

Annual Report

2016-17

Relationships Australia[®]
TASMANIA

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President's Foreword

We Say Thank You



Once again I am pleased to report that Relationships Australia Tasmania has performed extremely well in the 2016-2017 financial year.

We continue to be a client-centered organisation and have provided excellent services to Tasmanians who accessed our programs in increasing numbers.

We saw 8,131 individual clients this year, up from 7,942 last year.

That accounts for 23,447 client sessions. All this in a financial environment that continues to be challenging, but in which we have achieved a modest surplus of \$231,000. Our income increased to just under \$9 million, a \$318,000 improvement over last year's figure.

The Board also oversaw the review and maturation of the Strategic Plan, adjusting it to reflect the changing environment and ensuring that it will now see the organisation in good stead for the last two years of the plan.

The Board has retained its focus on the changing funding environment, with increasing competition as services are tendered out and there is a move to individual funding rather than block funding. Despite this, Relationships Australia Tasmania has maintained its existing programs and has achieved funding for new services in family violence and suicide prevention.

The Board also oversaw the review and maturation of the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, adjusting it to reflect the changing environment and ensuring that it will continue to guide the organisation appropriately.

One reflection of the changing environment was the recent investment in the redesign of the Client Centre in Clare Street, New Town in the South, which was undertaken to meet the implementation of Universal Screening - a client safety risk assessment tool.

Two new Board Members have filled casual vacancies during the year. Emma Quinn, now the Board Northern Representative, will bring her accounting skills and knowledge of the community and financial sectors to our organisation. Dr. Mandy Matthewson is a clinical psychologist from the University of Tasmania and is also in private practice. Her appointment as

Board General Representative reflects the Board's commitment to maintain a person with clinical experience within its membership.

I wish also to farewell Maureen Doherty (previous Vice President) and Sarah Gracie (previous Treasurer) who left the Board during this year and to express my thanks to them for their commitment and hard work on behalf of Relationships Australia Tasmania.

Thank you to existing Board Members, Wendi Key and Kristian Falconer who took up the roles of Vice President and Treasurer respectively and who have been of great assistance throughout this year. Thanks also to Ella Dixon who continues as Board Secretary and to the other Board Members for their contributions throughout the year.

Finally, I wish to express my acknowledgement of the hard work and excellent performance of our CEO, Mat Rowell and also of the Leadership Group, the organisation's Managers and most importantly its staff. We have achieved a lot across many domains throughout this year, and for that the Board sincerely thanks you.

Mary Bent PSM
President
Relationships Australia Tasmania

CEO's Year in Review

Another Successful Year



The 2016–2017 financial year has been another year of reviewing, refining and maturing our systems and service offerings.

We have again had two sets of client satisfaction data which continue to show overall client satisfaction ratings at over 96% of those surveyed. This is quite an accomplishment when you think that some of our programs are involuntary and where others work in high conflict situations, with complex issues.

As society has become increasingly complex so too have the issues with which people seek our support and assistance. This has led to continued growth in mental health services, and in order to meet demand in this area we undertook a redesign of the Early Intervention Services moving our mental health staff into one new team and appointing a new Manager to lead this team through some complex change and growth. A key focus has been on the rollout of the NDIS and its implications for existing and new clients.

We had our best performance in Community Based Mental Health Care Service so far despite some challenges in attracting and retaining a workforce with the right credentials. This continues to be a focus and we are proud that we delivered over 2, 000 sessions in this program alone in the south.

We also enjoyed funding success in being awarded the state government's new Men Engaging New Strategies (MENS) program, a sophisticated perpetrator intervention service for low-to-moderate offenders of family violence.

We were also successful in receiving funding from the state government to scale up and roll out our schools program in state schools with SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY.

We also won the Tasmanian Suicide Prevention Initiatives contract for another three-and-a-half years, allowing us to continue this important work.

With an increased emphasis on client safety we successfully implemented a Universal Screening program for all new clients at RA Tas across almost all of our programs. This will ensure that where there are any risks for clients accessing our services they are identified and managed as early as possible during clients' engagement with our organisation.

As with previous years, the Staff Conference was a particular highlight, but this year just gone, the highlight for all of us was the staff TED Talks. These were inspiring, insightful and humorous and we all enjoyed hearing about our peoples' passions.

The RA Tas Enterprise Agreement was approved in the Fair Work Commission and new salaries and back pay provided to all staff effected.

As well as all of this, we also progressed the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program, and actively engaged with a number of other campaigns such as MindOUT, and various suicide prevention campaigns.

I want to thank all of the staff who work to provide the high quality services our clients have come to expect every day. You are all valued and we appreciate your efforts.

Thanks to the entire Board, who volunteer their valuable time and expertise to govern the organisation and support the RA Tas mission. Mary Bent, President, in particular is strategic, supportive and collaborative.

Thanks also to all the Management team, Leadership Group, and to Michael Kelly our Chief Operating Officer who celebrated 10 years of service with RA, commencing initially at the Hobart Family Relationships Centre and working through the organisation in a variety of roles.

Thank you all of you for another successful year at RA Tas.

Mat Rowell
Chief Executive Officer
Relationships Australia Tasmania

About Relationships Australia Tasmania

Client-Centred, Community-based

With more than 65 years of experience RA Tas has been helping Tasmanians to build positive relationships through the provision of confidential relationship support services by our professionally-trained and highly skilled staff.

We are a community-based, not-for-profit organisation with no religious affiliations.

Our services are for all members of the community, regardless of religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, lifestyle choice, cultural background or economic circumstances.

We are committed to enhancing the lives of communities, families and individuals and supporting positive and respectful relationships. We are part of a federated structure with large autonomous member organisation in every state and territory and a national office based in Canberra.

With over 65 years' experience, RA Tas has been helping Tasmania to build positive relationships through the provision of confidential relationship support services by our professionally trained and highly skilled staff.

Our Vision

All Tasmanians enjoy positive, respectful and fulfilling relationships.

Our Mission

We offer people the services and support they need, when they need it, to assist them when life presents challenges. This may be to do with a relationship, work, past trauma or other personal challenges.

We aim to support people to transform their lives and their relationships in ways that matter to them.

