

Annual Report 2010-11

NSW Rape Crisis Centre

"I still remember getting off that call and looking at the phone to see that you had worked with me for 84 minutes. You stuck with me in that counselling call which I can only describe as gruelling. I suspect it may have been the only time in my life I felt like giving up. I felt totally overwhelmed and just wanted someone to take over. You didn't. That was of great benefit because now I know I can push through anything." **Client**



Promoting awareness is the first step in stopping sexual assault and domestic violence. I am proud to support NSW Rape Crisis Centre and to be part of this essential work.

Lauren Jackson, Patron
Australian Professional Basketball Player

We've gone national

In September 2010 NSW Rape Crisis Centre became the clinical service provider for the National Telephone and Online Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service.

The National Service provides one point of contact for anyone in Australia who is at risk of or has experienced sexual assault, family or domestic violence. The service also works with non offending supporters, and provides clinical consultation and debrief for sector workers.

The National Service seeks to fill gaps in service provision, not duplicate existing services. When a client contacts the service and there is a state, territory or regional service available the National Service will assist the client to contact that service. Where those services are not

available National Service counsellors will provide the required telephone or online counselling and support.

The National Telephone and Online Counselling Service is an initiative under the 'National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children'. The plan identifies six outcomes including: "Services meet the needs of women and their children experiencing violence". The National Telephone and Online Service is one of the strategies which will contribute toward the achievement of this outcome.

NSW Rape Crisis Centre is very proud to be part of the work of the national plan. The Centre is committed to continuing to work with women, women's services and governments across Australia to reduce and eventually eliminate violence against women.



Chairperson's Report



Phillippa Dimakis
Chairperson

Board members are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Current members are women from a variety of backgrounds with ages ranging from 27 to 72. Members hold qualifications in accountancy, adult education, the arts, law, nursing, social work and teaching.

In the 2011 year the establishment of the national counselling service and changes to the Associations Incorporations Act (2009) introduced in July 2010 has resulted in the Board focusing on governance.

Board members attended two NCOSS seminars which examined changes to the act; good governance, board performance, board review, risk management, managing

conflict of interest, current community management models and implications of the Act on future direction. Members also attended the Practical Governance and Leadership Master Class, presented by Better Boards Australia.

The annual Board Planning Day in June afforded members further opportunity to reflect on short and longer-term directions, needs and strategies.

These activities assisted members to enhance their knowledge of contemporary board practice and stimulated discussion on issues requiring resolution and improvement. Subsequently governance and financial management policies have been further refined.

Board members contribute their time and draw on their experience to ensure that priorities and work practices continue to ensure a quality service at the Centre.

Online Therapeutic Support Group

"I made a promise to myself never to cut myself again and all these things have helped me."

Statement by a Group participant.

The Online Therapeutic Support Group, initiated by NSW Rape Crisis Centre, is the first of its kind. The virtual group targeted young women, aged 14 to 17 years, who had experienced sexual violence. Twice per week for nine weeks, group members logged on to a secure website to engage in group activities designed to reduce the impacts of trauma, provide psycho education and maintain engagement with their face to face counsellors. The group commenced in May and finished in July 2011.

A total of seven participants enrolled, but 4 young women were unable to continue. Three young women completed the program. In the evaluation, participants said they enjoyed the group and benefited from talking to others their age. As one participant

put it as "just knowing that there are others out there helped".

Before the group, one of the participants was only able to communicate with her counsellor in writing. She said the group helped her to feel "she could trust her counsellor". After completing the program she was able to verbalise her feelings and thoughts, "I just like that I have a good bond with her (the counsellor) and I can trust her and she is always there to listen".

NSW Rape Crisis Centre is preparing a report on the learnings and outcomes of the group. Financial support to offer further programs is being sought.

Research

The NSW Rape Crisis Centre is committed to evidence based practice in its service delivery. In particular, continuing to develop best practices in the provision of telephone and online counselling to people who have experienced sexual, family and domestic violence, and their supporters both professional and non professional.

