



Annual Report

2021/2022

JUSTICE • RESPECT • SERVICE • CARE • UNITY





Acknowledgements

MERCY SERVICES ACKNOWLEDGES THAT WE WORK ON THE TRADITIONAL COUNTRY OF THE AWABAKAL, WORIMI AND WONNARUA PEOPLES.

WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEIR ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT.

Mercy Services would like to thank the following people, organisations and Government Departments for their contributions to Mercy Services over the past year:

- The Institute of Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Hunter New England Health (NSW Health)
- The NSW Department of Community and Justice
- Transport for NSW
- Samaritans Foundation
- Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies (NADA)
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
- Mercy Action Support Fund
- Mercy Ministry Companions
- Mercy Community Services Australia Ltd
- All people supported by Mercy Services, their families, carers, volunteers and all Mercy Services staff.



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THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to read Mercy Services 2021-2022 Annual Report. Our aim is to provide you with a comprehensive overview of the achievements of Mercy Services over the past 12 months and our vision for the 12 months ahead.

WHERE TO GET A COPY

In an effort to reduce the impact on the environment, limited copies of this document have been printed and are available by contacting Mercy Services. Alternatively, a copy of this report can be found on our website and is available for download.

The wonderful photos in this publication have been captured by some of our talented staff and volunteers. We are particularly grateful to Chris Latham, and Marg Mackie, who captured so many of the images contained within this report.

Our Profile



THE SISTERS OF MERCY HERITAGE

Mercy Services founded by Catherine McAuley, in Ireland in 1831 who continues to inspire Sisters of Mercy all around the world.

The Sisters of Mercy first came to Australia in 1846 and to Papua New Guinea in 1956 and were dedicated to serving people who suffer from injustices related to poverty, sickness or lack of education; endeavouring to respond to a range of local and global needs. In December 2011, for the sake of their mission, fifteen Mercy congregations formed the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

In 1875 The Sisters of Mercy arrived in the Hunter region when Mother Mary Stanislaus Kenny and 10 Sisters settled in Singleton, NSW. Subsequently, the Sisters established many houses and served in many schools; Monte Pio Orphanage, West Maitland (1910 - 1972); Home for Unmarried Mothers, East Maitland (1967 - 1975); Mater Misericordiae Hospital, Waratah (1921 - 2006); Taree Aboriginal

Apostolate; Toronto Retreat Centre; Mercy Nursing Home, Singleton; and Mercy Services.

The Sisters courageously continue to undertake other works such as development assistance in poorer countries; supporting and advocating for refugees and asylum seekers; working with those with addictions; and counselling, ensuring that those most in need receive the best services regardless of their background.

Mercy Services is proud to continue the Sisters of Mercy heritage. The Sisters still set the overall mission, values and direction of Mercy Services.

These are our sign posts showing us both what we are to do, and the ways we are to behave with each other and with clients. There are few Sisters of Mercy still working in Mercy Services but it is our hope that people will see in all of us the same spirit that enlivened Catherine McAuley and all of her Sisters of Mercy.

OUR SERVICES

Mercy Services takes a holistic approach to its services, which include:

- community aged care services
- residential aged care services
- disability services
- community transport services
- alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services
- services to vulnerable families.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Mercy's philosophy embraces a deep and lasting trust in the compassionate love of God.

We believe in, and are witness to, the dignity of the human person and the value and quality of human life.

We respect that all persons are born equal and that all life is a God-given gift.

We acknowledge that each person's journey is unique, and that support needs can vary from person to person.

We believe in offering services that recognise and honour the whole person: body, mind, heart and spirit.

We believe in responsible stewardship.

Placing high value on our human resources, while promoting rigorous attention to the financial, structural and material.

We believe in collaborating with other organisations that share our values to better benefit the community we serve.

We hold the values of Respect, Care, Justice, Unity and Service to be central to our culture and believe in demonstrating them in creative responsiveness to the social needs of our times.



MISSION

Mercy Services is to provide holistic, proactive and inclusive service, in the spirit of our foundress, Catherine McAuley, to all those we support and work with both in the community and in a residential setting.

In all our work we strive to provide compassionate, respectful, high quality and environmentally sustainable practices.

VISION

Following Jesus' example of love and service, Mercy Services will be leading providers of compassionate care and quality services. We will excel in the delivery, management and measurement of service and quality, and will be implementers of innovative and integrated care delivery models.



OUR VALUES

Motivated by our stated philosophy and committed to our mission and vision our values become key to who we are and how we choose to offer service.

JUSTICE	Ensuring that relationships are maintained by establishing systems and structures that give each person maximum opportunity for access to resources. We advocate for a society in which all can realise their full potential and achieve the common good.
RESPECT	Everyone, regardless of title or position, income, education or status, ethnicity, religion or sexual preference has a dignity that is sacred. All people deserve to be met with a spirit of genuineness and sincerity, and an appreciation of their own self-worth.
SERVICE	Responding with compassion to the needs of others, whether clients or colleagues, we willingly offer our time, skills and attention.
CARE	Attending to the identified needs of those we serve, giving priority to those who are underserved by society, we seek to care not only for their immediate needs but also to advocate for structural change that keeps people in an unhealthy or unsafe environment.
UNITY	Creating a community where harmony and connectedness are present, we work together to progress our Mission. We stand by each other in the face of challenge, and co-operate with decisions that are taken for the good of the Service, yet might be different from one's own preference.

Our People

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to introduce Mercy Services Annual Report for 2021-2022.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the passion and commitment displayed by Mercy Services staff throughout the years, but none more so than this year, as they provided care during the second lockdown and ongoing restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The unwavering commitment of Mercy Services staff has been humbling despite the challenges faced.

Mercy Services has been well served by the Risk and Continuous Improvement committee throughout the pandemic. This committee consists of members and representatives from each team at Mercy Services, and allowed the pandemic response to be tailored to, and tempered by, the needs of each team, and each cohort of clients and residents. Each meeting, the RCI team rose to the ever-evolving challenges posed by COVID-19, associated restrictions and the significant impacts on our staff and our clients, and made decisions on the practical steps taken to protect staff and clients, as well as the interpretation of the relevant Public Health Orders, and the policy changes required to keep pace with the ever evolving and changing risks in our region.

A primary and consistent focus this year for our Board, was the transition process involved in transferring governance of Mercy Services at the beginning of

1 July 2022. In line with the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy transferring ministry governance to Mercy Ministry Companions, Mercy Services has in turn begun a transition to a common Board with other community ministries. Mercy Ministry Companions will provide the future governance of the Institute's incorporated ministries in the areas of health and aged care, community services and education. Mercy Services now joins Mercy Connect, and McAuley Community Services for Women in sharing the common Board of Mercy Community Services Australia Ltd. The outgoing Board welcome these new Directors, and having interacted consistently on a number of occasions, we are confident that they are well placed to lead Mercy Services in years to come.

