

DEAR WOMEN OF TOORA,

This Annual Report is a tribute to all of you. For the hard work you have all done and for the innovation you have embraced. At our birthday recently one of the women accessing our services stated, in very broken English, that she did not have enough English to express how grateful she was for all the support she had received. I believe there will never be enough words in any language to express the positive impact and change women experience in our services. So I will finish with just a simple thank you.

LOVE TO YOU ALL

Jacky





Heira team



WIREDD team



Lesley's Place team



Aleta team

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Toora House team



Admin team

...working cooperatively and professionally in a feminist environment to further the work of Toora Women Inc.

We were extremely fortunate to have Karen Lenihan (currently on short leave) as Chair of the Toora Women Inc Board during the year. Other continuing members were community representatives Vera van de Velda, Margaret Jones and Elizabeth Kentwell, with Tai Sullivan Advisory Forum Chair, Yasmin Elferkh and Linda Hayden as the Advisory Forum representatives. While, due to other pressures, Margaret reluctantly resigned, we were fortunate in gaining Felicity Rafferty and Gabrielle Alvarez-Sledge. The Board members have worked extremely well together, developing a respect and appreciation for each others strengths and expertise. They have developed a real sense of working cooperatively and professionally in a feminist environment to further the work of Toora Women Inc.

The Board would like to thank the Executive Director, Jacky Cook, for her excellent leadership and vision, and all staff for their professionalism and enthusiasm in the important work they undertake. The strong reputation in which Toora Women Inc is held is recognition of the high standard of their work. The Board is aware of the enormous contribution that staff make on a daily basis to the work of Toora Women Inc.

The Board has also been pleased to see that the decision to provide funding for professional development for all staff has had such a positive effect, with most staff availing themselves of the opportunity to undertake professional development during the year. We hope to continue this initiative in ongoing years.

Quality is a major priority and the Board is extremely pleased that the current quality assurance process has provided confirmation that Toora is a quality organisation with sound procedures, and would like to pass on its congratulations formally to all those women involved.

Governance has also been a priority for the Board this year, and members have agreed to establish a Governance Working Party to pursue appropriate governance issues. Toora will be moving shortly into implementation of the new Strategic Plan and Board members are keen to be involved in this process.

We have been extremely pleased that Toora has had two solid financial years, providing us with a firm base for the ongoing work of the organisation.

We have positive ongoing relationships with a large number of organisations and individuals within the Canberra community, including Legislative Assembly members, and we look forward to working with them in the coming year.

Over the years, Toora has played an important role in the Canberra community and we look forward to this continuing in the future.

Elizabeth Kentwell

ON BEHALF OF THE TOORA WOMEN INC BOARD



Toora Wimmin's Shelter was granted funding 26 years ago. The receipt of this funding supported the collective at the time to create the foundations of Toora Women Inc. today. The foundations were and still are, a set of feminist values and principles that ensure integrity, growth, development and flexibility; to provide quality services to women. Toora Wimmin's Shelter was a safe house for single women. The women who accessed the service had support needs consisting of drugs and alcohol, sexual assault, domestic violence, mental health, incarceration and homelessness. We knew then, as we do now, that these issues are not mutually exclusive. Toora Women Inc. has evolved over time with this knowledge firmly embedded in the creation of all our service models.

“The foundations were and still are, a set of feminist values and principles”

The past 26 years have seen governments come and go, political agendas change and departments created to address the different issues mentioned above. Consequently services are funded to meet a primary need of support such as homelessness, drug and alcohol, etc. Toora Women Inc. today has a number of services funded by a variety of departments. However, Toora Women Inc. has always maintained the practice of working with women ‘where they are at’ in their journey. For the past 26 years we have collaborated, formed partnerships and wrapped services around women to provide the highest quality service possible to meet all of a women’s presenting needs.

*“We will still be here when
others have moved on.”*

We are political advocates for women. We will continue to speak up. We will continue to point out the needs of women and where there are gaps in community responses. Toora Women Inc will continue to be innovative and to meet the needs of women. We will still be here when others have moved on.

This year has been a year of change, innovation and excitement for Toora Women Inc. Toora House has reopened its emergency bed, and established the new Day Refuge; a drop-in service for homeless women. It is a basic service providing access to showers, washing machines, internet and a cheap food store. The Day Refuge has had the wonderful opportunity to run activities, self esteem, art and craft, wellbeing and relaxation groups. This is all thanks to the amazing Soroptimist women who have kindly spent the year fund raising for these activities and groups. We send a heartfelt thank you to all the Soroptimist women, from the workers and the women who benefited from the groups—as well as myself.

We have started community consultations to improve access to detoxification for women and women with children. These consultations will continue into next year.

The Administration office has relocated to Weston primary school. Thanks to Richard Hutch at DHCS for hearing our plea when our old premises were sold and we were asked to vacate. The National Sorry Day Committee has joined us at the admin office as they were previously operating out of a dedicated member's dining room.

Congratulations to the Heira Team. They were awarded the ACTCOSS Minor Miracles Award for their tireless work for women with immigration issues. Congratulations Deb Wybron for receiving the Women of Spirit Award; to Paulina Hellec for being nominated for the National Drug and Alcohol awards; and Eddie Waddick who was nominated for the Women of Spirit award.

Toora women Inc. celebrated its 26th Birthday with the theme 'celebrating our cultural diversity'. It was a fantastic day and the food was catered by many of the staff. Some of the delicious recipes are published in the back of this report.

I would like to acknowledge and personally thank all the Board members, the Leadership team, the service workers and women who access our services. I would also like to thank our community partners and the government departments that support Toora women Inc.

