

Annual Report 2008-09

NSW Rape Crisis Centre

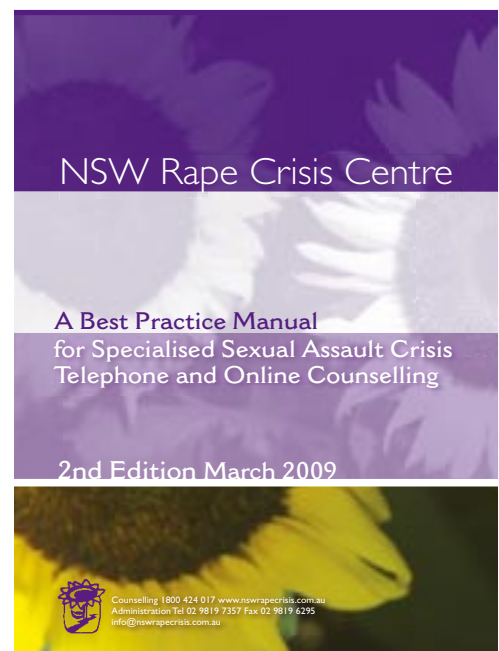
*“And it is my gender – it is our gender – Australian men – that are responsible.
And so the question is: what are we going to do about it?”*

The Hon Kevin Rudd MP, Prime Minister
White Ribbon White Tie dinner speech – September 2008

A Best Practice Manual for Specialised Sexual Assault Crisis Telephone and Online Counselling, 2nd Edition

In 2008/09 the NSW Rape Crisis Centre reviewed and further developed its *Best Practice Manual for Specialised Sexual Assault Crisis Telephone and Online Counselling*, to create the 2nd Edition. The Manual incorporates a feminist framework and adopts a feminist analysis of sexual assault. The impacts of trauma are discussed and resultant mental health concerns are conceptualised within a trauma model, an alternative model to that often presented within the medically oriented mental health field. The manual provides the rationale for Centre policies and practices and thus guides and informs the work of Centre Counsellors. It aims to ensure that our clients receive evidence based, compassionate, professional assistance in their recovery.

The final product is a 155 page document that contains a summary of all the professional literature to date that relates to the effective provision of counselling services to people who have experienced sexual violence and their supporters. With specific sections on the provision of counselling services by telephone and online technologies, this document is a unique reference for all professionals who are interested in providing evidence-based interventions to sexual assault survivors.



The *Best Practice Manual for Specialised Sexual Assault Crisis Telephone and Online Counselling, 2nd Edition* was launched at Blake Dawson in March 2009. Guest speakers included Andrew O’Keefe on behalf of the White Ribbon Campaign. Consistent requests to purchase the manual throughout the year has proven the launch to be successful in both promoting the work of the Centre and contributing to the ongoing development of best practice standards in the field of sexual violence.

Counselling Manual Launch – March 2009
Julie Dombrowski - Senior Counsellor & Jackie Burke - Clinical Manager
NSW Rape Crisis Centre



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The Counselling Service - Overview

Following the 2007 SafeWork award for the Centre's Vicarious Trauma Management Program, we continue to develop current knowledge about this occupational health and safety risk both within the centre and outside the organisation. This includes continued refinement of our in-house management program and pursuing opportunities for research.

The Office for Women's Policy, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet funded a counselling service initiative to develop clinical care networking for clients with multiple needs. The aim of this work is to ensure that NSW Rape Crisis Centre clients who also have contact with other services are supported in cohesive and effective ways. The project facilitates communication

between support services, counsellors and support workers so that the work is collectively attuned to the client's goals. This minimizes confusion and frustration for clients and maximizes potential to reach desired clinical outcomes. Evaluation of the effects of this work is now commencing.

Whilst these exciting projects have been going on, counsellors collectively responded to more than 6,700 requests for counselling. The counsellors are, as always, committed to providing best practice, evidence based, compassionate and professional services to all people throughout NSW who have been affected by sexual violence.

"RCC manages vicarious trauma (VT) in a swift, caring, supportive and practical way. I have never known another organisation to be as in tune with the risk for individual workers and as committed to addressing VT in a non blaming way. It's awesome."