As Mercy Services will now share a common Board, this is my final report as Chair of the Board of Mercy Services. It has been a great pleasure to oversee such important work in our community, and I would like to thank our Directors one more time for all they have contributed to the Board of Mercy Services.

Please join me in thanking all those involved in Mercy Services at every level. Please thank them for all they have done, do today, and will do for clients and residents into the future.

Peter Williams

Chairperson of Mercy Services Board

Corporate Governance

MERCY SERVICES BOARD

Mercy Services is governed by a skills-based board of six (6) directors who oversee the strategic direction of the organisation to implement strategies and achieve goals in compliance with the Australian Securities Investment Commission (ASIC) and Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

On 1 July 2022 our Board of Directors will be replaced with a common Board, within Mercy Community Services Australia Limited - McAuley Community Services for Women, and Mercy Connect.

During the Financial Year, twelve (12) meetings of Directors were held. Attendances by each director during the year is shown below:

MERCY SERVICES BOARD OF DIRECTORS	YEAR APPOINTED	NUMBER OF MEETINGS ATTENDED OUT OF 12
Peter Williams	2019	9
Val Woodman	2015	10
Mark O'Connor	2012	10
Darlene McLeod	2018	10
Felicity Evers	2020	9
Sr Anne Hannigan	2020	10
Sr Anne McGuire	2020	7

The Company Secretary and Public Officer is Tony Bidstrup.

Finance and Investment Committee Members: Mark O'Connor, Darlene McLeod, Tony Bidstrup and Allan Collins

Community Housing Advisory Group: Robert Hodgson, Narelle De Losa, Trish Tanner, Felicity Evers, and Jamie Young

The Board farewelled Sr Anne McGuire in February 2022, after two years as a Director of Mercy Services. All remaining Directors were formally farewelled in late June 2022 during a ceremony, arranged by the incoming Board of Mercy Community Services Australia Limited.



Management Team

MERCY SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM IS NOW COMPRISED OF EIGHT (8) HIGHLY TALENTED, EXPERIENCED AND WELL-QUALIFIED PEOPLE.

TONY BIDSTRUP

Tony Bidstrup was appointed Chief Executive Officer in November 2016.

He has many years experience in the banking and insurance industries.

Tony brings to Mercy Services exceptional leadership and management skills coupled with commercial acumen which is underpinned by a strong Christian faith.

Tony has also undertaken voluntary work overseas, working with the underprivileged in Africa.

MARION PERROTT

Marion commenced with Mercy Services in 2007 already with a number of years in Aged Care. Since then Marion has worked tirelessly with clients as a Care Manager and brings that knowledge and experience now to the Head of Home and Community Care position. Since then Marion has worked tirelessly with clients as a Care Manager. Marion was appointed to the Head of Home and Community Care position in July 2022 and has qualifications in Aged Care, Welfare, and Frontline Management.

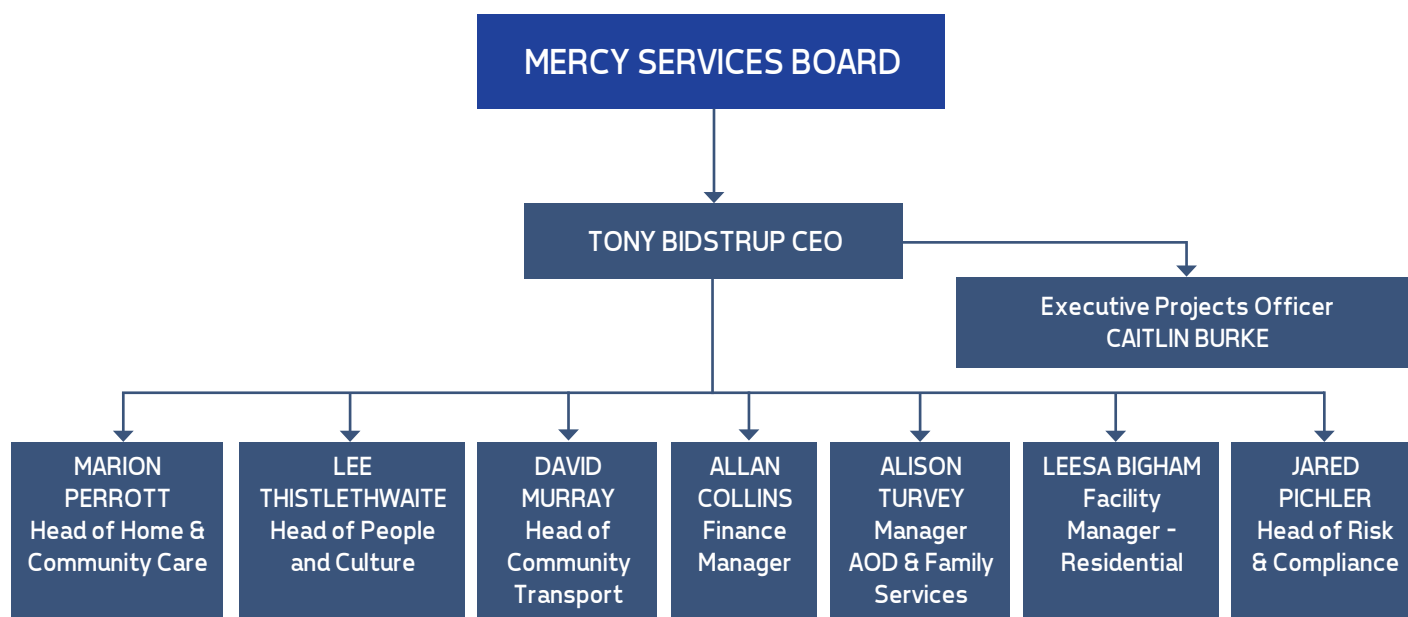
LEE THISTLETHWAITE

Head of People and Culture, Lee joined the Mercy Services team in September 2017. Lee comes to Mercy with over 15 years experience in the field of human resources obtained across various industries including retail, hospitality, manufacturing and most recently in community services. Lee is passionate about ensuring people management processes are effective, transparent and respectful and she believes that sound relationships and genuine conversations are the cornerstone to achieving a respectful workplace. Lee holds a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) and a Bachelor of Business (Honours) - Industrial Relations and Human Resources Management.

DAVID MURRAY

Head of Community Transport since November 2017, David came to Mercy Services with experience as a senior manager in community transport, social housing and the building industries. He has worked for both government and not-for-profit coordinating their maintenance and capital works programs, bringing with him solid management and leadership skills.

David came to Mercy Services with experience as a senior manager in both government and not-for-profit coordinating their maintenance and capital works programs, bringing with him solid management and leadership skills.



ALLAN COLLINS

Finance Manager Allan joined Mercy Services as our inaugural Finance Manager in November 2014 with over 15 years working in the not-for-profit disability sector. Allan directs and manages the Mercy Finance Team and is responsible for the financial reporting as well as ensuring that the Mercy Finance Team has the resources, skills and training for the introduction of new systems and ventures that Mercy may undertake. Allan is a fellow of the Institute of Public Accountants (FIPA) and completed an Advanced Diploma of Business Management with the University of Ballarat.