Over the past 12 months the Centre has undertaken a number of research projects. Research into the provision of professional support and clinical consultation for regional and remote counsellors who work with clients who have experienced trauma has been finalised and a copy of the report is on the Centre's website. Stage 1 of the effectiveness of sex and ethics training has also been completed. This research looks at

using the principles of sexual ethics when working with clients who are struggling with decisions about whether their relationship is ethical or not (ie. clients in the contemplation and preparation for safety stage of trauma recovery). In relation to a stage based approach to trauma recovery, research is nearing completion on the contemplation and preparation, and the establishing of safety stages.

Planned work over the next 12 months includes completion of the stage based trauma model including trauma processing and reconnection. Research into the efficacy of an online therapeutic support group for young people will be completed and, in partnership with Workcover NSW, research on vicarious trauma will continue.



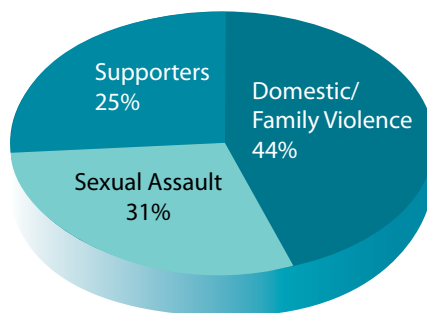
Counselling Service

NSW Rape Crisis Centre continues to be the NSW 24/7 telephone and online contact for anyone who has experienced sexual violence. As of October 2010 the Centre's counsellors also answer all calls made to the National 24/7 Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service (SA/FDV).

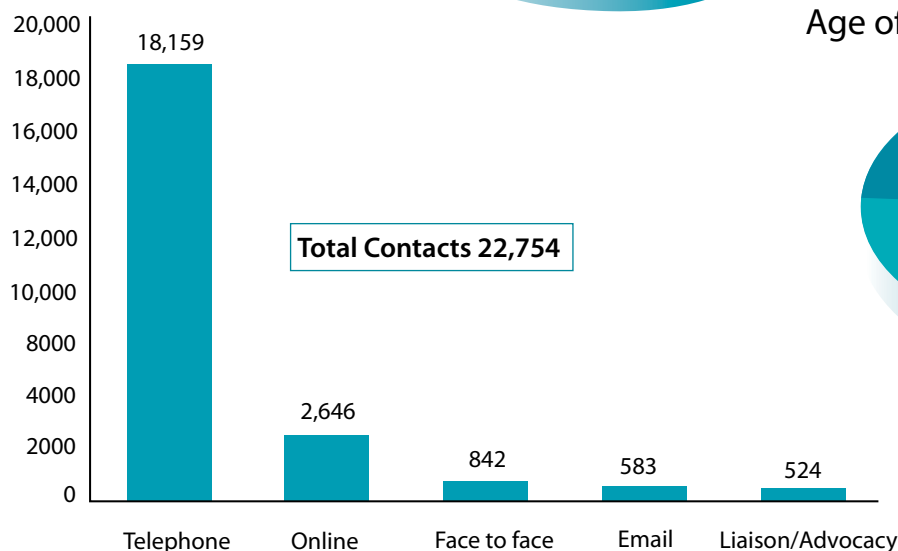
In the 2010/11 year, counsellors responded to or initiated 22,754 contacts with people who had experienced or were at risk of SA/FDV and their supporters. 84% of callers were female, reflecting expected call patterns, with the higher proportion of male callers presenting as supporters of people who have experienced sexual assault, family or domestic violence.

