

## Change of Name

Forty years ago a brave and visionary group of women set up a service for rape victims called Sydney Rape Crisis Collective. By the 90's the Centre had expanded to be a state wide service. A new name, NSW Rape Crisis Centre, reflected this expansion. As the organisation now provides services nationally and clients contact about sexual assault and domestic violence, in 2013 a further name change was decided. On the 23 September 2013, the then Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO launched Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia. It is hoped the new name and the work continues to honour those who came before, inspire those who will follow, and most importantly encourage those who seek our assistance.

## Corporate Partners

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia is fortunate to have a number of private sector partners who support the organisation's work. Solicitor Dianne Nilson of Nilson Legal is a long term friend of the organisation who has provided in kind legal support and guidance in our legal governance for more than ten years. In 2013 Adair Donaldson from Shine Lawyers began an ongoing partnership with the organisation. His legal team is reviewing the organisation's

## Sexual Assault Counselling Australia

Sexual Assault Counselling Australia provides nationwide telephone counselling, and face to face counselling in NSW, for anyone who has been affected by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The telephone service is available from 8am to 11pm (AEDST) Monday to Friday. After hours calls to the service are answered by 1800RESPECT, also a service of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia.

Face to face counselling is provided in the New England, North and Far West NSW, parts of Central NSW and the Riverina including the Mallee region in Victoria. In addition Sexual Assault Counselling Australia will fill service gaps when other NSW services experience demand above capacity.

During 2014 Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia organised forums across Australia to launch Sexual Assault Counselling Australia regionally. Attendees were offered an introduction to Complex Trauma and Vicarious Trauma. Police in each state or territory provided information on their systems and responses to sexual assault, child sexual assault and their work with the Royal Commission.

To June 2014 the Royal Commission has received over 7,000 letters

## Ethical Leadership: challenging gender based violence

The Ethical Leadership program is a multi layered program for organisations who are looking to foster a corporate culture that embraces zero tolerance to gender based violence including sexual harassment and homo or transphobia. The program builds on the work of Professor Moira Carmody of the University of Western Sydney in relation to the Sex and Ethics program and brings in a third partner, Dr Kath Albury of the University of NSW.

Ethical Leadership will be offered at three levels, organisational, leaders, and the shop floor. At the organisational level the organisation's cultural climate will be assessed and a community

## Maintaining Partnerships

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia staff presented to organisations and interagencies on 72 occasions in the past year. A further 53 training sessions were offered to a total of 933 people. Events were held in all states and territories. 34% of events were held in rural and regional areas and 66% were in state and territory capitals. Locations included Geraldton, Alice Springs,



From left: Debra Maher, Marie Bashir, Maha Abdo, Wafa Zaim

national legal data bases in relation to sexual assault and domestic violence law, and organisational compliance to privacy and communication legislation. Adair is interested in the civil aspects of sexual assault and Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia is working with him to expand these options for those who experience sexual assault where an institution may have a duty of care.

and emails, held over 2,000 private sessions and 17 public hearings. It has released its first interim report. The extension of the Royal Commission until 2017 will allow more people to tell their story, a further 70 public hearings to be held and more research to be conducted in order to produce the final report. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia is optimistic that this report will be the foremost document in guiding Australian institutions in protocol and practice to ensure safety when working with children.



From Left: Detective Inspector Paul Jacobs, Jackie Burke, Assistant Commissioner Mark Murdoch, Karen Willis, Nicole Scheidel

readiness program will be tailored for each organisation based on their cultural climate and the key goals of management. The leaders training will utilise the principles of the Sex & Ethics Program. Shop floor activities will be designed to implement cultural change or to maximise an existing positive climate.

The program will be developed and evaluated with at least three corporate partners over eighteen months. Once evidence of positive outcomes has been achieved the Ethical Leadership program will be promoted to public and private companies across Australia.

Ballina, Townsville and Canberra. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia initiated or completed five research projects and held active membership in seven state and national networks and reference groups. The organisation provided media commentary in relation to sexual assault or domestic violence on 71 occasions.