Allan has also worked in the transport, newspaper, radio, packaging, metal roofing and fencing industries.

ALISON TURVEY

Alison commenced with Mercy Services in January of 2022. In addition to being an experienced Registered Nurse, Alison also brings with her a solid background in alcohol and other drugs, mental health and the justice system. Alison is a member of APSAD (Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol & other Drugs) and holds a Graduate Diploma Clinical Science majoring in Drug & Alcohol Studies.

LEESA BIGHAM

Leesa began with Mercy Services at the residential facility in August 2006 and is now the Facility Manager. She has qualifications in administration, business management, information technology and ageing support.

JARED PICHLER

Jared commenced the Head of Risk and Compliance role at Mercy Services in September 2021. Bringing with him over 15 years experience in both private and public sectors for financial services and not for profit organisations. Jared holds a Bachelor of Finance, a Bachelor of Development Studies, and a Postgraduate Diploma of Risk, Disaster and Resilience.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

It brings me great pleasure to again have the opportunity to commend our staff, this time on their resilience during a second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, including a second extended lockdown. Despite the pandemic, our teams continued to adapt to provide great care to our clients and residents. We were able to remind clients that they can still receive care safely, even if they have COVID-19. Our team continued to consistently procure appropriate PPE stocks allowing us to ensure that all staff, clients, volunteers, and visitors, have access to appropriate protection, minimising the risk of infection. In reflecting on what we have learnt from the first year, and applied to our practices this year, I am reminded of the Catherine McAuley quote "The simplest and most practical lesson I know is to resolve to be good today, but better tomorrow.", which rings true in the resolve we see in our staff, providing incrementally better care each day, learning from what happened yesterday, to benefit our clients and residents.

Strategically, Mercy Services moves forward with our projects that are both more environmentally and time efficient, with outcomes directly linked to benefitting our clients and residents. We have rolled out new software in Home and Community

Care, as well as at our Singleton residential facility. We have worked on better systems, processes, and training to get the best possible care delivered at every visit. Our transport team are offering more and more services and outings, but with distancing and mask wearing in place to protect our clients and drivers - the vehicles might not be at full capacity, but the care and personalised service are unchanged. Our Alcohol and Drug team adapted consistently to provide counselling to clients in ways that suited the individual - if not at their home, then discreetly at the local park, or even on the phone. All this to say, each of our teams have been adaptable and resilient this year, despite the continued challenges.

This year we also farewell our Board of Directors, who have expertly guided Mercy Services for years, as we join the common Board at Mercy Community Services Australia Limited in the next financial year. This change, albeit bittersweet in farewelling our formidable and knowledgeable directors, we now join other Mercy ministries including Mercy Connect, and McAuley Community Services for Women, who also provide social and community services. The commonalities of mission, as well as purpose, will serve Mercy Services well into the future.



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The financial year ending 30 June 2022, has provided a great deal of learning opportunities at Mercy Services.

Mercy Services have again partnered with our local Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Essential Skills, to run the Care Worker Training Program. Throughout this program students are employed 22 hours per week with their time divided between formal learning at the RTO and in work-placement. Students are supported throughout the program with supervised (buddy) shifts from our experienced Mercy Services Care Workers and on completion of the program, students receive the nationally recognised Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing).

For the period between July and December 2021 a cohort of 10 students commenced the Care Worker Training Program. Six of the participants were offered ongoing employment with Mercy Services.

For the period between January to June 2022 a cohort of 5 students commenced the Care Worker Training Program with 4 successfully completing the program. Of these 4 students, 4 were offered ongoing employment with Mercy Services.

Due to the changing job market which has been subject to influences including COVID-19, changes to Government funding and a decreasing labor force, the program has been suspended for the 2022 - 2023 FY. Alternate recruitment and training opportunities are being explored including partnering with other local education providers such as universities and private colleges to attract existing students to our employment, particularly nursing students who have the eligibility for employment in the CCA role, and potential Graduate pathway opportunities.

Considerable training and development opportunities have been extended to our existing Mercy Services employees who continue to participate in online learning through Altura Bridge, the online learning platform. This learning platform continues to be of great value to the organisation as it allows the publication of in-house developed training modules, together with a library of clinically appropriate training modules available to be released to employees at our discretion. This training also allows for flexible training options with access available via multiple devices, including desktop computers, laptops/tablets and mobile phones.

Safeguarding training sessions are an integral part of the Learning and Development calendar. This training is delivered via a workshop session where foundation principals are reinforced with real-life case studies. Evaluations from participants have been overwhelmingly favourable, with positive feedback across the organisation. In November 2021 a total of 196 employees participated in Safeguarding workshops and a further 19 new employees have also completed this training to 30 June 2022. This training will continue to be delivered to new employees with a refresher training session to be released November 2022 for all existing employees.

Learning and Development have also provided support to an employee, Annette Hopley, who is engaged in a Traineeship whilst completing the Diploma of Community Services. Annette has been participating in formal learning which has been supported with on-the-job experience. The opportunity for Annette to further apply her new knowledge in the workplace will be further enhanced with her course progression and prior to her expected completion date of October 2023.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN 2022/2023

Under consideration is a Cadetship pathway where University students are engaged with Mercy on completion of their first year of study. This would allow the students the opportunity to be meaningfully employed within the Aged Care sector and Mercy Services the opportunity to support the students whilst they complete their Undergraduate degree with additional benefits such as work-placement, supported mentoring and Professional Development days. On completion of their degree, eligible students will be offered a Graduate 12 month contract.



830

hours spent on
learning in total



48

courses
completed



186

learners

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

It has been another challenging year for the Aged Care and Community Services Industry, with skills shortages being the number one agenda item on many providers lists of concerns.

Whilst this has been felt across the organisation, it also highlighted incredible moments of staff going above and beyond in support of our clients. From staff coming in on days off to support residents in Singleton, to team members regularly picking up additional shifts to make sure our clients receive their services, we are humbled and ever grateful for the tireless efforts of our staff in pursuit of maintaining exceptional care standards.

Pleasingly, we have maintained our workforce numbers across the organisation, welcoming 82 new staff members across our services this financial year. Additionally, our staff retention is stable with over 37% of our workforce celebrating over 5 years of continued service.

To combat the skills shortages, the People and Culture team have been focussed on strategic recruitment practices, leveraging over 12 different platforms to advertise and recruit workers, including attending expos and utilising social media marketing. The strongest platform

for sourcing candidates is Seek, however this is closely followed by staff referrals and direct to service recruitment, indicating Mercy Services reputational strength and satisfaction of current staff to recommend others to the workplace.