Jacky Cook
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT WITHIN TOORA WOMEN INC.

The Quality Improvement Review process for Toora Women Inc began in November 2008, with a contractual arrangement with Quality Management Services (QMS). The aim of this process is to ensure that as an organisation, we are continuously developing the quality of services which we provide. Ensuring that organisations meet quality service standards has now become a requirement of most funding bodies, and the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process is designed to assist organisations to integrate principles of quality within all aspects of its operation. The major set of standards against which Toora is being assessed is the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Standards. This set is divided into a core module and a number service delivery modules. As Toora crosses both the homelessness and the Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) sectors, the organisation is therefore assessed against the Health and Community Core Standards and the separate Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs (ATODS) module for programs funded to provide AOD services.

The process for Toora Women Inc. commenced on 10 December 2008, with a full staff and Board workshop with QMS. This provided an opportunity to learn more about what was entailed in meeting the QIC Standards and the commitment required by Toora Women Inc. in embarking on the review cycle. Since that time, staff have regularly met to discuss each of the Standards and to provide input into the Quality Journal.

From the outset, it was agreed that the process should be inclusive, with all staff where possible involved in the process. Initially we considered that the Accreditation Officer would conduct groups at all services to discuss each of the Standards, and then bring that information together in a draft form before taking it back out for comment. However, it was quickly recognised that this process would not be successful, not only because it lengthened the task, but it would result in staff losing momentum and interest in the process.

Therefore, the process we adopted has included sending out the Standard proforma for discussion at service level, regular meetings with representatives of each of the services to provide feedback from service-level discussions, and review and consultation to develop and complete the Quality Journal. We have learned that this process works well, and that if the momentum is maintained—allowing enough time for discussion at team meetings and then bringing that information together for distribution and comment – we are able to engage staff and services in the process. We are working towards an External Review date of April 2010.

*“This process works well...
we are able to engage staff and
services in the process.”*

*“Toora Women Inc.
continues to play a vital role in
the ACT community.”*

As part of accreditation, we are also reviewing policies and procedures and looking at the way in which we communicate and coordinate our services both internally and externally. It has given us the opportunity to recognise gaps in service delivery and this has in turn lead to discussion about the ways in which we can better meet the needs of the women who access our services.

Toora Women Inc continues to play a vital role in the ACT community. Assuring our services are continually assessed and evaluated within a quality framework ultimately provides a better level of service for the women within our services. This also ensures our commitment to providing a safe and secure environment and to the provision evidence-based services for the women who come to us for help and support.

Lynne Magor-Blatch
ACCREDITATION OFFICER

TOORA HOUSE

Over the past financial year Toora house has gone through many changes in both service delivery and staffing. It has brought excitement, growth and trepidation in not knowing what the future holds for us. Even though we have faced many challenges the Toora team has become stronger and more robust.

The Toora team has had many staffing changes from Service Coordinator Cill Law resigning, to an entirely new day team. Kim is now the coordinator and we have three new Key Support Workers – Helena, Viv and Fika. During the past 12 months we have been lucky to welcome a baby to Toora by Nevenka. Nevenka had been with Toora for the past three years but has left Toora Women Inc. for a new position with the public service.

During the past 6 to 9 months, the Day Refuge been operating at capacity. Staffed by Viv, the Day Refuge has gone from strength to strength. It has facilitated a variety of groups which include 'She is...'. This group requires women to look at the different aspects of being a woman. This includes courage, contributing and completing a task that is relevant to the topic of the day. The Day Refuge has also been fortunate enough to obtain some finances from the Soroptimist which we greatly appreciate. It has given us the opportunity to take the women to places that they would not normally be able to afford such as the Australian Zoo, Floriade, cruises on the lake and lunches.

We have also been working collaboratively with Women's Information Referral Centre (WIRC), who are facilitating a weekly group on self assertiveness. This group has been very well received by both women in the service as well as the outreach women who are coming to the Day Refuge.

The Day Refuge is also working with Judy Crosten to promote a group called 'Move it with Jud' which is a body Maintenance course. This entails information regarding maintaining good healthy eating, nutrition, movement and posture. This group runs for 2.5 hours on a weekly basis.

In collaboration with the following services we have been able to provide the best service delivery we can to both women in Toora House and the Day Refuge. There have been some amazing networks set up with other organisations due to the ongoing difficulty with finding women appropriate exit points. These include (but not limited to):

Women's Legal Services	CHYPP	Marzenna
Migrant Resource Centre	Canberra Psych Ward	Marymead
Welfare Rights	CARE Financial	Mission Heart
Mental Health Foundation	Carers ACT	Quest
CRCC	CREATE	Relationships Australia
ACT Mental Health	Dept. of Children Protection	Respite Care
CET	Doris	Sexual Health Clinic
Heira	Family Planning Clinic	Southside Community Services
Centrelink	Gungahlin Community Centre	STREETS
Centacare	Homelinx	TIS
ACTCOSS	IPA	Winnunga Nimmitjah
Aleta	The Junction	Woden detox
Belconnen Community Centre	Lesley's Place	CIT
Barnardo's	Lowana	Family Planning and Sexual Health Centre
		Oz Harvest.



Our service users have come with a vast range of complex needs including housing, legal and medical issues, violence, eating disorders, discrimination from other services, issues of trauma, incest, ritual abuse and sexual assault, pregnancy, custody and family issues, drug and alcohol recovery, income support and training needs.

This year the Toora team was fortunate enough to go away for strategic planning. We went to the coast for 2 days. The team found this to be very beneficial as it gave us the chance to unwind and for the team to discuss outcomes and where we would like to be in 12 months.