## Visitors to the Centre

Throughout the year Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia has welcomed many visitors. They have included service providers from across Australia and overseas, those in public life and others from creative and business backgrounds who come to offer their talents and service in support of the organisation. In July Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia was proud to welcome the Leader of the Opposition in the Australian Government the Hon Bill Shorten MP and members of his team. The visit was organised by the NSW Shadow Minister for the Status of Women the Hon. Sophie Cotsis MLC. Other key state wide sexual assault and domestic violence service providers attended. Mr Shorten expressed considerable interest and knowledge in the area of domestic violence. Leadership is one critical component in the work to put a Full Stop to sexual assault and domestic violence. It is clear that Mr Shorten is a committed part of the national team leading in this work.

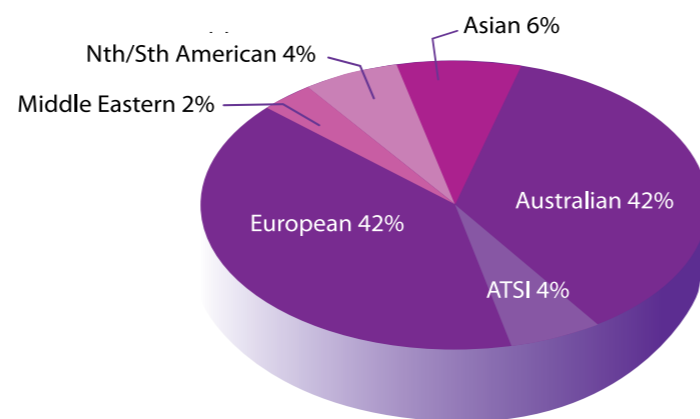
## Golf Day

In September 2013 the Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia patron Lauren Jackson organised a Lauren Jackson Invitational Golf Day in Albury. The event attracted over 100 people with funds raised being shared between Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia and Albury/Wodonga Women's Health Centre. It is Lauren's intention to repeat the event every two years with a plan of building the day into an event on every golfer's must-do list.

## Staff Profile

At the 30.6.14 Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia employed a total of 73 people. All members of the clinical team hold Social Work, Psychology or equivalent qualifications. Projects and administration staff hold qualifications relevant to their position including a Masters in Business, Masters in Government, and Masters in Accounting. BA's are held in Professional Studies, Psychology, Science, International Studies, and an Advanced Diploma in Business Studies. The youngest team member is 26 and the oldest is 62 with the average age being 41. Staff attended 88 professional development events throughout the year and all participated in supervision and an annual performance appraisal.

## Staff Cultural Background



P 02 8585 0333 F 02 9555 5911  
PO Box 555 Drummoyne NSW 2047

Funded by NSW Ministry of Health and the Australian Government Department of Social Services  
ABN 58 023 656 939



From left: Dr Rae Cooper, Karen Willis, Bill Shorten, Sophie Cotsis, Janet Loughman, Denele Crozier, Moo Baulch