In conjunction with Learning and Development, we continued our Certificate III In Individual Support Training Program this year, as well as hiring a diverse group of workers through University of Newcastle in various support positions across Mercy Services. We also continued the collaboration with ACCPA by welcoming another four (4) graduate registered nurses across our community nursing and residential facility.

As we look towards the coming financial year, our focus is to continue a strategic approach to identifying and sourcing the skills and workforce required to meet the growing needs of the community. Furthermore, we are taking a renewed focus on recognition strategies for our valued staff by implementing a referral bonus, providing various gifts and instant recognition initiatives throughout the year, professional development as well as other incentives to demonstrate our appreciation of their ongoing dedication towards providing exceptional care services.



QUALITY AND SAFETY

COVID-19 continued to be the dominate risk challenge over the year. Specialised Outbreak Management Teams continued to be in operation for each service area to address the risks faced throughout the various COVID waves. Plans were regularly revised in line with the developing situation and NSW Health guidance. With the focus being on living with COVID, Mercy Services worked hard at ensuring services could be maintained with clients while still offering an engaging and supportive service.

In September there was a restructure of the Risk & Compliance team to include an additional resource for the team and elevate the manager to the leadership team. This will assist Mercy Services meet its increased regulatory obligations for the services it provides and meet ongoing Government reform in Aged Care and recommendations from the Royal Commission.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

Mercy Services developed a flood management plan for its Singleton residential facility in October 2021, which has subsequently been activated twice in the first half of 2022 due to two major flooding events impacting the Singleton township, the latter in early July had the town on standby for evacuation. The implementation of this plan during these events by management and staff ensured appropriate steps were taken to ensure continuation of care for our residents, providing confidence that if an evacuation was required, appropriate measures were in place to transfer residents to alternate accommodation. An overall business continuity emergency management plan encompassing all potential emergencies at the facility was also updated in line with current practice, guidance and operational requirements.



A photograph of a person wearing a purple long-sleeved shirt, holding a small green plant with red flowers. The background is a blurred garden scene with trees and a lawn.

RISK & COMPLIANCE

Mercy Services continued to develop its risk & compliance management framework over the year. It established defined risk appetites for key risk areas of the organisation and conducted a risk workshop with the Board to develop an organisational risk register. The register will be reviewed quarterly with a report presented to the Audit, Risk & Finance subcommittee on any proposed changes to risks based on operational experience.

Mercy Services continues to review and enhance its policy suite with significant revisions to its Safeguarding, Whistleblowing and Privacy policies. Mercy Services has reinforced its zero tolerance for breaches of safeguarding with face-to-face workshop training conducted with all staff and the Board. The training reinforced Mercy Services expectations and policy regarding safeguarding and protection of those we care for.

The whistleblowing policy revision included enhanced provisions to promote a safe and supportive culture while strengthening the process for staff and other stakeholders to raise or report a serious matter of concern confidentially. This service is provided by an independent and externally managed integrity hotline to provide guidance to the reporter in confidence and anonymously if requested.

Mercy Services also implemented a new organisational policy on Supported Decision Making & Dignity of Risk. This policy acknowledges those we care for have a human right to make decisions about their own life and to have those decisions respected even if there are potential health consequences. This service is provided by an independent and externally managed integrity hotline to support the reporter in confidence and anonymously if requested.

QUALITY AUDIT REVIEW

Mercy Services developed a revised audit plan for the 2022-23 year which was endorsed by the Board in June. This plan outlines the schedule for quality reviews and audits against the various Aged Care Quality Standards over the coming financial year and the type of review or audit to be undertaken against that standard. Clinical audits will be reviewed at the subsequent Clinical Advisory Council meeting with a summary of audits presented quarterly to the Service Delivery committee for oversight.

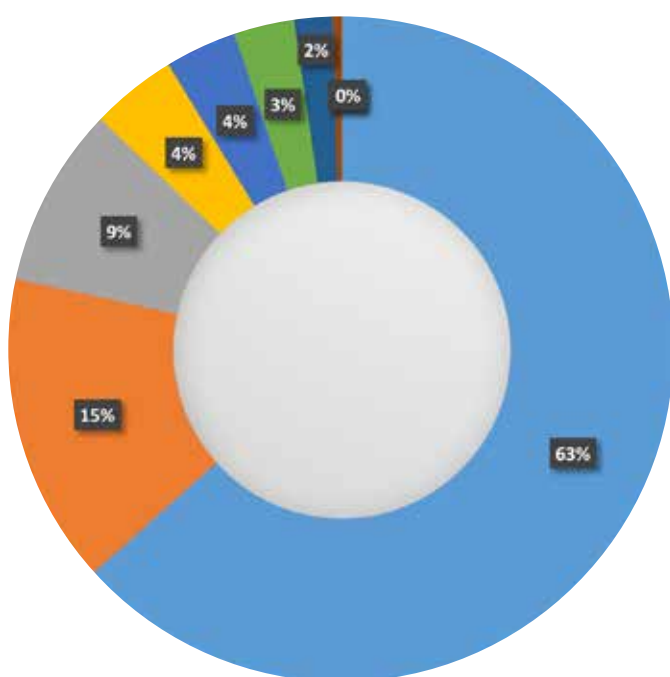


¹Letter to de Sales White February 28, 1841.