Client Profiles

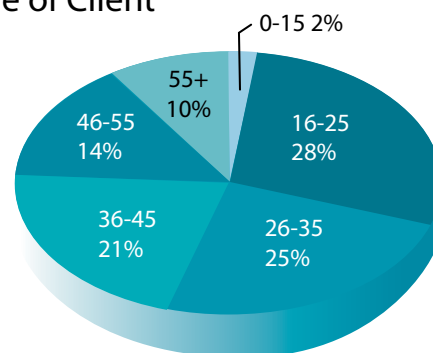
Reason for Contact



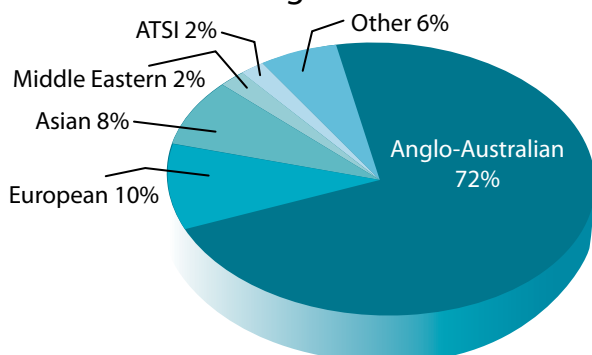
Manner of Contact



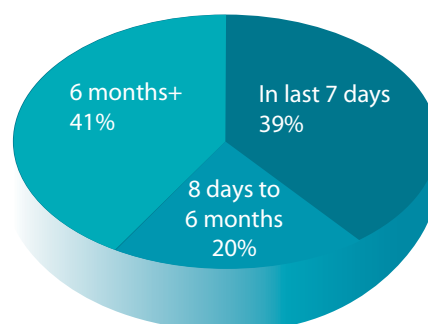
Age of Client



Cultural Background



Last Assault Occurred

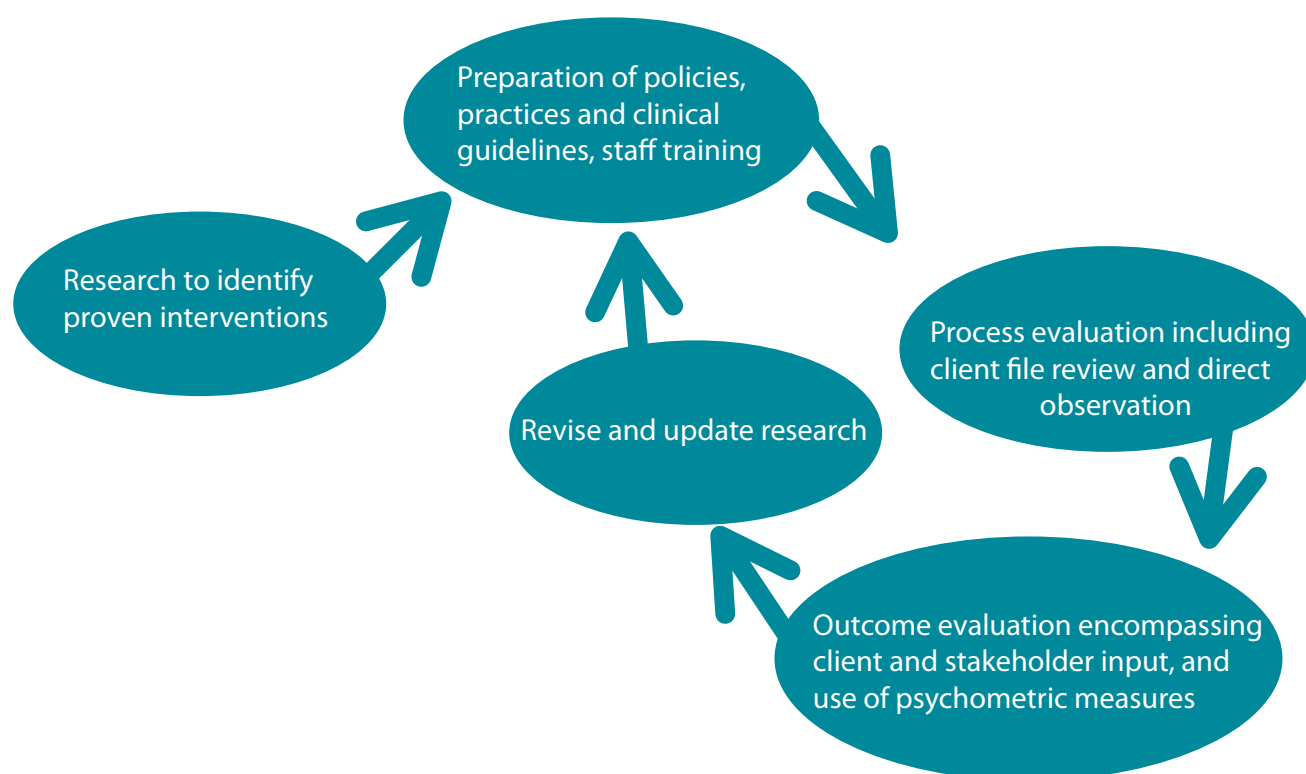


"I had no idea what to expect when I rang but the service blew me out of the water. The Counsellor was clear, non judgemental and humane. She normalised what was happening and how I was feeling. Thank God you are there." **Client**



Evidence Based Services

Providing a high quality, evidence based, best practice counselling service is fundamental to the work of NSW Rape Crisis Centre. The NSW Rape Crisis Centre views 'best practice' as a cyclic process:



Research tells us that there are four stages to recovery from the trauma of sexual assault, family or domestic violence. Research also tells us the current best practice interventions that should be used at each stage of recovery. This knowledge has been translated into policies, practices and clinical guidelines at NSW Rape Crisis Centre and all counsellors are trained in working from this stage based approach.

The stages are:

Contemplation and preparation for safety. This is the period before the client makes the decision to move toward safety. Many will misattribute responsibility for the violence, look for alternate ways to manage or reduce the violence, talk about their perceived role in the violence or underplay the level or impact of the violence. When working with clients at this stage of their recovery counsellors focus on discussion about the nature of violence and about human rights. Counsellors will also assist clients who are undecided to make appropriate and safe choices for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of any dependents. Where the client is contemplating a move to safety, counsellors encourage and support that motivation, assist with safety plans, and prepare the client both logistically and psychologically to establish safety.

Establishing safety. This requires managing both external and internal safety risks. External safety risks may include being

accessed by the perpetrator; injury management, insufficient finances or homelessness. Internal risks include trauma impacts such as: suicidality, self-harming and high risk behaviours. When a client is in the establishment of safety stage, crisis intervention counselling is provided. This includes a comprehensive risk of harm assessment and intervention. All efforts are made to link the client with local services where continuity of care can be offered.