TRENDS

In the last financial year Toora has provided accommodation to 180 women. Of these, there were 48 specifically accommodated in our emergency 24 hour bed and 9 ongoing at the end of this period.

This is a 56% increase from the same period last year when we accommodated 79 women. This has been attributed to the completion of renovations and a solidified, consistent team.

Table 1. Age bracket percentage of service users

AGE GROUPS	%
16 – 20 years	13.3
21 – 25 years	12.2
26 – 30 years	7.7
31 – 35 years	11.1
36 – 40 years	13.3
41 – 45 years	13.3
46 – 50 years	8.8
51 – 55 years	4.4
56 – 60 years	4.4

Table 2. Cultural background percentage of service users

NATIONALITY	%
Anglo-Australian	62.2
Aboriginal	7.7
Chinese	2.2
Croatian	2.2
New Zealander	2.2
Sierra	1.1
Ethiopia	5.5
Polish	3.3
Pilipino	4.4
Sudanese	3.3
Total percentage of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	24.2%

Table 3. Percentage of service users who present with health issues

HEALTH ISSUE	%
Dual diagnosis	22.2
Drug and alcohol	30.0
Homeless	23.3
Mental health	64.0
Domestic violence	32.2
Sexual assault	21.1

We have had 14 women accommodated in our transitional program with 6 on-going. This number was affected by not having a halfway house for a part of this period.

Outreach has been at capacity for the majority of this year with 27 women being supported in this time with 3 ongoing at the end of the period. This is the same as last year.

We have provided support, advocacy, referrals, food, clothes, transport, bus tickets and many other forms of assistance to women, of these 58 presented with dual diagnosis and 75 with co-mobility.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We would like to be positive about our future and provide the best possible service we can. The women have their own court yard which we have been able to decorate with new plants provided by the kind donation of \$150.00 from Magnet Mart. We would like to see the women who access the Day Refuge establish a vegetable garden that can be utilised when cooking. Women in service can have fresh vegetables and learn the benefits of nutrition.

We are working hard to make the Day Refuge a place that we are proud of, and intend on making it bigger and better. This will be done by networking and establishing positive working relationships with a variety of services in the community .

All workers have done an amazing job of maintaining Toora's high standard of service

T H A N K S

Toora has welcomed many new workers, including relief workers in this period. Toora would like to acknowledge all the hard working and lovely women in all positions at Toora House who have navigated their way through frequent challenges during their employment. All workers have done an amazing job of maintaining Toora's high standard of service deliver and ensuring that women are supported. Every one of them has done a wonderful job and offered their skills, kindness and commitment so that we can operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We would also like to thank Branka Trajkovski for her ongoing support and kindness, and to Jacky Cook for her flexibility, vision and passion for the organisation. We would also like to thank the Leadership team for their direction and support and Heira, Lesleys Place and Aleta for making working collaboratively with the women enjoyable, relaxed and focused. We look forward to a eventful, dynamic and full year of great things to come.

Kim Cartwright
TOORA HOUSE COORDINATOR

HEIRA WOMEN'S REFUGE

Heira Women's Refuge is a residential and outreach crisis service that provides supported accommodation and transitional support to women who are affected by domestic violence and are unaccompanied by children. Heira is a feminist service that is committed to principles such as, empowering women, inclusiveness, cultural diversity and recovery.

All women who access Heira are assessed and have case management options offered within 24 hours of their arrival to Heira. The Strengths-Based Case management framework is designed to mobilize all personal, services and community opportunities in order to facilitate service users' independence and engagement with the general community. Within its case management practice, Heira offers flexible strategies to assist service users to achieve their identified goals as stipulated by the SAAP National Case Management Principles.

Heira provides a range of support activities that include advocacy and referral, support with legal, housing, immigration, health and financial matters, attendance at appointments, linking women with other supports and government and community agencies.



A C H I E V M E N T S A N D T R E N D S

During the financial year 2008-09 Heira Women Refuge supported 104 women with 44 of them in the accommodation program and 60 in the outreach program.

- The age of women who were accommodated in the crisis service ranged from 19 to 60 years of age.
- Forty two percent (42%) of these women identified themselves as being from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds including: Afghanistan, Italian, English, Croatian, New Zealander, Greek, Irish, Philippine, Ethiopian, Chinese, Pakistani, Kenyan and Polish.
- 12% of women identified themselves as Aboriginal.

The bed occupancy rate during the financial year 2008-09 was 97%. Compared to the previous financial year, Heira saw an increased number of women with unsolved immigration issues. These women came to Australia under different visas, including fiancé, spouse and working visa.

During this financial year data indicated that women stayed longer at the refuge due to several factors:

- Not all women are achieving Priority status for Public Housing, as escaping DV on its own is not regarded as a reason for their application to be considered by the Multidisciplinary Panel, even though most women will also seek long term counselling treatment for the trauma they have experienced.
- Some women are being considered for Priority Housing after being on the High Needs list for around 12 months. Due to a lack of exit points for these women, Heira has been supporting them for much longer than the 3 months crisis period.
- Another factor contributing to the longer support periods is the length of time it takes for women to achieve Permanent Resident status after leaving DV. Some women are waiting (without income and any entitlements to legal and medical support) up to 12 months to achieve the status required to be eligible for Public Housing, after which they may then make their application for Public Housing.

Heira is facing a new trend where women who have left the service some years ago, are returning to the outreach program. These women found it difficult to sustain independent housing and are looking for further support from Heira. Although it is hard for them to be in such a situation, Heira team feels pleased that these women can trust us and approach us for support years after leaving our service.