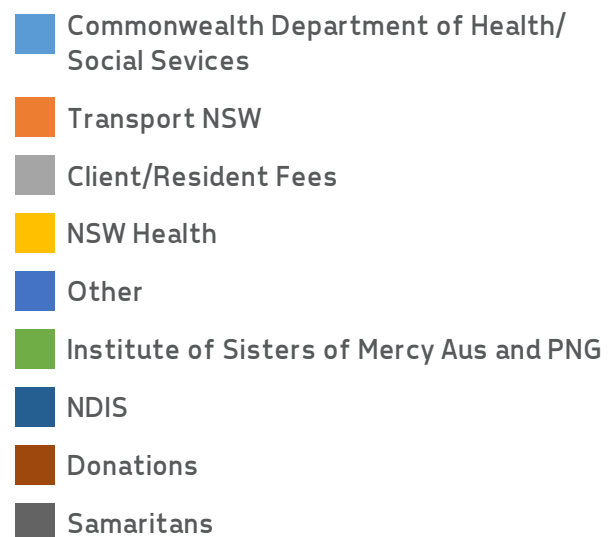
GRANTS AND FUNDING

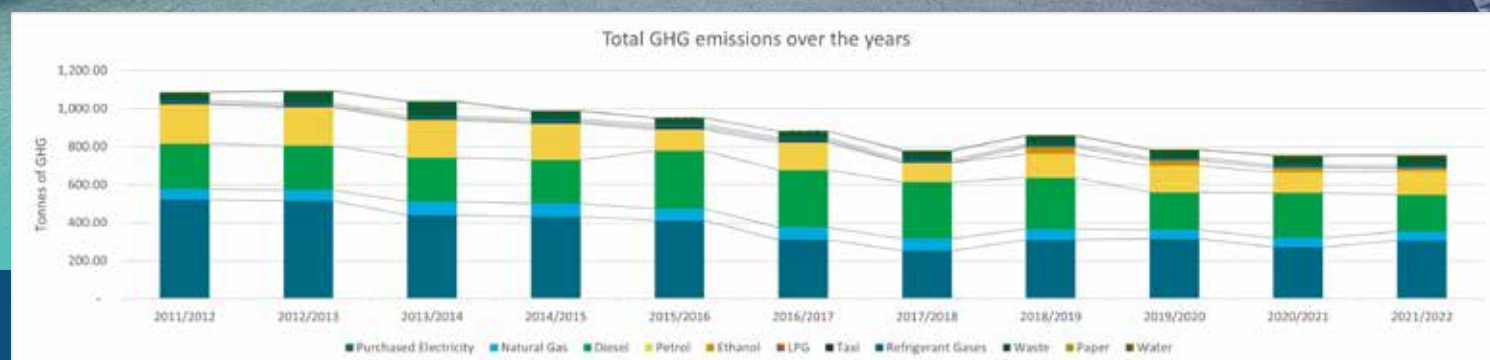
Mercy Services is contracted to deliver a range of services on behalf of the Federal and NSW Governments. Funds are allocated to specific programs, and expenditure of these funds is monitored in accordance with contractual obligations and outcomes as stated on the program contract or service details, as outlined by the funding body.

SOURCE	PROGRAM	FUNDS RECEIVED	
		2020/21	2021/22
Commonwealth Department of Health/ Social Services	- Government subsidies for Aged Care Facility Singleton - Home support (CHSP Program) - Transport - Home Care Packages (HCP)	\$10,573,665	\$10,648,263
Transport NSW	Community Transport Lake Macquarie and Newcastle	\$2,485,944	\$2,528,118
Client/Resident Fees	Community Transport Lake Macquarie and Newcastle	\$1,627,685	\$1,467,431
NSW Health	- McAuley Outreach Service - Day Centre - Health Transport - Auspice of Newcastle CDATs	\$674,870	\$698,465
Other	- Rent Received - Interest - Sundry Income	\$620,639	\$582,317
Institute of Sisters of Mercy Aus and PNG	Health and Aged Care Coordinators	\$468,836	\$491,620
NDIS	Payment for services to persons under 65 with a disability	\$343,943	\$313,811
Donations		\$87,640	\$73,468
Samaritans	Brighter Futures Parenting Program	\$50,000	\$- 0
Total Funding		\$16,933,222	\$16,803,493
Government Funding For Services		\$14,128,422	\$14,188,657



MERCY SERVICES FUNDING SOURCES





Environmental Responsibility

Greenhouse gas emissions remained stable in the 2021/22 financial year, as the effects of the pandemic continued from the previous financial year.

The increase in petrol car emissions during the year was offset by a decrease in diesel and ethanol car emissions, resulting from a reduction in Community Transport services operating during the lockdown period when Day Centres, social outings and other services such as brokerage were put on hold.

The increase in electricity emissions was partially offset by a decrease in gas and paper emissions, as the efficiencies of moving to electronic systems materialised with a reduction in paper usage.

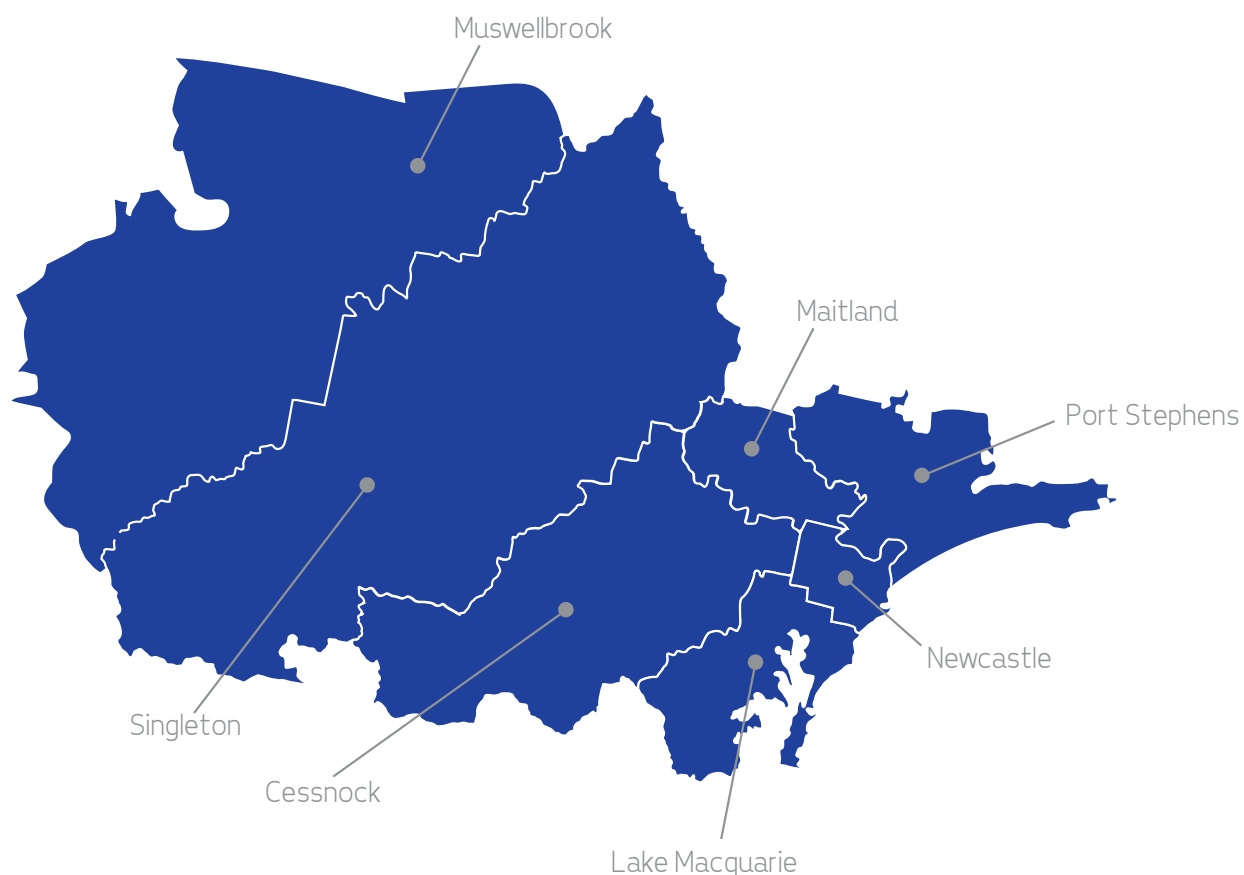
There has been a significant decrease in total greenhouse gas emissions over the last three years. Diesel car emissions have reduced by 22%, partly due to the impacts of the pandemic, including lockdowns and government restrictions. Paper usage has seen a huge improvement over this period, with an overall decrease in emissions of 32%. The reduction in greenhouse gas emissions achieved over the last three years is equivalent to planting approximately 473 trees (<https://treesforlife.org.au/tfl-carbon>).