Strategic Plan 2014-2019

Mid-term Review

The mid-term review of the plan reflected a maturing of our organisation and showed significant progress in all five areas of the plan.

Having reached the mid-way point for the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan, a review was conducted to assess our progress toward meeting the goals under the five priority areas identified in the plan.

The Strategic Plan for the organisation is an important framework to ensure that the work we do and our culture are aligned with our goals. Throughout the lifecycle of this plan, the work of RA Tas is shaped and influenced by the five priority areas: Client Experience and Outcomes; Community Profile and Reputation; Well-Functioning Organisation; People and Culture; and Service Design and Business Development.

The mid-term review of the plan reflected a maturing of our organisation and showed significant progress in all five areas of the plan. The five key priority areas continue to be a clear focus for the organisation and the strategies have moved from building a foundation and identifying opportunities to proactively taking action. Some of the highlights for the 2016-2017 year are detailed below with many more appearing through this report.

Under the first priority, Client Experience and Outcomes, we've introduced universal risk screening

for all clients accessing RA Tas services. Universal Screening embeds a systematic approach to enquiring about wellbeing and safety risks to enable practitioners to detect risks, conduct risk assessments as required and provide services in a coordinated manner.

The completion of the Penelope Training Project which resulted in the development of user friendly tutorials for our client data management system has also been a significant achievement under this priority area. The basic 101 training which is now easily updatable has been rolled out to all current staff and is now available for use as a refresher or as part of the induction process for new staff members.

A refined process for receiving and collating feedback from clients who have exited our service was developed in early 2017. Collection of feedback from clients who have left the service is now done electronically via Survey Monkey and is able to be analysed in real time. We also worked with the Department of Social Services to pilot a web based client satisfaction survey that clients completed on tablets and continue to look for other ways that we can better use technology to get feedback from our clients.

We have continued to add to the suite of core competencies which are completed by new staff. We have added two new competencies with a focus on work health and safety and workplace discrimination and harassment.

Priority two, Community Profile and Reputation has been built upon with RA Tas appearing in the media on several occasions, showing leadership on issues such as family violence, marriage equality, suicide prevention, welfare reform and gambling reform. There has been focused

It's been a busy and rewarding year for RA Tas with some considerable achievements in relation to our strategic plan and goals.

work on our collateral with the review of numerous brochures and resources to ensure our brand and profile are strengthened across the state.

RA Tas has expanded its service offering to include programs that address men's behaviour in relation to family violence which has created new partnerships and collaborations with the sector.

A number of exciting new initiatives have been rolled out to address actions under priority three, Well-Functioning Organisation, including the Bright Ideas Campaign, the implementation of a Business Continuity Plan for our IT system and the work to develop a business intelligence system for the organisation that will provide greater access to performance data to better inform decision making and the information that is available for inclusion in reporting.

An improvement in organisational culture and employee satisfaction was noted through the process of rolling out the Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Survey at the end of 2016.

The theme of the 2016 Staff Conference focussed specifically on serving our clients and how we can best meet their needs, another example of how we've been working to achieve our goal of being a well-functioning organisation.

People and Culture is a key priority area in the Strategic Plan. RA Tas recognises that our staff are at the core of our organisation and are key in delivering on our

vision and purpose. A range of work has occurred in this priority area including the development and implementation of a family violence leave policy to give staff support if they experience family violence. We also launched the Employee Lifecycle policies and procedures to ensure that RA Tas is able to attract and recruit the best possible people to be part of our team.

The area of Service Design and Business Development has been as challenging and demanding as ever. In the 2016-2017 year we were successful in retaining funding for the Community Based Mental Health Care Service and for the suicide prevention program. We also recognised the complexity and growth occurring in the area of mental health through the establishment of a mental health service delivery stream. This will ensure we are well placed in the future to attract further funding in the mental health area and take on opportunities presented by the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

It's been a busy and rewarding year for RA Tas with some considerable achievements in relation to our strategic plan and goals. RA Tas is well placed moving forward to be flexible and collaborative in our service delivery as we strive to provide the very best services to people who access our services.

The background of the page is a dark blue color with several large, overlapping fingerprint patterns in a lighter shade of blue. The fingerprints are scattered across the page, with some being more prominent than others. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a focus on human identity and security.

*Key Events,
Projects
and
Staff Stories*

2016-2017

Neighbour Day 2017

Raising Awareness for Social Connection

Neighbour Day is about everyone; every person, in every community. It's a movement that helps spread the word that social connection is the responsibility of everyone.

Tasmanians are known for being friendly, but sometimes modern life gets in the way. Some people: the elderly, sick or those without a good social network might feel isolated or left behind.

This was the case for Elsie Brown who died in her home in 2001. Her body wasn't discovered for another two years. People in the community began to ask: how is it possible that a neighbour can die and her absence go unnoticed?

Founder of Neighbour Day, Andrew Heslop was so impacted by Elsie's tragic story that he sought a way to bring attention to the negative side effects of disconnected communities. In 2003, Neighbour Day was born.

Then in 2014, Relationships Australia became the home for all things Neighbour Day. Neighbour Day is about everyone; every person, in every community. It's a movement that helps spread the word that social connection is the responsibility of everyone.

This year the theme for Neighbour Day was the Importance of Social Connection for the Elderly. Throughout Tasmania, RA Tas hosted and partnered with other organisations to show support for the day.

In January 2017, Relationships Australia's national survey found

that more than one-third of respondents reported that they often felt isolated, while a further 40% stated they felt isolated some of the time. This is why RA Tas celebrates Neighbour Day every year.

In the North, Neighbour Day was celebrated with the Northern Suburbs Community Centre, Country Women's Association, Launceston City Councils and the Uniting Church Hall Committee for Cuppa and Conversation at Mowbray Shopping Centre in Launceston. The Uniting Church Hall was set up with activities and child-friendly spaces including scrabble and children's story time, and drawing. The Art of Conversation Card Game was a great way to break the ice and get people talking and sharing.

In the South, on Thursday 23 March, 2017, RA Tas hosted Neighbour Day at Mathers House in the centre of Hobart, in partnership with Hobart City Council, Council on the Aging (COTA), Mission Australia and Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania (ATDC).