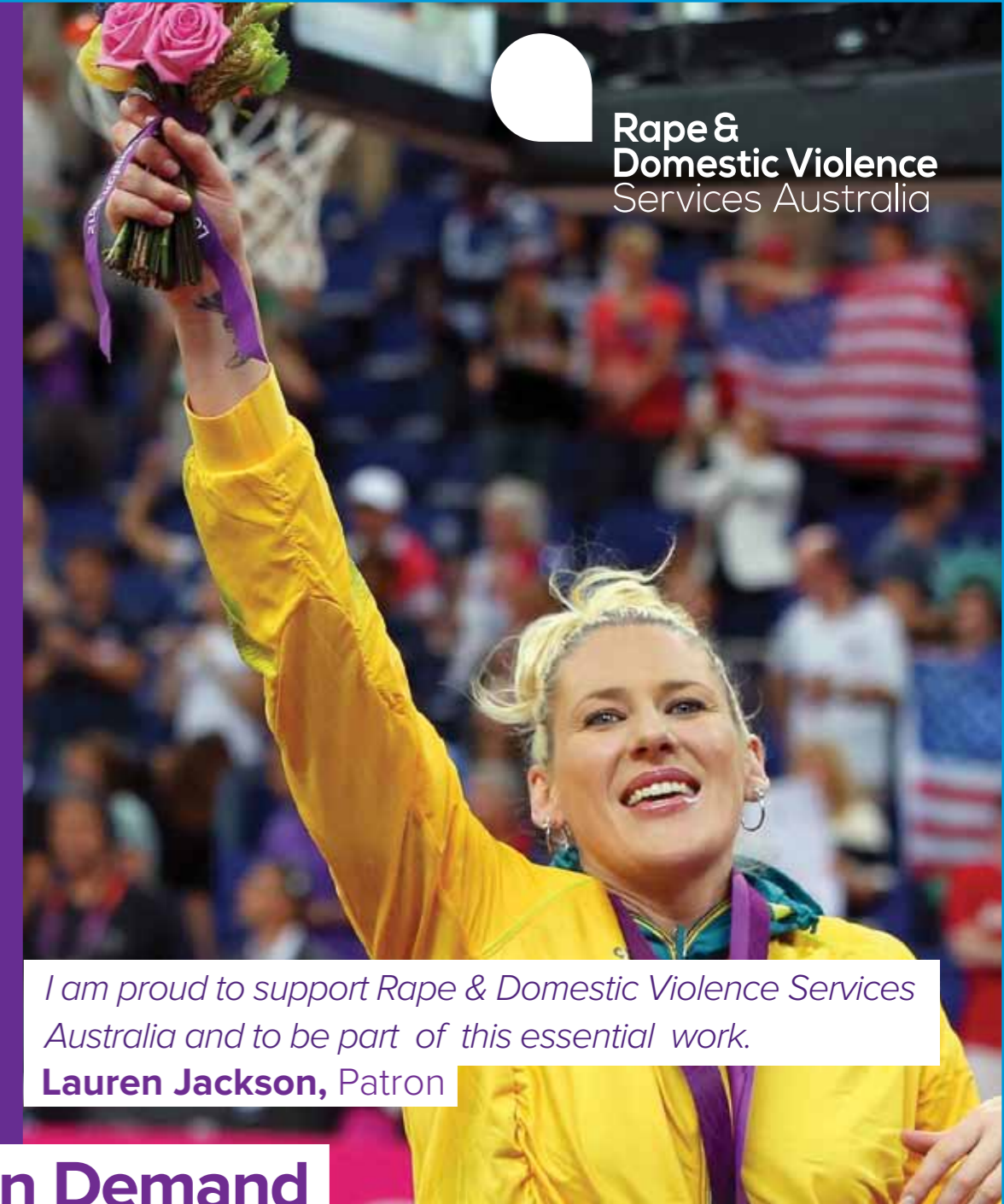
From left: Christian Willis, Ben DeBono, Lauren Jackson, Karen Willis, Helen Harbutt, Robyn Walsh

## Financial Report

Income	
Grants	6,536,461
Fundraising and donations	43,296
Training and contracts	162,339
Other	78,627
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,820,723</b>
Expenditure	
Wages and on-costs	5,606,510
Administration	514,655
Maintenance, equipment and IT	307,039
Professional development	183,854
Resources and travel	172,161
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,784,219</b>
Transfer to Reserves	35,400
<b>Balance</b>	<b>1,104</b>

**Counselling Services** [rape-dvservices.org.au](http://rape-dvservices.org.au)  
24/7 NSW Rape Crisis 1800 424 017  
24/7 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732  
Sexual Assault Counselling Australia 1800 211 028  
Online Counselling via website

# ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14



Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia

I am proud to support Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia and to be part of this essential work.  
**Lauren Jackson, Patron**

## Increase in Demand

In greater numbers than ever before people whose lives have been impacted by sexual assault or domestic violence are seeking support in their recovery and are reporting the crime to Police. This increase is being experienced across all Australian states and territories.

More and more those who experience such violence are saying 'what happened was not my fault, it is a crime. I have a right to be safe and to recover and to seek criminal redress for the crime/s I have experienced'.

For Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia this has meant a 25% increase in occasions of service over the last twelve months.