Supporting women with unresolved immigration status involves engagement of external services. We would like to use this opportunity to express our special thanks to Registered Migration Agent, Peter Steele who provides his expert advice and practical assistance to our women in a process of visa application. Always happy to take extra work coming from Heira, Peter Steele has over the years been supporting our women on a pro bono condition. We also want to thank Marianne Dickie who works voluntarily for Migrant Resource Centre and supports our resident's visa application process as well. There is one more person who is always supporting our women when we need to fill a statutory declaration form: Sandi Plummer. We want to use this occasion to publicly thank Sandi for all her great support for women in needs.

DV CHRISTMAS INITIATIVE

The DV Christmas Initiative came as a result of collaboration between SAAP Services, Housing ACT and DVCS to respond to the higher number of crisis accommodation beds needed over the Christmas holiday period. Initially the property allocated was inappropriate due to safety concerns in the area, but through discussions and negotiations with Housing ACT and DVCS, a suitable property was found and urgently re-allocated. Heira team have contributed to the development of appropriate protocols between services involved in the program. A dedicated worker was allocated to attend to this program and the women who use this service.

HUMAN RIGHTS NATIONAL CONSULTATION

Earlier this year Heira workers attended the National Consultation on Human Rights in Australia forum, to provide input regarding the consultation process through submissions of case studies regarding

*Heira hopes to have
the voices of the women who
access this service heard*

breaches of Human Rights of Migrant and Refugee women. Heira presented case studies which reflect the issues faced by women who have no income, no accommodation and/or no access to legal support as a result of unresolved Immigration Status after fleeing domestic violence and/or sexual assault. Heira hopes to have the voices of the women who access this service heard through contributing to this National Consultation process, and that this may result in greater visibility and consideration to the issues faced by women and how the lengthy and complex Immigration processes impact their lives.

I N N O V A T I O N S

WORKING WITH SUDANESE WOMEN EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

For some time agencies within the Community Services Sector have been identifying challenges and barriers to working with Sudanese women, children and families who are experiencing domestic violence in the Canberra Community. The main barriers include limited understandings of the Sudanese Culture, access to the Sudanese community except through the Elders system and the impact that community services interventions can have on female family members in Australia and overseas.

The Migrant Information Centre (Vic) has researched the Victorian experience of this situation. It has also built strong relationships with the members of the local Sudanese community and has developed a training program for people working with the issue of Domestic Violence in Sudanese communities. Heira is part of the Working Group to bring the research and training package to Canberra in August 2009.

This initiative was commenced by the YWCA Family Housing Outreach Service in partnership with Heira Women's Refuge, Beryl Women's Refuge, Doris Women's Refuge, Inanna North and the Women's Centre for Health Matters. Other Services supportive of this training but not directly involved include Canberra Rape Crisis Centre, DVCS, Companion House, Migrant Resource Centre and Women's Legal Centre. It is possible that this training could become part of a "Train the Trainer" arrangement with MRC and WCHM in the future. The training may also be appropriate and available in the future for workers in Health, Housing, Education, Policing, Criminal Justice and Children Services.

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INVOLVE PROGRAM

With a one-off grant received to fund a social inclusion project, Heira had a chance to run different events to help our residents integrate into the community. This grant gave us the opportunity to provide recently arrived migrants and refugees, and interstate women who use the services of Heira Refuge, with different activities and support needed in exploring and learning about the local area. The activities integrated into the Involve Program includes accessing groups, workshops and key events, attending various information sessions, landmark visits, cultural events, places of interest, picnics and social gatherings.

Feedback from women suggest these activities have been highly valuable and Heira will strive to continue with the program, where practicable due to cost, in order to provide opportunities for women to engage in their community this way. It is Heira's intention to continue to seek funding as this Program has been so beneficial in breaking the barrier of isolation for the women who have participated.

U N M E T N E E D S A N D F U T U R E D I R E C T I O N S

Heira will continue to support women with unresolved Immigration issues. Heira provides evidence of circumstances to Immigration, support and referral to MRC, Immigration Officers, Legal Support as well as material aid to the women in these situations. The process is time consuming and resource intensive, and outcomes with Immigration are often unsatisfactory. While these women are awaiting the outcome from Immigration they are not eligible for a government benefit and are therefore financially dependent upon Heira. At times women will appeal the Immigration decision, resulting in further increases to the timeframe and need for worker support,

accommodation and material aid. It is not uncommon for Heira to provide 100% of women's living costs for a 12 month period.

During the financial year 2008-09, Heira supported several women with accommodation (and in outreach & referral) who have children not in their care. These women are unable to access supported accommodation for families due to having part time unsupervised access with their children. As a single women's service Heira is unable to provide space for women to have access with their children even on a part time basis. It appears that this creates a greater strain on the maintenance of the relationship with their children.

Some women choose to return to their abusive partner for 1 or 2 nights per week to see their children, putting themselves at risk of further violence and abuse. This situation increases the emotional burden on these women who may also be dealing with the challenges of recovery from chemical dependency as well as their own adult and childhood trauma.

Heira raised awareness of this issue and the need for safe accommodation for women and their children at 2009 Toora Women Inc. strategic planning day and more broadly in the community services sector.

Heira would like to say thank you to all women who let us be part of their lives and allowed us to walk their journey with them. Special thanks go to Heira team: Belinda, Bogda, Jen, Indijana and Dara as well as our always supportive management and admin team for their hard work and dedication.