In his speech on the day, RA Tas CEO Mat Rowell thanked Mathers House for facilitating activities that connected older Tasmanians to each other and the community. Mat also thanked

Dancers from Broadway Boogie entertain the audience at Neighbour Day.



particular individuals for showing their support for Neighbour Day, including Hobart City Council Lord Mayor Sue Hickey; The Honourable Rob Valentine; COTA CEO Sue Leith, Mission Australia State Director Noel Mundy; ATDC CEO Debra Rabe as well as the Broadway Boogie group, and the many volunteers and staff who do their bit for the elderly community in Tasmania.

“Due to our extensive work with the community and from a range of studies we know how important social participation is for positive physical and mental health and improved wellbeing for individual, families and communities,” Mat Rowell said.

“Relationships Australia is now proud to carry the torch nationally, each year after becoming the home for Neighbour Day in 2014,” Mat said.



Darisha

From Supporter to Energetic Senior Practitioner

STAFF STORY

For this story, Darisha McKnight was asked, among other things, what her role at RA Tas involves. While in her answer Darisha spoke about her eight years with the organisation, her enthusiasm, dedication and passion for her work shone through.

Darisha started her RA Tas career as a fourth-year social work student, in the Aboriginal Cultural Program, supervised by Dave

Warrener. Since this time, Darisha has worked in a range of RA Tas programs and projects, including the Children's Contact Service, facilitated education sessions in the Parenting Orders Program and the Young Aboriginal Support Program (yAsp).

Now, Darisha works in Find and Connect, Forced Adoption Support Services, facilitates an Aboriginal Women's Healing

Program, supervises 11 staff members, and delivers external supervision across a range of programs, and is called upon to assist in other early intervention support services.

Even though her role is vast and varied, pinpointing her favourite aspects are no problem for Darisha. It's the investigation and research of tracing lost family members for the Forced Adoption Support Service and Find and Connect.

Where does Darisha get her energy to keep going and meet the demands of her varied role?

"There are all the clichés (which are true!) of wanting to make a difference to other people's lives; to work alongside people to reach their full potential, to enhance relationships but, perhaps selfishly, I really enjoy seeing people do just that and I find energy in working alongside clients and colleagues as they reach their goals."

Darisha's enthusiasm and tenacity also come from wanting to be a role model to her daughters.

"Early on in my career at RA Tas I wanted to show my daughters that despite what life throws at you, some hard work and determination means you can reach for anything you set your mind to... that it doesn't matter where you start, it's where you end up that's important!

"My daughters are now adults. And now, I'm motivated by the sense of fulfilment and energy I get from being a part of a team and an organisation that people come to, to overcome hurdles they feel too big to climb alone."

White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program

Family Violence Training for RA Tas Staff

**“In 2013-2014
Tasmania police
attended over
than 2,219 family
violence incidents
and 1,562 family
arguments.”**

(Safe Homes, Safe
Families: Tasmania’s
Family Violence Action
Plan 2015-2020)

“I want to tell people that family violence happens to anybody, no matter how nice your house is, no matter how intelligent you are.” – Rosie Batty, 2016 Australian of the Year and domestic violence advocate.

Domestic and family violence impacts everyone. The statistics are now so high that it’s inevitable that everyone in our community has or will be affected in some way. Findings from the Tasmanian’s Government’s ‘Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania’s Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020’ state: “In 2013-2014 Tasmania police attended over 2,219 family violence incidents and 1,562 family arguments.

RA Tas sees the impact of these statistics throughout many of its early intervention and post separation programs. So in 2015, RA Tas entered into the White Ribbon’s Workplace Accreditation Program.

The White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program supports organisations to respond to and prevent violence against women. Going through the program allowed RA Tas to critically evaluate the way it supports staff

and colleagues experiencing family violence. RA Tas now has a fully implemented family violence leave support policy with allowances for staff to obtain dedicated leave in order to access help and support. A series of staff training sessions was rolled out in 2017 to further complement new and updated policies and procedures. Staff training provided practical skills for staff to listen to and support their colleagues who might be in family violence situations.

“Participating in the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program has increased our own capacity as an organisation to respond to disclosures from employees who might be experiencing family violence. We are now having more open and honest conversations about what we can do to support staff who might be experiencing family violence.

‘Now staff know that RA Tas has policies and procedures in place to support them should they need it,’ Director People and Culture, Kristy Brown, said.

White Ribbon Oath



Stand up Speak out

Relationships Australia
TASMANIA

Proudly working with White Ribbon to create a safer workplace
Australia's campaign to stop violence against women



Championing Equality for All

Cultural Safety of all Service Users

Celebrating inclusivity is something RA Tas has incorporated into its policies, its advocacy work and its culture.

¹ LGBTI stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex. We recognise our use of the letters LGBTI as an umbrella term, that this term has limitations, and acknowledge that all language evolves and changes.

At the core of its values, RA Tas sees all Tasmanians as equal and having the right to feel safe when accessing its services. However, feeling equal when accessing services - particularly for some people from the ¹LGBTI community - has not always been the case.

In recognition of this, RA Tas appointed ambassadors within the organisation as MindOUT champions. MindOUT is a campaign from the National LGBTI Health Alliance: a national suicide prevention initiative aimed at improving the mental health of the LGBTI community.

To ensure that it provided a welcoming and safe environment across all its service centres, RA Tas collaborated with and sought feedback from members of the LGBTI community. Some of this feedback regarded the RA Tas intake process. As such, RA Tas provided individuals with the ability to de-identify their gender, and choose their preferred name and pronoun.

Inclusivity for All

Celebrating inclusivity is something RA Tas has incorporated into its policies and procedures, its advocacy work and its culture. Some examples of this are:

- In 2016 staff across the North and South took part in the Wear it Purple Day Pride march

- RA Tas delivered Working with LGBTI People training in partnership with Working It Out and provided a regular meeting place for LGBTI community and working groups
- RA Tas has spoken out in support for the Marriage Equality Bill and developed a formal statement of commitment to the LGBTI community
- In October 2017, the RA Tas staff conference will be focused on what is real gender equality. Key note presentations will generate increased understanding and awareness of the inequality of the past and how we as a collective can be the drivers of equality and respect for all in our work and in the community.