A number of factors have contributed. Media reporting of sexual assault and domestic violence is increasingly more respectful. The victim blaming rhetoric of yester year has been dramatically reduced. The work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has encouraged many to talk about the sexual abuse they experienced in childhood in institutions and, as is far more common, in the family. An environment is being created where the next generation is growing in a community which talks about sexual assault and domestic violence and importantly about respectful relationships. Our leaders, sports people, entertainers and politicians are increasingly saying 'violence against women must stop'.

Less and less is our community saying domestic violence is a family matter or that sexual assault happened for any reason other than the offender/s criminal behaviour. Many are seeking to assist those who experience such violence. If the supporters

who contact Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia are an example, supporters are supporting with great compassion and a conviction that sexual assault and domestic violence is an appalling and abusive behaviour which must stop.

As a society our task is to ensure that when someone seeks support in their recovery from the trauma of sexual assault or domestic violence, and when they report the crime, that our systems are available, accessible, high quality, evidence based and responsive. This requires government, community and corporate support.

The challenge is to put a stop to sexual assault and domestic violence - to put a Full Stop to the crime.

## It's our birthday

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia turns 40 this year. In 1974 the then Prime Minister Gough Whitlam sent the first cheque to the Sydney Rape Crisis Collective. Forty years of service later the organisation may look different but the mission and values defined by our visionary elders continue to drive the organisation. As well as continuing to be feminist in principle and practice our organisation continues to hold that; everyone has the right to live free of sexual assault and domestic violence, such violence is about power and control and aims to hurt, humiliate and dominate, and a gendered analysis is critical if we are to prevent sexual assault and domestic violence.

## Chairperson's Report



Philippa Dimakis,  
Chairperson of the Board of  
Rape & Domestic Violence  
Services Australia

During the past year the Board followed its usual timetable of governance in policy development and review, oversight of organisational legalities, and the formulation of strategic direction in regard to the increasingly diverse nature of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia funding sources.

In July, after considerable legal delays to the implementation of the Equal Remuneration Order for workers in our industry, the Board was very happy indeed to approve a further and well deserved salary increase of 2.5% for all staff.

The organisation's successful tendering for funding from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has resulted in further growth. Conveniently premises have been found that adjoin our existing workplace to accommodate the additional counsellors who will carry out this important work.

In the past, much of the organisation's funding has stemmed from government grants. In mid-2015 the funding model will change

*Your service has been a great support during 2 years of family court. My privacy was respected, and the service was very supportive and understanding. I couldn't have done it without you guys. Client*

## Northern Territory Government Women's Safe Houses

Women's Safe Houses are a crucial service to women in remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities. They provide crisis accommodation for women and children escaping domestic & family violence. Safe Houses employ local women who provide crisis and case work support. The Women's Safe Houses operate 24/7 and are coordinated by a network of Team Leaders and Regional Coordinators.

In 2012 the Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia Gunbalanya Safe House project enabled the transformation of a vital Safe House service in the Gunbalanya Aboriginal Community. The project increased local workers' skills and knowledge, and as a direct result, local women operated the Safe House continuously throughout the wet season.

The Northern Territory Government manages fourteen Safe Houses. Following the success of the Gunbalanya Safe House Project the NT Government approached Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia to design and deliver a comprehensive training program to their Safe House Regional Coordinators.

Three training programs of two days each were developed and delivered in 2014. The programs covered; understanding domestic

*Thank you so much for sending through the information and for all the support and guidance you provided today. It is greatly appreciated. This is a valuable service greatly needed by those affected by domestic violence. It has empowered me in the difficult circumstances I currently find myself in. Client*

radically, with governments "purchasing" services via tendering processes. This will almost certainly be accompanied by some privatisation of social welfare services and result in NGOs like ours increasingly seeking funds for research and innovative programs from other sources.

Accordingly, the Board has appointed a Relationships Manager. Her task is to increase philanthropic support from individuals, foundations, and corporations for the organisation's new foundation – Full Stop Foundation – to support a range of projects that seek to stop sexual assault and domestic violence from happening.