Mirsada Draskovic

HEIRA COORDINATOR

Q U O T E S

The SMS message we received from an ex resident, 6 months after she left the service:

“It’s been a while now and looking back how my life is now from when we first met: I have a lovely home, friends and peace here in ACT. And that long, painful journey began to heal starting with you, your belief and care. Good bless you and I will always remember you and be thankful to you.”

The following are the quotes from the women who participated in Involve Program:

“We all feel it’s an honour for us to go into the House (Government House) and see everything in the House which we never think it can happen in our life. At meantime, we feel we are all equal to other people in Australia, because we all have been offered this opportunity to see the noble Government House like other Australian people can do. We love Australia more and know Australia more and also feel proud of this country.”

“I love this show (Divine Performing Art) so much. I come from China and always feel homesick. This show is about Chinese culture and history...I feel more proud of myself being Chinese. Also I feel very lucky I can live in Australia and can enjoy the Chinese culture here as well. Thanks again.”

ALETA OUTREACH SUPPORT FOR WOMEN

Aleta Outreach Service for Women provides outreach support to women. Aleta is an early and post intervention program aimed at interrupting the homelessness cycle.

The need for intensive outreach support services for single women greatly exceeds what is currently available. Outreach offers an opportunity to interrupt the homelessness cycle. It also gives women an opportunity to rebuild their lives and to develop community support networks while living in their own home.

Aleta's service delivery model focuses strongly on engaging and supporting women within a case-management support framework. This means working with and for women in order to provide appropriate support solutions to meet their needs. Aleta's service provision provides an emphasis on creating a safe environment that enables women to make decisions and take control of their own lives.

This can include the provision of information or advocacy services, assessment, financial resources, case management support and emotional support. Direct service delivery works to provide women with tailored support solutions. It aims to resolve housing difficulties or crisis and enhance women's opportunity for social participation.

E A R L Y I N T E R V E N T I O N

Aleta can provide support to women who may already have suitable housing but are currently experiencing difficulties in one or more areas of their lives that, if not addressed, may mean a loss of their current housing. This includes a multiple number of issues, that often if picked up early, can be resolved quickly. If these issues are left and not dealt with then the processes are often harder to resolve. This is especially the case when people who have interpersonal conflicts and limited conflict resolution skills are residing in the same complex. Neighbourhood disputes often have significant impact on a person's ability to maintain suitable housing.

Aleta is an early and post intervention program aimed at interrupting the homelessness cycle



P O S T I N T E R V E N T I O N

Aleta often begins support periods with women who are already experiencing an episode of homelessness. Lots of the initial support provided at this time is support and advocacy around the ACT Housing processes. To secure a place on the priority housing list requires detailed evidence of your current situation as well as supporting documentation that proves your current situation is both urgent and critical and cannot be addressed by any other means other the provision of early allocation of ACT Housing (Priority Housing). You also have to provide evidence that you have support in place when housing is allocated.

Aleta has a proven history in both the Early and Post Intervention which has been demonstrated by the considerable increase in referrals from

Housing ACT. In this financial year 22% of Aleta’s referrals were from Housing ACT. I believe this collaboration and informal partnership has beneficial outcome for mutual clients. Aleta’s workers have developed productive relationships with Housing ACT workers and this has resulted positive and sustainable outcomes for the women we support.

Aleta Outreach Service for Women has two part time workers who support a minimum of 20 women at any one time. In this financial year Jane and Linda have supported a total of 41 women.

Some interesting statistics for this financial year:

%	DETAILS
25 %	Became Housing ACT tenants
41.5 %	50 years or over (17 Women)
17 %	Over 60 years (7 Women)
13%	Under 25 years old (5 Women)
27%	NESB (non-English speaking background)
5 %	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders
22 %	Referred by Housing ACT
17%	Approved for Disability Pension

Aleta supports women who identify as Australian but where English is not their first language and/or they were not born in Australia. We also support women who were born in Australia, English is their first language yet identify as having different a cultural identity and background.

Linda Hayden
ALETA COORDINATOR

LESLEY'S PLACE

It has been a busy and productive year at Lesley's Place. The continuing theme throughout the year has been adapting our service delivery to become more flexible in providing alcohol and other drug support for women and women with children.

INNOVATIONS, CHANGES AND IMPLEMENTATIONS

A major innovation to Lesley's Place service delivery in the last financial year has been the widening on entry points for women wishing to access the residential service. Our community intake procedure has been in place for some months now, resulting in women being able to access the service without being obliged to attend a detox withdrawal unit first. This has made accessing Lesley's Place much easier for many women, particularly those with children.

One of our aims is support women who would otherwise fall through the gaps. We continue to take women who are on pharmacotherapy programs and have recently adopted a policy of flexibility to allow women who are undergoing benzodiazepine reduction to access the residential service.

Whilst maintaining our relationship with the Canberra Hospital (TCH) Withdrawal Unit and Acadia House we have also supported women, in house, with relapse on occasions when it we considered it to be less disruptive for the woman's well being.

Since the opening of the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) Lesley's Place has consistently offered outreach support and as a result we have had an influx of women requesting this extra care. In fulfilling our commitment to aftercare for women at AMC, Lesley's Place has been able to offer beds to six women in the prison in the prior three months.

STAFF MOVEMENT

In January this year Natalie replaced Anna Stewart as Lesley's Place coordinator bringing with her many years of experience from her work at WIREDD. Lesley's Place would like to thank Anna for her commitment, work and friendship during her time as coordinator. We are also happy to welcome Natalie into the role and look forward to working with her to continue improvement on our service delivery to provide women with the best possible support available.

Natalie, however, is in high demand and is currently replacing Branka as acting Duty Director of Toora Women Inc., until the end of October 2009. For this reason, and due to Kylie being on extended leave, Lesley's Place has employed Heidi Minter and Tracie Williams on short term contracts. They both have come to Lesley's Place with wonderful skills and have been received very well by the women.