RA Tas has taken a strong stand of responsibility to increase cultural safety for LGBTI service users and community members by speaking up against discrimination and identified covert harassment of others. We will seek to continue our partnership with the National Health Alliance and progress organisational adjustments, professional development for staff as well as community participation and consultation as part of our responsibility as drivers of change and rebalancing gender equality.

SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY

A Big Year for Mitch and his Team

Throughout the year, Stay ChatTY presented to many businesses, sporting clubs and schools across Tasmania and interstate to raise awareness of mental health and suicide prevention.

The team at SPEAK UP! Stay ChatTY (Stay ChatTY) have had a busy and successful year, spreading the message that nothing is so bad that you can't talk about it.

There have been many highlights across 2016-2017, which is a great indication that Tasmania is supportive of Stay ChatTY's work.

The year started on a high, as the team at DJ Motors presented Stay ChatTY founder, Mitch McPherson and the team with a Stay ChatTY-wrapped Nissan Navara to drive across the state.

Mitch represented the charity in a broad range of activities. He participated in the Give Me 5 for Kids Telethon in Launceston, and was also an ambassador for RU OK Day, touring with the National Conversation Convoy across the country.

The Stay ChatTY team participated in the Out of the Shadows walk remembering those we have lost to suicide, and attended numerous conferences, including the National Suicide Prevention Conference in Canberra.

Throughout the year, Stay ChatTY presented to many businesses, sporting clubs and schools across Tasmania and interstate to raise awareness of mental health

and suicide prevention. There were many charity events held in support of the organisation including statewide charity football matches, AFL Ladies Luncheon and, of course, the highlight: our annual Stay ChatTY ball, which was again held at Wrest Point Casino. More than 600 guests attended the ball, which raised over \$50,000.

In March, we held Tour de Tig #2, and it was another huge highlight, as Mitch and six of his friends, once again, ran from Burnie to Hobart in four days. With the support of politicians, businesses and high-profile individuals behind them, the boys completed the run successfully and raised over \$20,000!

May saw us hold our third Stay ChatTY/Banjo's coffee month. Throughout the whole month, 50 cents from every large coffee sold came to Stay ChatTY. This was an initiative that saw all 35 Banjo's stores participate. Over \$30,000 was donated to Stay ChatTY, which was a sensational outcome.

Additional to the funds raised it was the awareness and conversations that were started from the fundraising that is the most thrilling aspect for Stay ChatTY.

A thrilled Mitch with the Banjos Team.



We thank Banjos for their ongoing support, and we look forward to working together for years to come.

Stay ChatTY has been well represented by a wide range of wonderful, passionate people. Hamish Hall took on the massive challenge of swimming across the English Channel. Hamish raised over \$11,000.

Another fan of Stay ChatTY is Tasmanian motorcar driver Alex Peroni who joined the Stay ChatTY team to raise awareness whilst competing in the Formula Renault

Eurocup Championship this year.

Mitch himself deserves massive recognition for all of his individual success as well this year. Mitch was the State Winner in the Emerging Leader Category at the AIM Leadership Excellence Awards, he also won his category for the Make it Betta Health Achievement Award at the Tasmanian Community Achievement Awards.

Stay ChatTY was again recognised on a national level with Mitch being awarded the 2017 Young Tasmanian of the Year Award and representing the state at the

National Young Australian of the Year Awards in Canberra.

With funding from the Tasmanian Community Fund, Stay ChatTY launched its new school program "TeamChatTY" and delivered the program to more than 750 students.

Stay ChatTY was also especially grateful to the Tasmanian Government who have provided funding for the Stay ChatTY School Program. This funding will allow the team to deliver the program to many more students in grades nine to twelve.



PLAY MOVIE

Emily

Joy from Helping Others

STAFF STORY

Emily Bell, who began her role with RA Tas in February 2017 is a relatively new addition to the team but her previous experience in homeless youth, child protection and mental health enriches her role as a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP), at the Clare Street Family Relationships Centre in New Town.

It's the capacity of her role as a FDRP that inspires Emily to come to work every day.

"I have a great privilege to work

with families for positive change, supporting them through transitional periods. It's a challenge to do this role... to do it well. That's what inspires me to come to work: the challenge of working with people through mediation for positive outcomes, and to striving to improve my practice every day."

Fundamentally, Emily is interested in the human state; she wants to understand the motivations that govern the complexity of our thoughts and actions. This interest makes up a large component of

her role as a FDRP with RA Tas; the untangling of emotional stressors, guiding the repair of communication breakdowns, and assisting clients to have healthier relationships and positive outcomes.

"I gain intrinsic joy from working with people to reach greater potentials and like to see people smiling when we realise the potential to change. I have long been interested in the health and wellbeing of children and young people; through mediation I can share knowledge and skills with families to work towards better outcomes for children and families, optimising their development and opportunities in life."

Emily has a warm personality and a great sense of humour which comes through in her answers about the top three things she enjoys most about working at RA Tas:

"1. The FDR team. They are a truly amazing bunch of people. Everyone is different. Everyone has a little something special they bring to the team. And the support for each team member is unwavering.

"2. Community services can be a tough gig. We often don't see people at their best, but I am genuinely warmed every day by the RA staff. The girls at the front desk are always smiling; even if people are busy, they still smile and say hello on their way. I have received wonderful support and guidance from my Manager too, who has worked with me to find that work/life balance. The environment here is incredibly unique, genuine and special.

"3. The cake... it had to be said!"

Gamblers Help

Support for Problem Gamblers

During individual sessions clients can discuss how problem gambling impacts on their relationships, health, and ability to work and to function day-to-day.

The Gamblers Help Program is a free service for all Tasmanians. It includes one-on-one counselling for individuals, group session counselling and support groups. Strategies throughout the program are client-focused with the emphasis on harm-minimisation. Clients learn tools to reduce addictive behaviours. Financial counselling and ¹self-exclusion are also explored.

During individual sessions, clients can discuss how problem gambling impacts on their relationships, health, work, and their ability to function day-to-day. For some clients, their gambling addiction has led to criminal behaviours. The Gamblers Help Program supports clients to make sustained changes.