Earlier this year, the Board welcomed Lizzie Mulder, who has wide experience and skills in counselling, to fill a Board vacancy.

Following the Board's approval of an upgrade to the service's data-keeping capacity, students, academics and government agencies from Australia and New Zealand are now seeking to use the ideas and concepts inherent in our data systems as a resource.

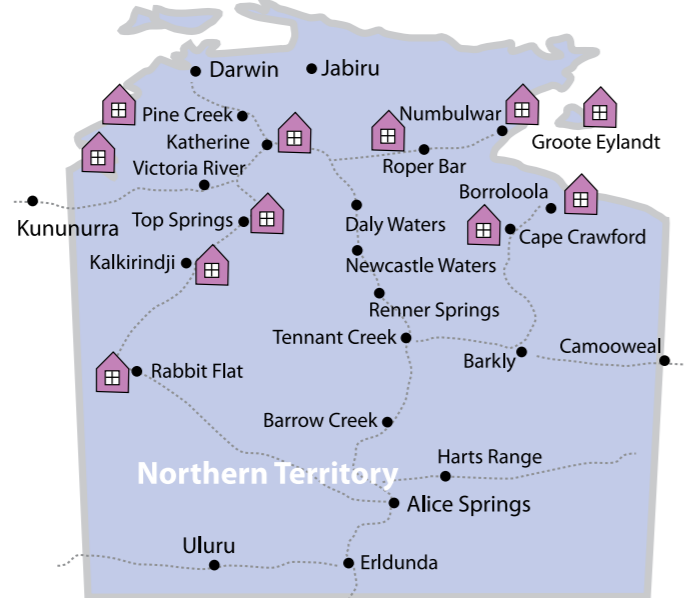
In October the Board will participate in a governance review workshop, followed by the annual planning day. The Board will examine priorities for the changed and challenging climate that awaits the organisation in 2015.

and family violence, effective case work and supervising staff.

Following outstanding evaluations of the training, the NT Government has requested a further four days of training in Vicarious Trauma Management and Leadership in 2015.

The map pinpoints the location of 11 of the Safe Houses.

Since delivery and evaluation in the NT, the training is already being requested by other government departments, including the Department of Family and Community Services in NSW which has approached the organisation to deliver similar training in Understanding Domestic and Family Violence in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities to refuge workers across the state.



## Counselling Service

It's not often our organisation quotes a Kevin Costner film, but the line "build it and they will come" could well be the subtitle of 2013-2014 for Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia. It seems that if you build a quality counselling service that provides compassionate, feminist, client-centred professional support to people affected by sexual and domestic violence, they will move from the silence and they will be heard.

The past 12 months has been an incredible year of Counselling Service achievements. Between July 2013 and June 2014, our Counsellors assisted 12,847 new clients in their recovery from trauma and in doing so, conducted 50,736 telephone and online counselling sessions. Clients are accessing telephone and online counselling support through NSW Rape Crisis, 1800RESPECT, Myline, and Sexual Assault Counselling Australia. In addition to this, face to face counselling services are expanding with 124 new clients and a total of 837 face to face counselling sessions provided in the last financial year. Face to face counselling services operated by Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia include the Community Based Counselling Service, Sexual Assault Counselling Australia, and the Secondary Prevention Counselling Program for men.

Responding to the increasing demand has been a real challenge this past year. Since July 2013, an additional 18 shifts have been added to the weekly telephone and online counselling roster. This has increased counselling hours offered per week from 751.75 to

