore workshop opportunities or have papers written about various issues. This will provide OARS CT with dynamic people who are prepared to help us.

Due to the expanding opportunities, an **internal re-structure** has resulted in **Louise Kelly being appointed as ‘Deputy CEO and Head of National Services & Development’**, and **Tracy Chapman as ‘General Manager SA Services’** and she will manage all SA services including the Rehabilitation Treatment Service Division.

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.

OARS & CT Services

Home Detention Integrated Support Program (HISSP)
National Disability Insurance Scheme (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
Community Connections (SA Western Regions)
Men’s Domestic Violence Therapeutic Community – Time Out for Treatment
Acacia Prison (WA) Real Support Network

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Newsletter June 2022



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. Our Donation Slip (which is included) and Website provides details on the various ways you can donate.

The Board comprises:

Annabel Shinkfield (Chair)
Robin English (Deputy Chair)
Peter May
Jessie Byrne
Jane Zadow
Leigh Garrett (CEO)



Annabel Shinkfield, Chair

Dear Members and Supporters

Leigh and I were honoured to meet with our new patron, Her Excellency, the Hon Frances Adamson, in February. We were invited to provide a briefing about our work and to explore ways in which we might work together over the next 5 years of her tenure. The meeting was extremely positive, and her Excellency was very keen to learn about our work and the issues we face on a daily basis. One of the outcomes was an agreement to provide Good News stories every month, to keep Her Excellency informed about the life changes and achievements that can be achieved with our programs. She has made it clear that she wants to meet clients, staff and the Board to ensure that she is well connected with us, which we'll be facilitating in due course.

The State saw a change in government in March, with a new Premier we're well acquainted with. As Minister for Police, Correctional Services, Emergency Services and Road Safety, Peter Malinauskas developed the "10 by 20" initiative, which was prospered by the Liberal Government when they gained power in 2018, and saw new funding and greater support for programs to reduce recidivism in South Australia. We continue to see the client and community benefits of this innovative program.

Sadly, this month we'll be saying farewell to Robin English, who has served on the Boards of OARS and Community Transitions since October 2014. We'll miss Robin's legal expertise and sharp wit at our meetings, but wish him well in his retirement. We are now on the look-out for further Board Members, particularly those with legal and/or relevant industry experience.

As I write this, we are experiencing an extremely cold and wet start to winter, with weather conditions that will exacerbate the cost-of-living crisis for many of our clients and their families. I would ask that, if you can, you consider giving to our Winter Appeal (see highlighted section "How to Get Involved"). With your donation, we can help ease our clients' hardships and provide comfort to families at this challenging time.

With thanks for your ongoing interest and support,

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.

OARS CT highlights.

- **COVID** - It seems a long time since the highly transmissible Omicron variant entered SA and WA, and it would be remiss not to mention the challenges of restrictions and constant changes, particularly for our staff and vulnerable client group in the community and those in correctional facilities. OARS CT had developed plans in December to assist us to manage continuity of services. Each program had its own requirements. Earlier this year, where possible, staff were working from home and client appointments moved to 'virtual' unless essential services or health services. Staff had limited movements between sites and Rapid Antigen Testing and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was utilised. The virus was also in the prisons, which have been in lockdown. Dept Correctional Services allocations were put on hold. OARS CT was funded by **Wellbeing SA** to host vaccination clinics at Port Adelaide. We hope that the next six months will improve as we are learning to live with the virus.
- **Domestic / Family Violence funding.** We were advised that OARS Therapeutic Accommodation Program has been allocated approximately \$200,000 for the **Time Out for Treatment** program under the first payment for the new National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence Responses. This payment is to enable South Australia to continue providing existing services and continue to manage the ongoing effects of the Pandemic. We were not successful in a tender with the Courts Administration Authority to continue the **DV Courts Program**. This was a great disappointment. The service is now being operated by Relationships Australia.
- **Coercive Control Discussion Paper** – OARS provided feedback to a Draft of Discussion Paper regarding this important topic. We hope to see some positive changes in the areas of domestic/family violence.
- Our **Port Lincoln hostel** has had a re-vamp. There has been much excitement from the clients as new furniture arrived, including beds, mattresses, tall boys and bed side cupboards for all rooms. Clients completely emptied their rooms and then washed the walls, windows, floors before putting the new furniture in. 'One Heart Care' (shop in Pt L) kindly donated a lounge to and supplied clients with a grocery voucher. The clients are so appreciative of the improvements and vouchers, but also for the support provided, which has made them feel heard, valued and worthy to be part of their community.
- **OARS CT Quality Management Mid – Term Audit** was held in January. We regularly assess our services, policies, staff training, and infrastructure to ensure we continuously improve, and we are currently upgrading our client database. We are on track to fulfil the items on our Workplan to maintain our accreditation.
- **Our Exceptional Needs and NDIS Service** continues to grow for clients with complex needs. We have also coordinated case conferences and when clients are working with multiple agencies, have developed Interagency Risk Management Plans.
- We met with the **Office for Problem Gambling** to discuss future funding. We have been advised that the Government will be re-funding us for the **Gambling Service**. This is great news. They have been reviewing the sector and a harm minimization implementation report is being prepared by them. We are doing some research in designing future services.

How to Get Involved:

- We are experiencing high demand for our services and your **donation** would be appreciated. **Online donations can be made to: BSB: 065-006 A/c No: 1004 9072, with your name & "Winter Don" as reference, or by filling in the donation slip attached.**
- 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.

Good News Story

Real Support Network
Western Australia

The Community Transitions team in Western Australia, have been offering a range of services to men in Acacia Prison and the Community since May 2021. They are part of the Real Support Network funded by Serco.

Recent feedback from a new client (JS) who is the brother of previous client (CS) is that he was encouraged by his brother to seek out the support of CT, and that since his release in November 2021 CS has been successful in getting a Homes West house and full custody of his son (after a short stay with his mum immediately after release).

He is apparently doing 'amazingly' and attributed a portion of this to the engagement he had with Community Transitions while at Acacia, and that is why JS has reached out for Drug & Alcohol and Case Management support.