The Gamblers Help Wellbeing Group meets every Wednesday in New Town and is a cohesive and mutually supportive group. One

of our counsellors also provides counselling to men and women at the Tasmania Prison Service on a weekly basis. The program also has a community education emphasis which focuses on community activities, education and advocacy about problem gambling.

Gamblers Help is also available in Launceston and Devenport. Outreach venues in the south and north-east of the state are available.

From 2016 to 2017, RA Tas helped approximately 165 people across the state to reduce their problem gambling, learn skills to manage their addiction and piece back together their lives and relationships.

The Gamblers Help Program are offered in partnership with Anglicare Tasmania and are funded by the Tasmanian Government through the Community Support Levy.

¹Self-exclusion (or self-banning) is a proactive process in which a person with a gambling concern or addiction makes an application to be excluded from specific gambling venues, areas or sites.



A Snapshot of 2016-2017

In 2016-17 we saw

8,131 clients

and held over

23,447 individual sessions

Our clients were

56%
FEMALES

44%
MALES

4%

Aboriginal
Torres
Strait
Islanders

Our Vision
All Tasmanians enjoy positive, respectful and fulfilling relationships.

Our Mission
We offer people the services and support they need, when they need it, to assist them when life presents challenges.

This may be to do with a relationship, work, past trauma or other personal challenges.

We aim to support people to transform their lives and their relationships in ways that matter to them.

Our Values

At RA Tas, we believe we should be:

- Client-centred
- Clear in our purpose and expectations
- Optimistic and hopeful
- Part of a collective effort
- Committed to outstanding service
- Professional and responsible

Our People

45.06
years

The average age of our staff was ...
(we were aged between 21 and 72 years)

19.73%
males

Our staff consisted of ...
(30)



80.27%
females

Our staff consisted of ...
(122)



18
years

The length of time our longest serving employee had been with us ...

51
FULL TIME

53
PART TIME

48
CASUAL

As of 30 June 2017, we had **152 EMPLOYEES**

Meagan

Goals for a Bright Future

STAFF STORY

Meagan is a Client Services Worker at the Family Relationships Centre in New Town. For two years, Meagan (affectionately known as Meags) has embodied the RA Tas value of client-centred service.

Her trajectory to working with RA Tas is an interesting one. After finishing College, she worked at Blundstones and while the role was supposed to be a temporary one, she stayed on for a total of eight years.

Later, Meagan completed a Certificate III in Business Administration and worked as a Manger at a convenience store for three years but, Meagan, said, something was missing.

"I wanted to be able to go home at night knowing that I have done something meaningful. I wanted to work for an organisation whose values were more about caring and helping than sales analysis and gross profit margins.

"Since working with RA Tas, my passion for wanting to help people has grown. This led me to enroll in a Bachelor of Counselling."

Now, Meagan said, being part of a team that strives to achieve a common goal within the community is "a humbling and rewarding experience for which I am grateful."

"Every staff member at RA Tas is genuinely caring, supportive and approachable."

Meagan's warm personality and drive is an asset to the RA Tas Team and, as Meagan explains, the feeling is mutual.

"I enjoy the learning environment within the organisation. The knowledge and wisdom that can be gained from each and every employee in this organisation is overwhelming."



PLAY MOVIE

Universal Screening

Screening for Universal Safety

The implementation of Universal Screening embeds systematic enquiries about clients' wellbeing and safety to enable practitioners to detect risks and conduct risk assessments to provide services in a coordinated manner.

Client Experience and Outcomes is the first Priority Area and Goal in the RA Tas 2014-2019 Strategic Plan. An example of our commitment to be client-centered in everything we do is the implementation of our Universal Screening tool.

Universal Screening is a series of risk assessment questions based on the Detection of Overall Risk Screen model (DOORS).

When talking with new clients, RA Tas practitioners assess risk against the following factors:

- Cultural and religious background
- Partner separation and measure of conflict
- How the client's coping
- Identifying the client's number and age of children
- If safety is a concern for self and/or children
- Mapping any other stressors.

Development of the RA Tas Universal Screening process started in 2015. For this project, RA Tas partnered with Relationships Australia South Australia (RASA). RASA provided professional development through workshop sessions to the Universal Screening Project Leadership Group. The project group consisted

of senior practitioners, coordinator and staff. The project group then consulted with the wider RA Tas team for feedback. Finally, a staff trial was conducted on 21 April 2017 to refine the intake process and gauge practitioner readiness.

On 29 May, 2017, Universal Screening was officially implemented. Since then, Universal Screening has allowed the RA Tas intake team to determine the best possible service RA Tas can provide to a client in a coordinated, safe and concise way.

In July 2017, the project group regrouped to review the Universal Screening progress and identify any areas that needed further consideration. So far, there have been many positive responses from clients and staff.

The partnership with RASA will continue to provide RA Tas with the opportunity to contribute to the evidence-based practice of using Universal Screening for family wellbeing and safety risks. RASA will conduct evaluations for practitioner attitudes and behaviours regarding the effectiveness of Universal Screening as an intake tool.

New Town Reception Remodeled

Collaborative Redesign for Reception Area at New Town

“The discreet spaces ensure the Universal Screening questionnaire is completed in privacy and with appropriate space for thought and reflection. Thanks to all Clare Street staff for their great patience and positivity throughout the renovation,” RA Tas Director, Family Law Services, Ruth Davidson said.

As part of the implementation of Universal Screening, RA Tas reviewed all of its client reception areas. It was determined that our Clare Street, New Town reception area needed a remodel to ensure clients had a calm, confidential space in which to complete intake.

The refurbishment work took place between 8 May and 9 June 2017. The client services team did an outstanding job with the relocation arrangements and made sure clients were not inconvenienced during the remodel. All staff were patient and extremely adaptable even during the room changes and other frustrating activities, such as ‘dust events.’

The new reception area officially opened on 13 June 2017.

“We’re all very happy with the finished product. Clients comment positively on the increased space, light and the general ambience of the space. The alternative seating spaces provides greater comfort for clients and clear visibility for the client services team at reception.