*...providing alcohol and
other drug support for women
and women with children*

S E R V I C E D E L I V E R Y

Lesley's Place had a noticeable increase in women who would like to access the service. During the 08-09 financial year bed occupancy rate for women and children in the residential service has increased from 83% to 91%. Furthermore, the average length of stay for women and their children also increased to 50 nights from 84. Subsequently workers have been at capacity for the full year. With more flexibility in service delivery, at times workers have been employed after hours and on weekends to provide support for high needs complex service users.

Marzenna has also received an increase in the number of women accessing the service. The average length of stay for adult women without children increased from 30 to 64 nights and the average length of stay for women with their children staying overnight increased from 14 nights to 171.

The majority of women who access Lesley's Place have issues relating to comorbidity confirming what we already know regarding intimate



connection between mental health, drug and alcohol and trauma.

Lesley's Place is committed to working with women 'where they are at' supporting women who would otherwise fall through the gaps due to the high complexity of these women's needs.

COLLABORATIONS, ADVOCACY AND REPRESENTATION

Lesley's Place has collaborated with a wide variety of agencies during the last financial year, both in the ACT and surrounding areas. These include:

AREAS OF PARTICIPATION

Table 1. Collaborations

Young Psychiatric Services
Bega Police, DOCS and other community services, Bega Women's refuge, Bega Family services
ATS collaboration with WIREDD
Toora Women Inc Services
Referrals from Sally Bramley at PSU
Ted Noffs – referrals and collaborative support for women
Arcadia
Youth Coalition
Women in Prison
Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)
Diversions Programs
Centrelink
Service visit - Maysoon, Arcadia & TCH
Alcohol and Drug Program Strategic Planning
Care and Protection – case conferences, working collaboratively with individual workers in a partnership toward same goal

Table 2. Advocacy

Attendance at AOD worker's group and forums
Alcohol and Tobacco Draft Strategy feedback
Advocacy of Women in the Court system
Women in Prisons Network
Human Rights Round Table
Launch by WCHM re CALD women
National Drug and Alcohol Sector Awards
Drug Action Week Conference
CIT student did surveys for research regarding links between domestic violence and dependency
Toora Women Inc Birthday Party
Reclaim the Night march
Participated in research (WCHM) re: institutionalised women.
Participated in worker's focus group at WIREDD on the needs of women using Ice for the WIREDD ATS project

Table 3. Training

The Alcohol & Drug Certificate IV
Mindfulness Training with Sandi Plumber
Counselling Training with Sandi Plumber
Senior First Aid Training
Explorations of Healing
Workers attended the Althea open day/launch at Directions
External supervision with Sandy Plummer
Board members service visit
Comorbidity forum organised by the Youth Coalition
Changes to Children and Young People's Act
QMS training all workers attended
Workers attended Bethyl Retreat
Drug and Alcohol Workers Groups and Forums
DBT training with Sandi Plumber

*“We are excited
at the prospect of
expanding Lesley’s Place
to include a detox”*

FUTURE PLANS

Lesley’s Place will continue to strive to provide quality service to women in need. We are excited at the prospect of expanding Lesley’s Place to include a detox for women and women with children. While this vision is still in its infancy, initial talks have taken place with the ACT Health Department and research is currently underway. Lesley’s Place looks forward to implementing this service for the benefit of those women who find it hard to enter into detox and rehabilitation, particularly due to parenting commitments.

Natalie Liosatos

LESLEY'S PLACE COORDINATOR

WOMEN'S INFORMATION RESOURCES & EDUCATION ON DRUGS & DEPENDENCY (WIREDD)

During the past financial year WIREDD was successful in having a full team. In addition to that WIREDD created a new Administration and Research position, which has been particularly crucial for WIREDD team.

WIREDD is continuing its active role in the community. WIREDD's expertise in gender analysis for women affected by drug, alcohol and other dependencies has been utilised through other services in the community.

The WIREDD team is working on two new projects; one is the need analysis of Home Detox and the second one is preparing a training package about Women and Ice.

S E R V I C E D E L I V E R Y

Drop-in	WIREDD had 2, 657 (2734) drop-ins over the financial year.
	6% of those drop-ins were done outside drop in hours.
	4% of drop-ins were children. Drop-in support needs range from general information to intensive support.
Phone Calls	Telephone support: We received 2,993 phone calls. 13.4% of those were intensive counselling support.
Counselling	Number of counselling sessions: 154 booked sessions, 70 non-booked sessions. Total of 224 sessions.
	30 new women attended counselling sessions.
	Number of women attending counselling identified as experiencing co-morbidity issues: Approximately 75%.
Groups	WIREDD ran 65 groups this financial year. 377 women attended those groups. 45 were new women. 16 children attended those groups with their mothers and 5 children were attending the childcare organised by WIREDD.
Outreach	Woden Canberra Hospital Detox: 34 visits, 75 women.
	Arcadia House: 7 visits, 18 women.
	PSU: 16 visits, 44 women.
	Visit to detention centres such as Belconnen Remand Centre (BRC), Symonston and the new AMC: 14 visits and 77 women.