Our Services

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

During the 2021-2022 year, on an any average week, our 200 Mercy Services staff assisted clients across a number of programs across the community. For much of this year, the COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing restrictions on distancing and capacity, again affected outputs in our Day Centres, our Parenting Program, and our Community Transport services.

OUTPUTS 2021-2022	ACTIVITY PROVIDED BY MERCY SERVICES
1,113	Alcohol and Other Drug services (individual counselling services)
4,144/210	Centre based activities hours/meals provided
1,842	Community Nursing Service (hours)
36,576	Community Transport (trips)
30	McAuley Parenting Program (hours)
5,714	NDIS (hours)



2642

Clients



200

Staff



20

Volunteers





Home and Community Care

I am delighted to be writing this report in my capacity as the Head of Home and Community, after a number of years as part of the Care Manager team here at Mercy Services.

This year has been laced with COVID-19 related challenges, much the same as the year before, however providing care despite the challenges, has become normal. We have staff well versed in the use of PPE and plenty of it to go around to our sites and day centres so things can operate as normally as possible. As an industry, recruitment is difficult, however the staff we are recruiting are still driven by the same values that Mercy Services operates within. It remains essential that our workforce, at any size, are representative of our mission and values, so that we can remain confident the care provided is indeed essential. We have welcomed a number of friendly new faces to our team, and also had some bittersweet farewells of much loved staff members who are on to retirement and other new challenges.

While sourcing new Community Care Assistants is challenging at times, we remain pleased with the support we can provide those who are new to the aged care industry. Of particular value are buddy shifts, where our staff can impart their practical knowledge that they have acquired over the years, so the care in the home is as consistent regardless of which of our staff is providing the care.

We are launching a new program in Home and Community this year. Known as our 'Partners in Care' program, it assists clients to manage their home care package. Due to the shortage of care workers and the direct impact COVID-19 has had on all providers, Mercy Services are able to support clients and their carers in obtaining essential services to maintain living in the community, such as allied health services, goods and equipment, home modifications, meals, nursing, continence services, and even community transport. With the new program coming to fruition in the coming months, we hope to continue to meet the needs of more clients in the region, in meaningful ways.

Our Day Centres were again impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and capacity restrictions, however clients returned quickly, keen to get back into their old routines. Now Day Centres are back with distancing and safety measures in place, games including bingo remain firm favourites, and the compliments on the food remain frequent.

Mercy Services will continue to be innovative in the way we support our clients, and it remains a true pleasure to be part of the team seeing those ideas come to fruition.



Residential Aged Care

This past year has again been impacted by COVID-19. There were periods where visitation was restricted due to Public Health Orders, and other times we implemented PPE requirements and surveillance RAT to protect both residents and staff from COVID-19. This year, as restrictions eased, the cooler months brought with it a mix of respiratory conditions we needed to be wary of, so it wasn't just COVID-19 we were watching for - there was the risk of RSV, influenza, and a number of other viruses.

Our staff and residents are exceedingly grateful for the generosity of our community. The donations we receive allow us to do so much more for residents than our funding allows. Our lovely hairdressing space remains a huge hit, and we were successful in securing funding from Hunter Valley Operations for another exciting project we have coming soon for our residents. The Friends of Mercy have again collected donations which help provide even more items on the resident's wish lists.

The La Nina weather event has also impacted the Singleton community in March and again in June this year, with the local government area included amongst many as a disaster zone. Some staff were flooded in at home, challenging our staffing levels, however many staff offered to stay, to ensure the care of residents remained uncompromised. Gratefully the flooding in that event did not impact our facility, however it was an opportunity to review and rehearse our flood plan, so that in the event we need to evacuate we will be well prepared.

Year on year our staff showcase an incredible resolve to provide quality care - despite the myriad of challenges each year has dealt. On behalf of all at our facility, thank you to our community for walking alongside us as we protect and care for our residents. To our staff, I know you take pride in the impact you have on our residents, and it is a wonderful force to behold.





Community Transport

The year kicked off again in the middle of the pandemic however we now have experience in dealing with it and how to keep our clients safe. We continued with helping to get clients out of their homes and into the community while ensuring that we do this as safely as possible.

SOME STATISTICS

How far did our vehicles travel through the year?
706,600km

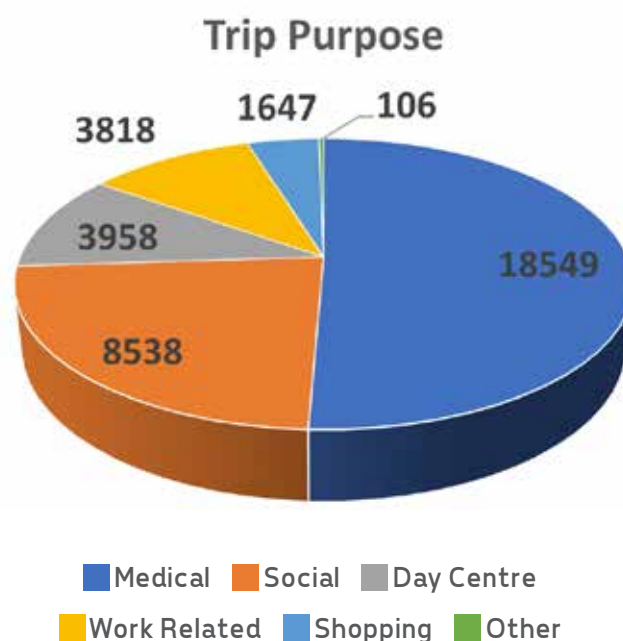
How many trips did we complete?
36,567

How many individual clients did we help?
1,913

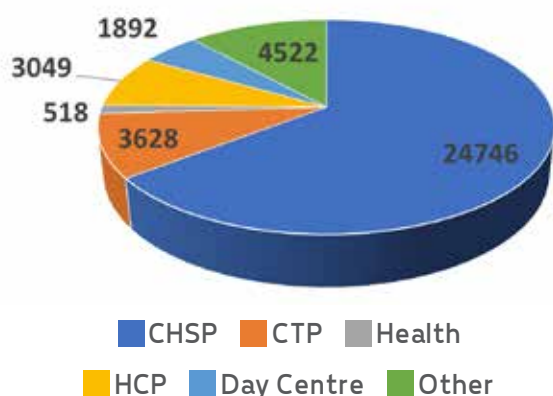
How many wheel-chair trips
846

The transport team as a part of the larger Mercy team continue to help out whenever they can by controlling the PPE throughout the pandemic.