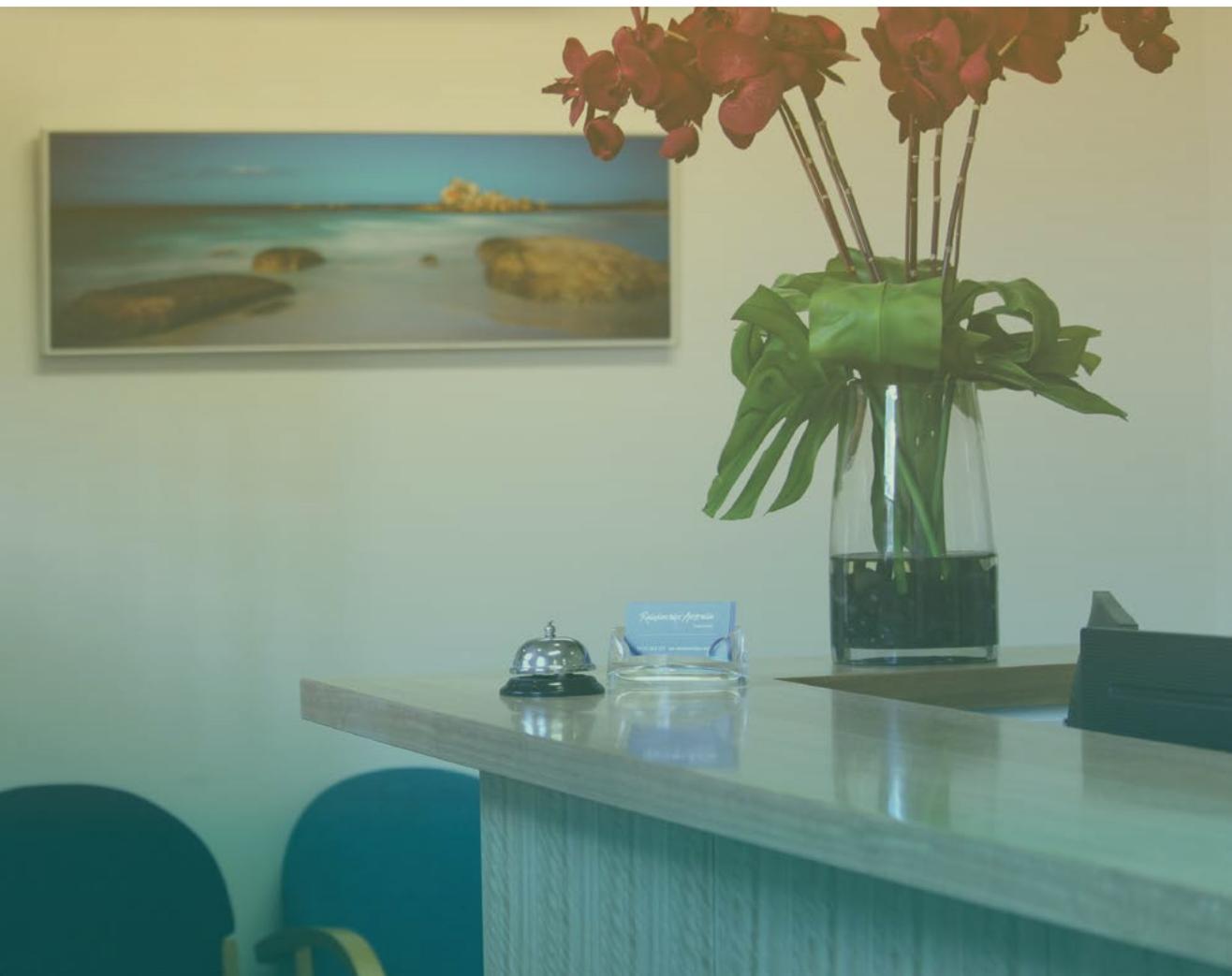
“The discreet spaces ensure the Universal Screening questionnaire is completed in privacy and with

appropriate space for thought and reflection. Thanks to all Clare Street staff for their great patience and positivity throughout the renovation,” RA Tas Director, Family Law Services, Ruth Davidson said.





Clare Street, New Town redesign.



Children's Contact Services

Support for Healthy Relationships for Tasmanian Families

RA Tas Children's Contact Service (CCS) across Tasmania facilitates safe spaces and plans for Tasmanian children to be supported through difficult times when the adults in their lives are struggling.

Children first learn about themselves and the world around them within their family unit. And, generally, if a family enjoys healthy relationships, children will thrive but some children miss out on the chance to feel safe and secure. Some children's families break down.

Family can break down for a range of reasons: addiction, poor mental health, and family violence are just some contributing factors.

RA Tas Children's Contact Service (CCS) across Tasmania facilitates safe spaces and plans for Tasmanian children to be supported through difficult times when the adults in their lives are struggling.

RA Tas CCS was established in 1996. There are three CCS centres in Tasmania, one in the South, and two in Devenport and Launceston, respectively. The teams across the state are made up of professionals with qualifications and experience in areas such as social work, education and law.

Some families use RA Tas CCS for support with visitation due to an enforced Family Violence Order. Family Violence Orders are designed to protect one or more family members against another person or family situation. Under

the Family Law Act, Family Violence Orders facilitate the delivery or collection of a child or children when spending time with a parent or other family member. Family Violence Orders assist family members to:

- Attend family counselling to establish or re-establish relationships, healthy communication skills, reduce conflict
- Have access to a family consultant that conducts comprehensive case notes and supervised visiting sessions and caregiver change over arrangements
- Enter into family dispute resolution to reduce conflict between ex-partners so children can enjoy better family dynamics
- Be supported through family court proceedings and for assistance with longer term care arrangements.

In all instances of intake into CCS, RA Tas practitioners work with families to develop a child-focused plan with solid case management.

RA Tas encourages the progression of family contact where appropriate and safe to do so. External referrals to other services and organisations may occur to further support individuals and families.



PLAY MOVIE

Yvette

Living the RA Tas Mission and Vision

STAFF STORY

Yvette Cehtel's commitment to the community sector is long standing. She's held a range of Board Member positions, as well as volunteer and fulltime roles for a host of well-known community organisations throughout Tasmania.