Counsellor, NSW Rape Crisis Centre

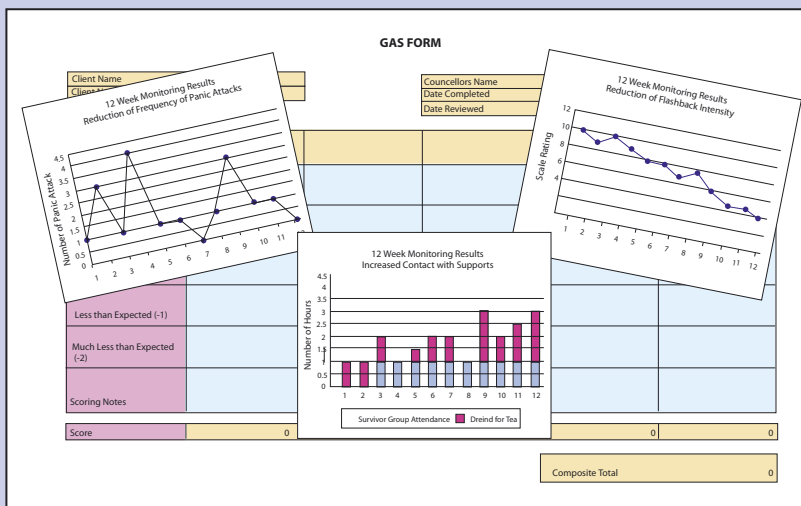
Evaluation

Conducting an evaluation of counselling services is at the cornerstone of best practice, evidence-based service provision (Helplines Australia, 2005). The Centre has been conducting extensive evaluations of the processes used by the counselling team through the use of Quality Improvement measures for a number of years. These evaluative practices measure adherence to process. They do not tell us whether the processes used are effective in creating change for our clients.

NSW Rape Crisis Centre has not previously conducted an outcomes evaluation. Such evaluation for telephone and online

counselling services offering individualised crisis interventions is extremely complicated and time consuming. The anonymity that our service provides means that long term follow up of clients to assess long standing treatment change is not practical. Further, as the Centre provides individualised interventions to our clients, it is extremely difficult to make generalisations and comparisons between clients regarding treatment change.

This year, a complex outcome evaluation design has been developed to answer the question, "Do our interventions really help our clients?" The evaluation design uses five measures to assess



treatment change. They include the *Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) Scale* (APA, 2000), the *Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) method* (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968), contact duration, frequency of contacts and emergency service activation. Implementation of these measures and data collection commenced in September 2008, to be completed by late 2010. This quantitative research design of the counselling service and its interventions is one of the first of its kind amongst Australian telephone and online counselling services. It not only reflects the professionalism of the NSW Rape Crisis Centre, but also our commitment to world class, best practice service provision to people who have experienced sexual violence and their supporters.

Community Based Counselling Services

This year, the NSW Rape Crisis Centre has been successful in its tender to NSW Health and SSWAHS to provide counselling services to adult survivors of childhood sexual assault. This funding will provide five counselling appointments per week in each of seven Women's Health Centres throughout New South Wales. These Centres are at: Bathurst, Lismore, Albury, Leichhardt, Liverpool, Penrith, and Wyoming. By basing the services in Women's Health Centres, a welcoming environment for clients and a like-minded support network for counsellors is ensured. In addition to these community based counselling appointments,

the availability of counsellors responding to telephone and online requests for services has been expanded.

Adults who experienced sexual assault during childhood often have difficulties accessing specialist counselling services to respond to their needs. Experiences of such trauma in childhood are correlated with complex mental health outcomes including depression, anxiety, substance abuse and dependency and eating disorders. The establishment of the trauma counselling services in partnership with Women's Health Centres will ensure an important and high demand service is provided.



NSW Rape Crisis Centre Achieves Accreditation

In June 2009 the NSW Rape Crisis Centre became an accredited service under the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) protocols. Of the seventeen standards of measure used to decide accreditation the Centre met all standards and exceeded requirements in ten.

As part of its commitment to providing services from a feminist perspective NSW Rape Crisis Centre understands its obligation to ensure all work is: evidence based and referenced to the latest research, underpinned by feminist principles and a gender analysis, and embedded in the stories and experiences of

women. When work at this standard is achieved outcomes must then be reviewed to identify further improvement.

The Quality Management Services (QMS) review measured NSW Rape Crisis Centre against the Health and Community Services Standards and the Women's Health Standards. The standards examine organisational leadership, human and physical resource management, financial, knowledge and risk management, legal and regulatory compliance, meeting community needs, focusing on positive outcomes, ensuring cultural safety and appropriateness, confirming consumer rights, empowerment, service co-ordination, agreements and partnerships, collaboration, good practice and community and professional capacity building.

Preparation for the review required completion of a workbook in which all aspects of Centre functioning and practice are described. Evidence must be provided to support workbook descriptions. This is followed by an external review team spending three days at the Centre reviewing everything.

It was very rewarding for all those involved in NSW Rape Crisis Centre to achieve accreditation and to have exceeded the standards in so many areas.

Accreditation Certificate

The Hon. John Della Bosca MLC, NSW Minister for Health
with Karen Willis, EO & Phillippa Dimakis, Chair NSW Rape Crisis Centre



“NSW RCC is a centre of excellence, and provides a model that is leading practice for other services and has effectively raised the issue of sexual assault, and its prevention, within the Australian community.” QMS Accreditation Review Report - March 2009

NSW RCC has achieved a measure of excellence that is unique in small and even larger community service organisations, and therefore has been credited with an exceeding of some standards in each section of the report.” QMS Accreditation Review Report – March 2009

Sex and Ethics

Associate Professor Moira Carmody of the Social Justice Social Change Research Centre at the University of Western Sydney and NSW Rape Crisis Centre have been working on the primary prevention of sexual assault through education for the past four years. The partnership included an Australian Research Council grant to research and develop the Sexual Ethics Program. Research shows that participation in the six week program resulted in behaviour change for participants. Sex and Ethics is now part of the Australian Government's Respectful Relationships program. A train the trainer program on Sex and Ethics has also been offered by Moira and Karen, the Centre's Executive Officer, in New Zealand in June 2009. Work to decrease sexual assault by achieving behaviour change at the primary prevention level has not been well understood in the past. The Sex and Ethics program is one of a few programs which

is achieving outcomes in this area. NSW Rape Crisis Centre is proud to be part of this ground breaking endeavour.