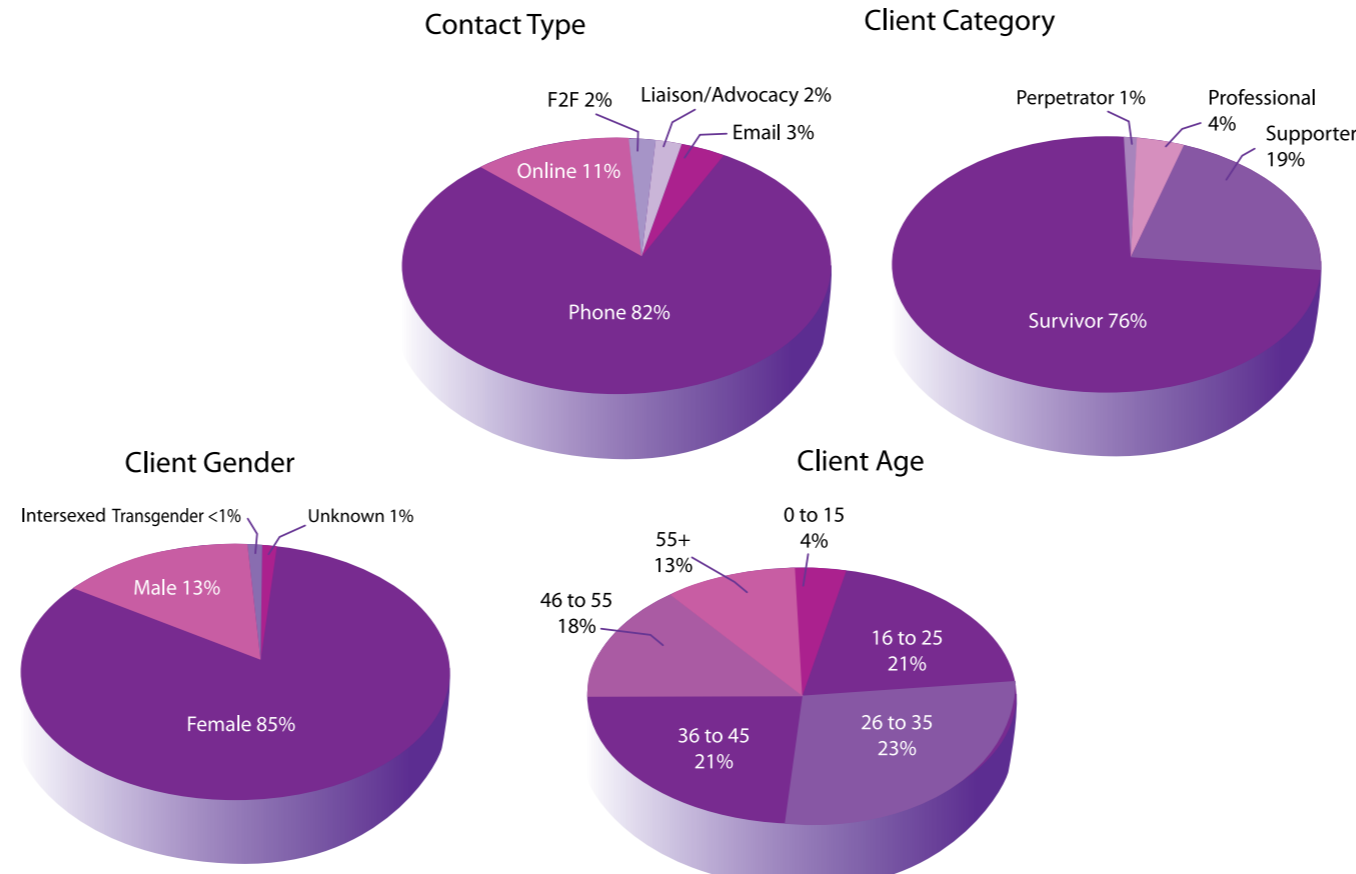
891.25. The organisation has consistently recruited Counsellors throughout the financial year increasing the size of the telephone and online counselling team from 34 to 49 Counsellors over the 12 months. The resulting increase in occasions of service has necessitated expansion of the senior clinical team and reconsideration of internal structures and processes. This work has been undertaken to ensure we can continue to provide high quality advocacy and coordinated interagency support to clients while also providing high quality clinical supervision, guidance, leadership and wellbeing support to staff.

One of the things that the Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia women have never been short on is the confidence to attempt new and innovative projects. The organisation is currently in the process of implementing structural changes within the counselling team that will enable better outcomes for the clients and growth opportunities for the organisation and staff. While this has been a considerable organisational task, the courage to make these changes seem insignificant to the courage of our clients.