Yvette said the organisational values of RA Tas align with her own. Particularly the client-centred approach.

"I also try to walk the talk of being open, transparent, respectful and professional."

Initially, Yvette was employed with RA Tas in September 2016 on a three-month contract to implement the Men Engaging New Strategies (MENS) program. This was a busy time for Yvette. Throughout the three months, Yvette's efforts were evident and she was asked to stay on with RA Tas as Manager, Counselling &

Support Services North/North-West.

Yvette loves the diversity and challenge of the RA Tas programs and outreach service that are run in Launceston and along the North-West Coast and across the state, in general. She also enjoys working as part of a dedicated and professional team.

"The skills and expertise on hand daily never ceases to inspire me."

Children's Contact Service - Case Study

Mother and Daughter Reconnect

Every day, RA Tas supports children, parents, partners and ex-partners to have healthy relationships.

Every day, RA Tas supports children, parents, partners and ex-partners to have healthy relationships. Some relationships need more help than others. This was the case for ¹Sara.

Sara is mum to six-year-old Jenny. Sara hadn't seen her daughter for 12 months due to Sara's addiction to drugs. Sara felt her house was unsafe for Jenny to visit her in. Sara missed her daughter and wanted to re-establish contact with her. In the hope that RA Tas could facilitate visitation, Sara contacted the Children's Contact Service (CCS).

The contact worker that supported Sara contacted Sara's ex-husband, Mike, who agreed for Sara to have supervised visits with Jenny. Mike believes: "[Sara] is a good mum when she isn't using drugs".

Six visits were initially offered by RA Tas CCS as part of a case plan, which included referral for both parents to the RA Tas Parenting Separately Program.

At the first visit, both Jenny and Sara were nervous around each other.

Sara's contact worker supported both Sara and Jenny through the process and let them know it was normal to feel uncomfortable and anxious. Sara and Jenny

persevered. By the end of the sixth visit their relationship grew stronger and they looked forward to seeing one another.

Sara, Jenny and Mike all agreed to another six visitations. In addition, Sara and Mike decided to take part in Family Dispute Resolution so they could plan for future decision making and enjoy a good working relationship as Jenny's parents.

Several months on, Sara and Jenny have progressed to spending more time together with changeover arrangements made at neutral places. A plan to increase contact with the support and involvement of RA Tas CCS is being discussed.

¹Names have been changed for confidentiality purposes



Sara and Mike decided to take part in Family Dispute Resolution so they could plan for future decision making and enjoy a good working relationship as Jenny's parents.

Reconnect - Case Study

Father and Son Begin to Heal

Reconnect is a free service for youth aged 12 to 18, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Fourteen year old ¹Bill was referred to RA Tas in early 2017. He was well known by police, who removed him from his family home for abusing his father.

Bill stayed at a youth shelter for several months in Launceston but had revoked his rights to shelter after hacking into the shelter's computer system.

Bill suffered poor mental health outcomes. After he talked about harming himself, Bill was admitted to Launceston General Hospital's Mental Health Ward and into Child Adolescent Mental Health Services.

In early June 2017, RA Tas secured a place for Bill in the Reconnect program in Devonport. Reconnect is a free service for youth aged 12 to 18, who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It focuses on engagement levels for young people in their areas of family, education, work, and community.

Since engaging with RA Tas, Bill has moved between Devenport and Burnie Youth Shelters. Bill's father has not allowed him to return home and has issued an Apprehended Violence Order against him.

Reconnect intervention for Bill has facilitated:

- Ways for Bill and his father to explore their relationships issues;

- Stable accommodation;
- Supporting Bill to re-engaging in fulltime school education; and
- Monitoring Bill's mental health and recovery plan.

There is much work left to do with Bill. He has self-harm ideologies, mental illness and anger management concerns.

Bill hasn't had contact with his biological mother since she moved to Asia six years ago so Bill's connection with his father is important.

The Reconnect practitioner working with Bill will continue to communicate between Bill and his father. The practitioner said he's confident that while it has taken several weeks for Bill and his father to agree to psychological services and financial counselling, more direct access and reunification of the father and son relationship will be established.

¹Not his real name

Staff Conference

2016

The conference is an opportunity for staff across the state to get to know each other better; learn from one another; participate in workshops; hear from speakers, and share experiences and ideas.

Benjamin Law speaks at the Staff Conference 2016.

Each year, in the month of October, RA Tas holds a two-day conference for all of its staff. In 2016, the conference was held from Wednesday 12 to Thursday 13 October, 2016.

The conference is an opportunity for staff across the state to get to know each other better; learn from one another; participate in workshops; hear from speakers, and share experiences and ideas.

The conference is the product of a working group made up of staff volunteers. In collaboration with feedback from their colleagues, the working groups manages various logistics to ensure the conference runs smoothly. The working group organises speakers; the program; entertainment and food and, ultimately, the theme which underpins the entire event.

The theme for 2016 was: Serves you Right: How the Right Kind of

Service Benefits our Clients and Ourselves.

Day One began with a keynote presentation by Benjamin Law. Benjamin is a Sydney-based journalist, columnist, author and screenwriter. Benjamin is best known for his two books: *The Family Law* (now TV Series on SBS) and *Gaysia: Adventures in the Queer East*. He's also written for more than 50 Australian publications.

"His focus on family dynamics and relationships, and his progressive world view are ideally suited to the work we do," Mat said.

CEO, TasCOSS, Kym Goodes' keynote speech was also a highlight at the conference. As were the launches of Bright Ideas Campaign; the Innovation Fund, and the White Ribbon Accreditation Workplace Program.