NETWORKING AND SECTOR PARTICIPATION

- AOD workers group
- Co-morbidity Bus Tour
- AMC Community Reference Group
- Meeting with DIRECTIONS about Maysoon Project Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs task force (ATOD)
- ANU Links with the sub-dean of John XXIII College and Scholarship Chair of ANU Sista, a women's organisation on campus.
- Aboriginal Embassy
- 2008 ADP PLANNING DAY
- Dr Allan Windstock
- Women and Prisons Meeting
- Centacare Cormorbidity Interagency Day.
- Dr Janice Russell about eating disorders review
- Sex Workers Outreach Project- Lexxie (Education officer)
- CAHMA
- IMPACT

“We received 2,993 phone calls. 13.4% of those were intensive counselling support”

TRAINING / CONFERENCE ATTENDED :

- Aboriginal Counselling and Group Facilitation – run by Relationships Australia
- Senior First Aid Training
- Motivational Interviewing with Groups
- UNIFEM Young Women’s Leadership Forum
- Drug Action Week events- Drug/Alcohol conference
- Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Fire Warden Training
- Certificate IV in Drug and Alcohol – 4 Competencies
- AMC authorized visitor – Security awareness training
- Victorian Multicultural Women’s Service – Departing point for migrant and refugee women discussion paper – Teleconference
- Refugee and Migrant Women: getting the Social Inclusion Agenda Conference in Fremantle
- Part of the reference group on the research project regarding the social connectedness and wellbeing of CALD women in the ACT.



100 % of the women ... felt their privacy and anonymity was respected

EDUCATION / TRAINING DELIVERED

- Counselling Training to Toora Women Inc workers. In partnership with Dr Sandi Plummer.
- Toora Women Inc – Pilot Project Amphetamine Train the Trainer.
- Mindfulness training – for Toora Women Inc workers. This training was organized by WIREDD and Dr Sandi Plummer. Dr Plummer delivered the training.
- Feminism training – for Toora Women Inc workers.
- Focus group for Toora Women Inc workers in regards to working with women who use 'ice.

SERVICE SNAPSHOT

100 per cent of the women who answered our snapshot felt their privacy and anonymity was respected and felt that views and opinions were valued. 86.7 per cent felt better able to manage drug and/or alcohol use and 66.7 per cent has made a difference with relationship with family/friends.

The end of the 2008-09 financial year brings with it the end of WIREDD's funding agreement with the Alcohol Education and Rehabilitation Foundation (AERF). Thanks to this funding from AERF, WIREDD has been able to provide such things as lunch and childcare for the women attending the weekly Relapse Prevention group.

*Heartfelt thanks to all
the women who have been
part of the WIREDD team*

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

WIREDD remains committed to the needs of women in the ACT dealing with dependency issues. The service is looking forward to securing stable funding. This will enable WIREDD to continue to provide the staff and resources needed to juggle groups, drop in, counselling and the outreach services to Canberra's prison, psychiatric and detoxification units.

THANKS

Heartfelt thanks must go to all of the women who have been part of the WIREDD team over the past year. In particular, WIREDD would like to acknowledge Carol Cutmore; both for her time as a WIREDD team member, and her long term dedication to Toora Women Inc. We thank Dr Sandi Plummer for her guidance and advice. And most of all, we would like to thank the women who access our service.

Paulina Hellec

WIREDD COORDINATOR

WORLD RECIPES FROM THE BIRTHDAY OF TOORA WOMEN INC.



German Almond Cake

Heidi

DOUGH

250 grams cream
1.25 cups flour
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 teaspoon baking soda

METHOD

1. Mix these with a mixer
2. Bake it at 200 degrees for approximately 10-15 mins until its slightly brown

TOPPING

1 cup caster sugar 125 grams butter (melted)
1 tablespoon vanilla sugar
Juice from 1 lemon
200 grams sliced almonds

METHOD

1. Mix the ingredients together
2. Spread this over the baked base
3. Bake it for 15-20 minutes

Egyptian: Geddo's Beef and rice

Jacky

INGREDIENTS

500 grams of diced beef
1 large onion
4 to 6 large garlic cloves
1 to 2 teaspoons of rock salt
2 table spoons of lemon juice
Pepper to taste
1/2 cup of water (add small amount at a time don't overdo it. (It's to add moisture, the sauce creates its self)

METHOD

1. Lightly oil sauce pan and brown the beef.
2. Finely chop onions and garlic and add to pot. Add salt and lemon juice and pepper.
3. Simmer for 10 minutes add water.
4. Simmer for one to two hours (until meat is tender).
5. Serve on rice.

EGYPTIAN RICE

1 cup of rice to 1 ½ cups of water.
Lightly fry 1/3 of your rice in veggie oil until brown. Put all the rice in a sauce pan with lid or rice cooker with water.
Bring to the boil and the simmer with lid on for 20 minutes.

Bosnian BAKLAVA**Mirsada****INGREDIENTS**

2 packets of filo pastry
 1kg of walnuts or Australian pecans
 200gr unsalted butter
 1kg sugar
 1/2 fresh lemon
 750ml water

METHOD

1. Grind 800gr and chop up 200gr of walnuts.
2. Melt the butter.
3. Use square lamington baking tray and lightly grease it.
4. Place 6 sheets of filo pastry on the tray and spread them with walnuts (2-3cm thick layer).
5. Now place 4 sheets of filo pastry and spread them with a layer of walnuts too. Repeat this process until you used up all walnuts.
6. The last layer of the filo pastry needs to be again 6 sheets.
7. With a sharp knife cut baklava in diamond shapes.
8. Pour melted butter all over baklava until you used it all up.
9. Preheat the oven to 200C before you put baklava in. Bake it for 10min on 200C. Then, turn the oven down to 150C and continue baking baklava for the next 1.5 to 2 hours.