Recently a client fed back to the organisation on how Counsellors have made an 'enormous difference' to her quality of life and that she now feels much 'braver' and able to go out more often. Courage is contagious, and Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia clients inspire us every day to continue to do the work we do.

*Our conversation yesterday provided me with a pathway to better work with clients who are victims of DV. I feel better equipped to make professional referrals and provide current information to my clients. Counsellor*

## Client Profiles



## Trauma Specialist Counselling Training

Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia has developed and is delivering a ten day Trauma Specialist Counselling training program. The training is for qualified and experienced counsellors who are directly engaging with people



Training Team of Rape & Domestic  
Violence Services Australia

who are traumatised as a result of sexual assault.

The training builds on Counsellors' existing skills and provides a framework to link the impacts of trauma, the dynamics of abuse, and therapist qualities, to structuring effective treatment.

Trauma Informed Care training has been widely

accepted and is suitable for those supporting a traumatised person. However, there is a lack of training for professionals who are working with the traumatised person towards their recovery. The Trauma Specialist Counselling Training fills this gap.

The Department of Social Services has funded delivery of the Trauma Specialist Counselling training to practitioners who are counselling people who are participating in, or impacted by, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. In 2014 the training has been delivered in Armidale and Sydney with a third program planned for Dubbo in 2015.

Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive and interest has been expressed in the training from around Australia. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia will work with the Department of Social Services to explore expanding the training across NSW and nationally.

## Other Training

The training program of Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia has expanded considerably over the past 12 months. The core programs: Responding with Compassion, Complex Trauma and Managing Vicarious Trauma continue to be in high demand. In addition to the 'Working with and understanding Aboriginal Domestic & Family Violence training' other new training programs include: Supervising Staff, Understanding Domestic & Family Violence in CALD communities, Elder Abuse and Telephone Counselling.

The training team now includes seven qualified Trainers and a

## Hey Sis We've Got Your Back (Aboriginal Women's Sexual Assault Network)

The 'Hey Sis' Network continues to achieve considerable support from Aboriginal women, and has a membership base of over 100. Since it was established, the Network has held six meetings across NSW, with a seventh planned. Over and again members have said: they are passionate and committed to reducing sexual violence in their communities; the opportunity to talk and learn from each other in safety about sexual assault is invaluable; and that this work will take time, and while it will be difficult, it must be done.

Hey Sis project workers are regular contributors to Koori radio and Koori News. Project workers continue to engage with influential individuals and forums regarding the Network's aims and activities.

Some Hey Sis members are employed in related fields but most are Aunties and community women; the women that others know they can go to when sexual assault happens. They are the women who say 'violence stops at my door'. Many are working with limited support and some experience opposition from others. Meetings facilitate constructive yarning, improved pathways to services

## Chinese Delegation

In January 2014 Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia was greatly honoured to welcome a delegation of Chinese women from the All China Women's Federation. The delegation was organised by the China-Australia Human Rights Technical Cooperation Program of the Australian Human Rights Commission. Four women, who were to establish a counselling service in China for women experiencing domestic violence, spent seven days with Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia Trainers covering all aspects of domestic violence counselling and service provision. As well as an opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from each other, there was considerable well intended banter as participants and Trainers struggled with the complications of communicating through interpreters. Feedback from the women certainly indicated that they found the training useful and that much of the information and practice discussed would be implemented on their return to China.

and justice, vicarious trauma management, and professional development.

The Hey Sis model is based on UN backed models where working against sexual assault starts by working with the individuals and networks already established in communities. External systems are then built to integrate with and support those existing systems.

Hey Sis has been successful in attracting funding of \$130,000 in 24 months from government and philanthropic sources. Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia has allocated unattached income to resource the network but securing ongoing financial support is critical to continuing and enhancing the work of Hey Sis.



Chinese Delegation with Rape & Domestic Violence  
Services Staff



Chinese Delegation with R&DVSA staff & Detective Acting  
Superintendent Rohan Cramsie, Detective Acting Inspector  
Andrew Tesoriero and Detective Acting Sergeant James  
Meyer from Newtown Police Station Australia