Processing Trauma. After safety is established, work with clients may be required to process the trauma they have experienced, with the aim of minimising its impact on their life. All efforts are made to link the client with a local service as this is the best therapeutic environment for such work. NSW Rape Crisis Centre counsellors will offer telephone trauma processing counselling where the client does not have access to local services for reasons such as rural or remote location or mobility issues.

Reconnection. In the final stage of recovery, clients may require counselling support to achieve a comprehensive state of wellbeing. This includes reconnection with people, activities and places that were meaningful and positive prior to the violence. At times, where the person has experienced violence over their lifespan or reconnection is not possible, the work focuses on creating new connections with people, activities and places that will enable the achievement of wellbeing.



Creating Pathways

When NSW Rape Crisis Centre became the clinical service provider for the National Telephone and Online Sexual Assault, Family and Domestic Violence Counselling Service, the Centre was very clear that the National Service would not replicate, duplicate or, by its existence, lead to a reduction in the level of service which is currently provided by state, territory, regional and local agencies. Conversely NSW Rape Crisis Centre seeks to develop partnerships and agreements with the many professional and dedicated services across Australia thereby offering the best possible pathways for clients.

To best design an effective and complementary system to existing services, Centre staff visited all states and territories and met with government and non government service providers. The meetings aimed to:

- promote the National Service,

- gain a clear understanding of what services are available to clients on a state wide and/or regional level,
- understand how these services integrate with each other,
- establish clear referral pathways for clients,
- identify any gaps in service provision which the National Service may be able to fill.

To date, meetings have been held with 123 organisations. Agreements and processes have been developed which include the National Service providing counselling and support to clients who are in the contemplation and preparation for safety stage of trauma recovery; require after hours assistance; or who are on service waiting lists. Counselling for supporters and debrief for practitioners, especially remote practitioners, is also offered in a number of regions.