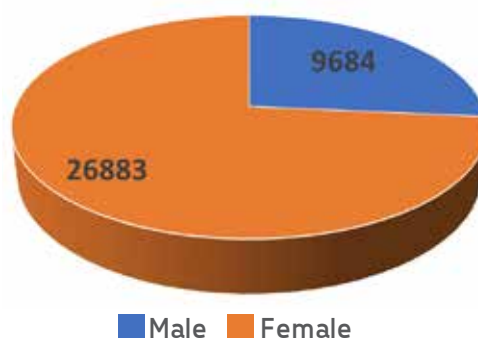
We continue to work with our clients to develop new outing ideas and explore new destinations



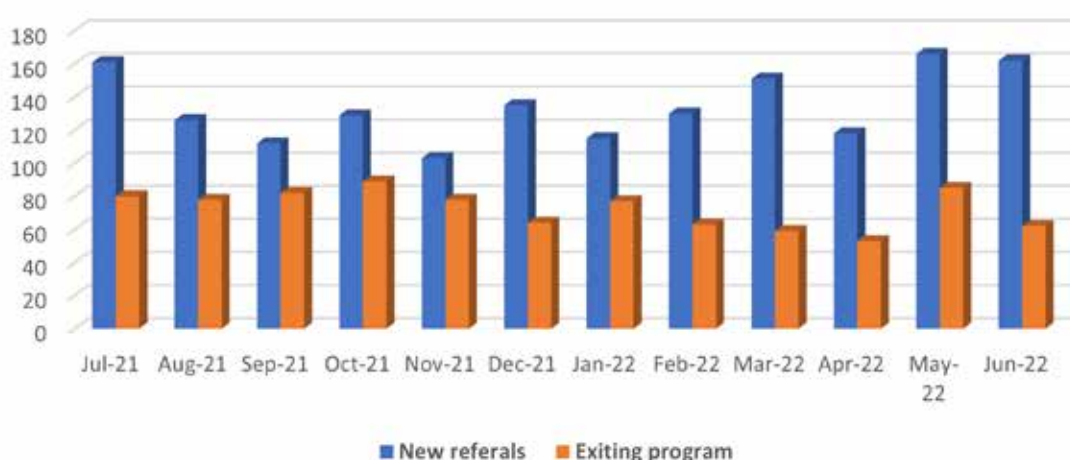
Trips by Funding Use



Male / Female Service use



Movement of clients



SOME GREAT FEEDBACK FROM OUR CLIENTS

Lee called to thank CT for fitting her in for a late appointment and the drivers were great

Patricia rang to thank Mercy for all the help in transport and would not know how she and Les would survive without Mercy's help.

Tony rang to say thanks for transport when his appointment ran over time. The driver Gus was wonderful.

From Newcastle Legacy - The drivers are most caring and helpful and Peta is helpful with arranging and rearranging the bookings.

Zoe called to say thank you for dropping off her umbrella that she left on the bus

Davidson called and it was her first day of travel with us and that Gus and Mick H were great.

Bartlett called to say it was their first time on the exercise outings and that they had a great time.

Lovely lunch at the park. Have booked for every Monday.

Pat rang to say that her and her husband travelled to Gosford and said Karl (volunteer) was wonderful.

Gail called to say it was her first trip with Mercy and she had wonderful drivers and they assisted her with her walker.

Noreen called to say how lovely it was to finally go to a club on the outings to have a meal. It was a lovely surprise to sit at the table and chat to everyone

Mr and Mrs L travelled for the first time today. They had drivers Eddie and Matt and couldn't praise them enough. Very happy with the service.

Mollie called to book transport to Gosford for an appointment. She was very grateful and said that the office staff deserve wings

Alcohol and other drug (AOD) & Family programs

MCAULEY OUTREACH SERVICE

Despite the fluctuating impacts of COVID-19 within the community, the McAuley Outreach Service continued to provide AOD counselling and support to families in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Port Stephens and Maitland areas throughout the year. The year commenced with the team continuing to work from home, demonstrating adaptability and resilience in finding new ways to provide care and support clients in an evolving pandemic. Counselling gradually returned to in person visits, whilst complying with mandated Public Health orders to maintain the safety of both clients and counselling staff. Phone counselling occurred for clients if they were not able to have an in person visit, or counselling appointments were held outside, maintaining distancing requirements and client confidentiality. By being innovative, counselling staff were able to maintain levels of service provision. Clients noted the positive impact of flexibility in care provision despite uncertain times and responded well.

Clients were heavily impacted by COVID-19 health orders, noting that feelings of social isolation and risk from domestic violence was increased. Clients responded positively to the ongoing contact from counselling staff.

Service to 244 clients; with a total of 115 children residing within the family home, 146 children in care, and five pregnant women.

82% female, 23% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

The drug identified as most problematic was methamphetamine, followed by cannabis and alcohol.

McAuley Outreach counsellors continue as accredited Work Development Order sponsors, with clients engaging in counselling sessions to pay off State Debt. More than 59 Work Development Orders were completed this year through participating in our counselling services.

We actively attempted to re-contact all clients 3 to 6 months after commencement of service to obtain feedback about the service they received. The outcomes indicate significant positive change among participants e.g. a reduction in AOD use; as well as in clients' perception of the severity of their AOD dependence. Psychological health as well as general health and wellbeing also improved significantly. A large majority also expressed an increase in their parenting skills and confidence. Clients also expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services provided; and 97% indicated that they would re-refer to the service in the future if they required further support. The vast majority felt that they had achieved some, or all, of their goals.

Themes in client's feedback were: feeling supported and not judged; being given good information and resources; and support to access other services. Most clients expressed the value of receiving support in their own homes.

After a life impacted by domestic violence, substance use and homelessness, one of the McAuley Outreach clients has gained stable accommodation through Mercy Services in addition to ongoing counselling. She wrote this on a card to her counsellor:

"This program and your support is the reason my children and I are still together. The reason we smile and the reason we have a home together. Thank you from the bottom of my heart and all of my being.
THANK YOU!



HOLYOAKE

With the easing of pandemic-related health restrictions, Holyoake Women's group recommenced in July 2021. Unfortunately, the reinstatement of restrictions saw the program suspended after only six sessions. Staff endeavoured to maintain contact with clients, making phone calls and emailing information. Clients were appreciative of the ongoing support of staff and the phone contact which enabled some continuation of the program.

Challenges around staffing have impacted the recommencement of the Holyoake Women's Program. But staff have maintained regular contact with Holyoake organisation and are working towards recommencing the program in the next financial year.

COMMUNITY HOUSING

The Community Housing program assists and supports parents, who have overcome AOD problems and their dependent children, by providing short to medium term housing at public housing rental rates.

Houses are offered to low-income families who have demonstrated the ability to live alcohol and drug-free for a significant period (at least 6 months).

Mercy has houses situated in the suburbs of Mayfield, Maryland, Whitebridge, and Elmore Vale. These are available to families for up to a 24-month period. Amelie Housing a registered community-housing provider, currently manages the houses. Mercy Community Services retains the right to interview and select the residents for each house, and then each resident signs a lease with Amelie and a support agreement with Mercy Community Services.