SYRUP

1. Bring sugar and water to the boil. Slice the lemon and add it to water and sugar. Cook it for 5 min, or until syrup gets thick (honey like).
 2. Pour hot syrup onto hot baklava (after baklava is baked and taken out of the oven).
 3. Wait for baklava to cool down and then - Bon appetite!!
- P.S. Don't forget to check your blood pressure and sugar level next day!

Italian Pasta Salad

(wheat free & vegetarian)

Belinda

INGREDIENTS

2 x 250g pkt quinoa penne cooked
2 x sweet potatoes peeled and cut in 1cm cubes
100g toasted slivered almonds
100g feta cheese cut in 1cm cubes
12 x button mushrooms cut in quarters
½ bunch parsley chopped roughly
½ bunch basil chopped roughly
2 handfuls of rocket chopped roughly
1 tbspn olive oil for cooked pasta & extra for frying

DRESSING

Juice & zest of 1 lemon
2 tbspn balsamic vinegar
100ml Olive Oil
1 handful of lemon thyme chopped finely
Cracked Black Pepper to season

METHOD

1. Cook pasta, drain, dress with olive oil to stop sticking together and cool.
2. Fry sweet potato cubes until soft & golden colour. Fry mushrooms and add rocket & herbs for 1 minute.
3. Combine the dressing ingredients.
4. Combine cooked sweet potato, mushrooms & herb mix, feta & almonds then mix in with cooled pasta.
5. Pour dressing over pasta and gently mix through.

Greek Salad

Nat

INGREDIENTS

1 large Cucumber, chopped
2 Roma (plum) Tomatoes, chopped
1 (5 ounces) jar pitted Kalamata Olives
1 (4 ounces) package Feta Cheese, crumbled
1 Red Onion, halved and thinly sliced
1/2 (10 ounces) package Romaine Lettuce Leaves
1/2 (10 ounces) package Baby Greens
Vinaigrette Dressing:
6 tablespoons Olive Oil
1 teaspoon Garlic Powder
1 teaspoon Dried Oregano
1 teaspoon Dried Basil
1 teaspoon Dijon Mustard
1 teaspoon Fresh Lemon Juice
1 1/2 cups Red Wine Vinegar

METHOD

1. Add chopped cucumber, chopped tomato, Kalamata olives, feta cheese, sliced red onion, romain lettuce, and baby greens to large serving bowl.

VINAIGRETTE DRESSING

In a small bowl, whisk olive oil, garlic powder, dried oregano, dried basil, Dijon mustard, fresh lemon juice, and red wine vinegar.

Greek Dolmathes

Nat

INGREDIENTS

1 pound ground beef
 1 medium onion, diced
 1/2 cup raw rice
 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley,
 flat leaf if available
 1/4 teaspoon dried mint, crumbled
 1 egg
 1/4 cup beef broth or water
 2 tablespoons margarine, melted
 Salt and pepper
 1 jar preserved grape leaves
 Egg & Lemon Sauce (Avgolemono)
 2 eggs
 Juice of one lemon

METHOD

- Combine meat, rice, onion, parsley, mint, egg, and broth or water, margarine and a little salt and pepper.
- Rinse grape leaves well to remove brine.
- Pick out the best leaves to stuff. Any broken leaves should be used to line the bottom of the pan.
- Place about 1 teaspoon filling in the centre of a grape leaf, shiny side down. (If using as part of a main course, use about 1 tablespoon filling.) Roll up, tucking sides in. (Should look rather like a cigar.) Continue rolling until all filling is used up.
- Arrange the dolmathes side by side, close together in a heavy 2 quart saucepan, (not aluminium) making more than one layer if necessary.
- Cover with a heavy heat-proof plate. This is important, if you skip the plate, the dolmathes tend to fall apart, Pour in water to barely cover dolmathes.
- Cover pan; bring to boil; lower heat and simmer for 1 hour. May be served as is or with Egg & Lemon Sauce.

SAUCE

- Beat eggs well; gradually beat in lemon juice .
- Pour off about 1 cup of hot broth from dolmathes.
- Beat the broth into the egg mixture.
- Remove plate from top of dolmathes.
- Gradually pour the egg mixture into pan; tipping pan to blend the egg mixture with remaining broth in pan.
- Cover pan; remove from heat and let stand for 5 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Lime tart

Linda

PASTRY

- 1 ¼ cups self raising flour
- 1 tablespoon cornflour
- Pinch salt
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1 egg (60 g)
- ¼ cup sugar

METHOD

1. Sift self raising flour, cornflour and salt.
2. Rub in butter.
3. Mix into dry dough with beaten egg and sugar.
4. Turn onto flour board, and roll out lightly.
5. Bake in a moderate oven, 180-200c for about 25 minutes.

FILLING

- 5 eggs lightly beaten
- 300 ml cream
- ¾ cup castor sugar
- 2/3 cup lime juice
- 2 tablespoon lime rind

METHOD

1. Combine all and place in pastry.
2. Bake in moderate oven for 30min or until just set.

Polish/Russian Vegetable Salad

Bogda

INGREDIENTS

- 4 boiled potatoes
- 4- 7 small cucumbers in brine from can ('Eskal' brand exported from Israeli)
- 4 boiled carrots
- 4 hard boiled eggs
- 3 apples
- 1 onion
- 1 jar of mayonnaise

METHOD

1. Cut everything in small cubes.
2. Mix all ingredients with mayonnaise.
3. Add salt and pepper to your taste.
4. Allow to rest in refrigerator before serving.

Ethiopian Bread

Service User

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups of flour
- 0.5 glass of milk
- 2 Tbs sugar
- 4 eggs

METHOD

1. Mix all ingredients with hands.
2. Form small balls and flatten them.
3. Deep fry.