Centre Staff have been to all States and Territories, meeting 123 Organisations



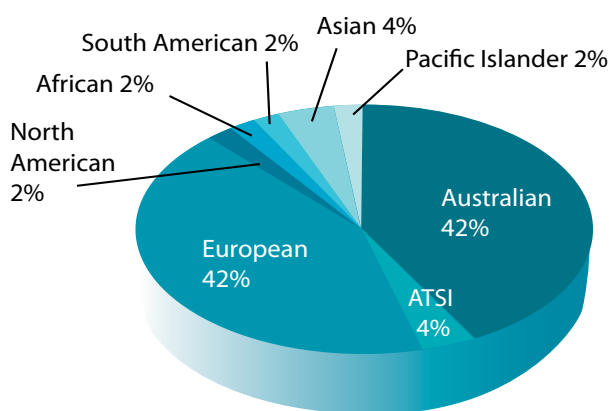
NSW Rape Crisis Centre Staff Profile

NSW Rape Crisis Centre currently employs 41 staff who work a full time equivalent of 29.5 positions. This is an increase of over 300% in the past twelve months. The Centre holds contracts with five providers in areas such as IT and accountancy. All clinical staff are tertiary trained and have considerable counselling experience. The Centre provides intensive orientation for new counsellors which includes working from a trauma and feminist perspective and working therapeutically in telephone and online environments. All file notes, referral information, statistical and quality improvement data, and sexual assault and domestic and family violence systems information is recorded and retrieved electronically.

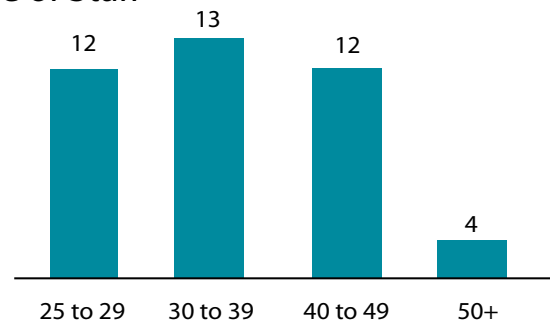
The counselling roster is organised to provide 24/7 coverage with a concentration of counsellors available from 3.30pm to 10.45pm each day when call volumes are at their highest.

In the past financial year counsellors participated in a range of professional development courses including Reflective Practice, Dissociative Identity Disorder, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, Family Law and Domestic Violence, Boundaries and Empathy, Working with Divorced and Step-Families, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Complicated PTSD and Complex Trauma, and Sexual Ethics.

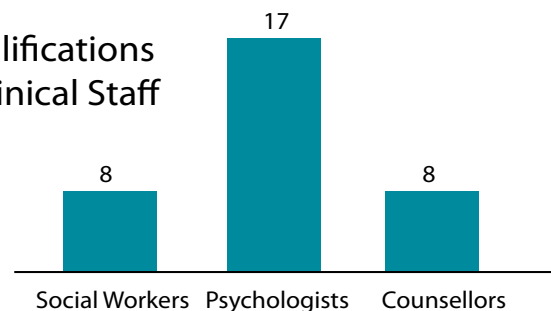
Cultural Profile of Staff



Age of Staff



Qualifications - Clinical Staff



Financial Report

Income to NSW Rape Crisis Centre increased by 96% in this financial year. Wages accounted for 83% of expenditure and 7% of expenditure was allocated to administration. Information technology (IT), equipment, and travel accounted for 8% of expenditure, which reflects the high use of IT and the national partnership work.

Income	\$
NSW Government	1,502,875
Australian Government	1,781,362
Donations/Consultancy/Training	17,737
Interest	49,615
Other	4,197
Total	3,355,786

Expenditure	
Wages	2,717,059
Administration	230,569
IT and Maintenance	157,185
Professional Development	79,827
Resources and Travel	100,341
Total	3,284,981

Operating Surplus	70,805
Transfer to Reserves	69,000
Net Surplus	1,805