New Zealand Sex & Ethics Training – June 2009

'O' Week Resource

Each year Universities and TAFEs contact NSW Rape Crisis Centre requesting Orientation week information. With over 80,000 students enrolling annually this is a great opportunity. In 2008 Lauren Hansen from the Girl Guides of NSW/ACT asked if we had a project she could complete as part of her work toward achieving her Queens Guide Award. Developing an 'O' week information resource was the obvious project.

Lauren arranged training on sexual assault for her fellow Guides. The Guides identified the issues that had most meaning for them. Lauren designed the resource. A grant from the Department of Corrective Services covered the printing, and Lauren and the Guides boxed up the resource and sent them to NSW tertiary institutions. 84,000 wallet size information cards were distributed.



Van Against Violence

In 2007 the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW funded NSW Rape Crisis Centre to provide its "Responding with Compassion to Someone who has been Sexually Assaulted" training in rural NSW. Two tours were undertaken in the 2008/09 year with the Van Against Violence visiting locations such as Bourke, Cobar, Bathurst, Mudgee, Lightning Ridge, Eden, Cooma, Gouldburn, Deniliquin, Albury, Wagga Wagga, Coonabarabran and Walgett. Over 1,600

people attended the training. The 'Van' also visited a number of TAFEs and held discussions with sexual assault services and Police. The final trip to Western and South Western NSW will take place in September 2009. As a result of the 'Van's' work contact from those areas has increased. This includes contact from health and welfare workers seeking assistance in the work they are doing to support people who have experienced sexual violence.

"When I did an end of semester evaluation the students named the Rape Crisis talk as the one that really stood out for them by being both interesting and very informative."

TAFE teacher

C.A.R.E. (Community, Advocacy, Respect & Equity) Campaign

The Australian Services Union, which has coverage at NSW Rape Crisis Centre, has initiated a campaign to improve wages and conditions for those employed under the Social and Community Services Award. At NSW Rape Crisis Centre most staff are paid \$20,000 to \$25,000 less than their counterparts in the public sector. All at NSW Rape Crisis Centre do what we do for a number of

reasons, money being just one of them. The organisation's capacity to continue to attract and retain qualified staff of the current calibre will be diminished if wages are not brought into line with workers in other sectors. Support for the Union's CARE campaign is high at NSW Rape Crisis Centre.

Health Department Review and Service Expansion

Over the last four years NSW Rape Crisis Centre has experienced a significant increase in demand. While this is a great outcome, the Centre's work to meet that demand has resulted in considerable financial difficulties. Representations have been made to the funding body for help. This led to Sydney South West Area Health Service and NSW Health organising an independent review of the Centre's core services. The reviewer's findings were very favourable

and resulted in the Minister for Health John Della Bosca providing an immediate allocation of \$200,000 to the Centre to reduce the structural deficit. Additional funds have also been provided by the NSW Government to provide counselling services from Women's Health Centres to adult survivors of childhood sexual assault, and to offer an online therapeutic support group for young people who have experienced sexual violence.

"There is a clear commitment to clinical quality assurance and evaluation within NSW Rape Crisis This is underpinned by effective leadership of the counselling team and strong support from the Management Committee and the Centre Manager for professional development, clinical supervision, routine case review, debriefing and vicarious trauma management programs for front line counselling staff."

Review of NSW Rape Crisis Centre Core Services – May 2009
Report prepared by Carla Cranny & Associates for SSWAHS and NSW Health

Statistics

Total Contacts

New clients	1,553
2-4 contacts	590
5+ contacts	4,582
Total	6,725

Telephone

5,985

Online

740

Supporters

23%

Most common presenting issue

Adult sexual assault	33%
Child sexual assault	35%
Mental Health	14%
Self harming	4%

Time since assault

Last 7 days	28%
8 days to 6 months	20%
More than 6 months	52%

Cultural background

Australian	74%
ATSI	3%
European	10%
Middle Eastern	2%
North American	2%
South American	1%
African	1%
Asian	5%
Pacific Islanders	2%

Ability

Physical Disability	18
Intellectual Disability	17
Both	4

Age

Under 15	2%
16 to 25	27%
26 to 35	27%
36 to 45	22%
46 to 55	15%
Over 55	7%

Finances

Income

Grants	1,040,797
Donations	16,940
Other	68,731
Total	1,126,468

Expenditure

Wages and on costs	878,099
Administration	139,493
Maintenance, equipment and IT	52,647
Professional development	29,576
Resources and travel	43,420
Total	1,143,235

Transfer from Reserves 17,000

Balance 233