Four individuals with a combined total of nine children have occupied the community houses in the past financial year. Three of the long-term tenants have undertaken or completed vocational courses and obtained employment during their time in Community Housing.

One tenant recently completed his tenancy and gained private rental accommodation at Edgeworth. This is his story:

Colin completed a two-year tenancy in May 2022, residing at the Whitebridge property with his teenage son. Colin noted the positive impact of safe and secure accommodation during his ongoing recovery - he was able to study, gain a Community Services qualification from TAFE and secure stable employment as a Support worker. He was able to make a comfortable home for himself and his son, commenting that it had changed the way he lived and increased his confidence. He felt that he was able to move beyond his years of addiction, be a good father and a contributing member of the community.

Colin was excited to be able to apply for private rentals, with his tenancy giving him good references - of which he was very proud. His son was going to continue to reside with him, and his teenage daughter was also going to live with him. Colin was happy that his elderly mother would be living nearby, and that he was now able to be a support for her.



BRONTE HOUSE

Bronte House has accommodated 5 women over the past year. The Bronte House Support Worker meets with the women for a weekly house meeting. Discussion points include goal setting, AA/NA meetings and group attendance and any household matters that may arise.

Two long term residents obtained independent accommodation and one further resident only stayed for a short period. A further resident only stayed for a month before a significant relapse with significant mental health issues requiring hospitalisation. The compassion of counselling staff was evident through this challenging time, and the client maintained contact following hospital discharge when she went to reside with friends.

Bronte House underwent a mini-makeover this year, with gardens and excess furniture removed from the property. New beds were purchased and a near new lounge was donated. The house looks very tidy and welcoming.

As of July 2022 we currently have one resident who has been very active in her recovery. She has commenced voluntary work and is playing social tennis in the area. There are ongoing enquiries for this accommodation.

BRIGHTON HOUSE

Nine men stayed at Brighton during the year. Their ages ranged from early twenties to late forties. Some residents have returned to the house, seeking the support and positive experience of a previous residency. These "old boys" bring a wealth of lived experience to the House, strongly upholding the principles of the Brighton house program, and supporting their co-residents. On occasion the Support worker has been pleased to have met some former residents at the house, who are continuing to support current residents and attending meetings. It is lovely to hear them talk of their time at Brighton and the strong friendships that they made.

Length of stay varies, some residents moving on to alternate accommodation, or because they have experienced difficulties in their recovery journey.

COVID-19 impacted the household, with residents being "locked down". During this stressful time, the residents were supported remotely by AOD staff and Mercy Services organised grocery delivery. The boys were most pleased to find some chocolate in their order!

Current residents are undertaking TAFE studies or have gained employment. They are active in the recovery community, seeking positive peer supports and are redeveloping good relationships with their families. There is a good feeling of family and fellowship within the house- melas are shared, the house has a very well-organised cleaning roster and the garden is tidy. The residents were very active in cleaning up discarded possessions, old beds and furniture. We were fortunate enough to have a large and comfortable lounge suite donated to the house, in addition to a new bed. The residents were very happy with the new, fresh look.

One long-term resident has now gained independent accommodation in the Newcastle CBD and is now permanently employed.





Volunteer Update

VOLUNTEERING

As we move into the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations across aged and community services sectors continue to experience a significant decline in the number of volunteers available to give their valuable time to assist the not-for-profit sectors. Our experience here at Mercy Services has been no different to this.

March 2022 saw the resignation of Karen Maloney, who had been our Volunteer Coordinator since 2018. Aine Beard commenced as the new Volunteer Engagement Officer in July 2022 and has started to look at new ways to encourage and engage volunteers across Mercy Services. Part of this role has been to create detailed and distinct volunteering roles across all departments and to register with Centrelink to host 'mutual obligation' volunteers.



As our nation opens up post-COVID, we have been reconnecting with existing volunteers to assess where there are mutual benefits to found for clients, volunteers, and Mercy Services as a whole.

Mercy has linked in with the following programs and services to assist with growing our Volunteer program over the next 12 months.

- Hunter Volunteer Centre
- Volunteer Resource Hub
- The Center for Volunteering
- Go Volunteer
- Seek Volunteer
- Community Visitors Scheme (CVS)
- Altura training

Without dedicated, committed, loyal and highly skilled staff and volunteers, organisations like ours would not be able to function. At Mercy Services we are extremely lucky to have staff and volunteers who are committed to the vision and mission of the organisation. They display empathy and care towards clients and enjoy what they do every day.

On behalf of everyone at Mercy Services, we would like to say thank you to all our Mercy Volunteers, we sincerely appreciate your time, support and commitment. We could not achieve what we do without you!



Financial Report

MERCY SERVICES
Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2022

Mercy Services

ABN 34 095 335 309

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2022

		2022	2021
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	5	16,803,493	16,933,222
Employee benefits expense		(11,772,294)	(11,771,131)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(744,492)	(760,933)
Other expenses		(4,056,273)	(4,132,018)
Finance expenses		(31,559)	(36,788)
Lease expenses	11	(108,784)	(124,433)
Surplus before income tax		90,091	107,919
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus for the year		90,091	107,919
Other comprehensive income, net of income tax			
Net fair value movements for available-for-sale financial assets		(505,555)	414,770
Other comprehensive income/(loss) for the year, net of tax		(505,555)	414,770
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year		(415,464)	522,689

Mercy Services

ABN 34 095 335 309

Statement of Financial Position
As At 30 June 2022

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	6,248,046	6,523,885
Trade and other receivables	7	320,458	230,860
Other financial assets	8	6,088,105	6,437,768
Other assets	9	625,903	784,706
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		13,282,512	13,977,219
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	10	2,794,864	3,261,093
Right-of-use assets	11	755,877	697,030
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		3,550,741	3,958,123
TOTAL ASSETS		16,833,253	17,935,342
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	12	5,639,530	5,735,329
Lease liabilities	13	175,748	128,655
Employee benefits	14	1,578,163	1,540,701
Other financial liabilities	15	2,146,277	2,864,167
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		9,539,718	10,268,852
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	13	678,636	655,866
Employee benefits	14	240,592	220,853
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		919,228	876,719
TOTAL LIABILITIES		10,458,946	11,145,571
NET ASSETS		6,374,307	6,789,771
EQUITY			
Motor vehicle replacement reserve		1,235,808	1,251,519
Financial assets reserve		(317,175)	188,380
Retained earnings		5,455,674	5,349,872
TOTAL EQUITY		6,374,307	6,789,771

Contact us

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MERCY RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

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Fax: 02 6572 3951

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Phone: 02 4962 6680

Fax: 02 4955 4218

MCAULEY FAMILY AND AOD SERVICES

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Phone: 02 4961 2686

Fax: 02 4969 5149

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

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Phone: 02 4961 3113







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