RA Tas Ted Talks and workshops were highly popular with staff too. The topics were:

Michael Kelly	What do we know about our clients?
Les Whittle	Innovations in Reflective Practice
Megan Albion	Following your Passion
Sharon Jones	Putting Lived Experience into Action
Steve Barker	Service our Clients in the Moment
Robin Black	Great Client Service
Angela Wilson & Jo Palmer (Journalist)	Our Relationship with the Media
Margie Law (Anglicare)	The Politics of Pokies
Lynn Dunn	Who Pays the Rent?
Bill Field & Lucy Crowley	Conflict Resolution Skills
Ruth Davidson & Valerie Matsumoto	Universal Screening
Jude Hillhouse (The Body Loft)	Body Awareness, Breathing and Postural Alignment
Megs Richardson (Fit 'N Kicking)	Fitness for You - Meditation and Relaxation
Geraldine Crisp	Being Present: It's not just about Mindfulness

Most staff enjoy the conference each year. However, from the 2016 Staff Conference Evaluation Survey results, the 2016 conference was a stand out. Here are some staff comments:

'Found this year's conference to be the best so far, with the majority of the content relevant to our industry. I really enjoyed the TED Talks from staff, and our keynote speakers were great.'

'The high level and relevance of the speakers and topics was stimulating and uplifting. And the Ted Talks from RA Tas were sensational - such wisdom and experience. I found the whole

conference refreshing. It reminded me why I do this work and why I'm passionate about it.'

'Range of topics covered and opportunity to catch up with staff from across the state. TED talks were particularly interesting and valuable.'

'The dressing up themes added to the hilarity and bonding of attendees.'

Planning for the 2017 Staff Conference is well underway. The theme? What is Real Gender Equity? A timely subject, which will surely be an inspiring, insightful two-day discussion at the 2017 RA Tas Staff Conference in October 2017.



Andrew and Sladjan

A Busy, Powerhouse Duo

STAFF STORY



PLAY MOVIE

Every day with RA Tas is a different one for Senior ICT Officer, Andrew Jackman (pictured left). And since he's been with the organisation for 17 years now, that's a lot of variety. Andrew started with RA Tas when the organisation had only 40 staff, so his role included a significant number of administration tasks. Now that the organisation has tripled in size, Andrew's happy to share the ICT load with fellow ICT Officer Sladjan Miric.

Both Andrew and Sladjan have a huge amount of responsibility in their roles. They look after the entire IT and technological communication needs for the state, with more than 150 staff. This equates to a lot of problem solving. "Which is fine with me," said Andrew.

"Every day we have different challenges that we deal with; different problems to solve so it never gets stale. At the end of the day, when we look at the figures of the number of people we support it feels good to be part of that," Andrew said.

Sladjan's drive to work as the IT Support Officer with RA Tas for seven years

also comes from the opportunity to: "Provide help to others and to positively impact the world around in a tangible way."

The impact this IT power-duo has on the organisation is significant. Their IT knowledge and support helps RA Tas to live out its vision every day.

It's the component of helping people both within the organisation and external to it that keeps Andrew and Sladjan inspired.

"I enjoy the feeling that the work I do contributes to the wellbeing of others rather than simply a profit-making venture," Andrew said.

The culture of RA Tas is also something Andrew and Sladjan appreciate about RA Tas.

"I enjoy how we are treated as people rather than simply assets, and our personal achievements and milestones (be they birthdays, weddings, births) are recognised and celebrated," said Andrew.

Sladjan lists the top three things he likes about his role at RA Tas as: "The RA Tas people and culture; being involved in making positive influence to the broader community, and the RA Tas work-life balance," Sladjan said.

As a father, Andrew values the work-life balance too.

"I enjoy the people and family focus of the organisation," said Andrew. "I like how RA Tas supports families with generous parental leave allowances and flexible working conditions. I can do things like look after a sick child without being made to feel guilty."

Overall, Andrew and Sladjan appreciate the culture at RA Tas and how staff treat one another.

"Our staff are nice and we care about the wellbeing of others. Even if you're not having a good day, everyone seems to be in such a good mood all the time; it's infectious," Andrew said.

Financial Management

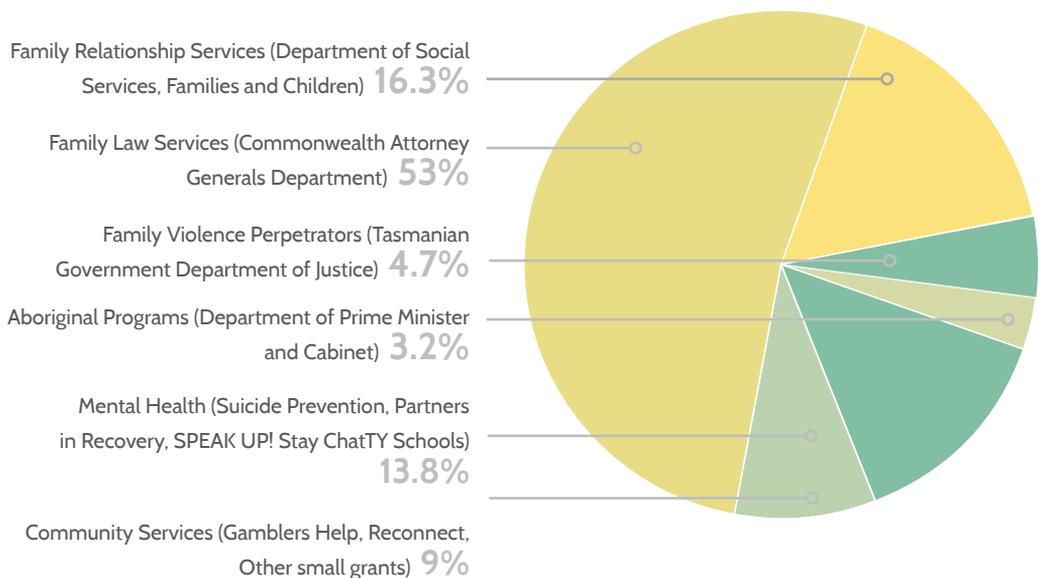
Relationships Australia Tasmania made an operating surplus of \$231,359 in the 2016-2017 financial year.

Total revenues increased by 3.7% in 2016-17 financial year compared to 2015-16 financial year while overall expenses increased by 5.4% during the equivalent period. The increase in expenditure was due to the provision of additional services, as well as wage costs mostly associated with the new enterprise agreement approved by Fair Work Commission in September 2016.

Increase in grant income was mainly due to new program funding from the Tasmanian Government via the Department of Justice for the Family Violence Perpetrators program.

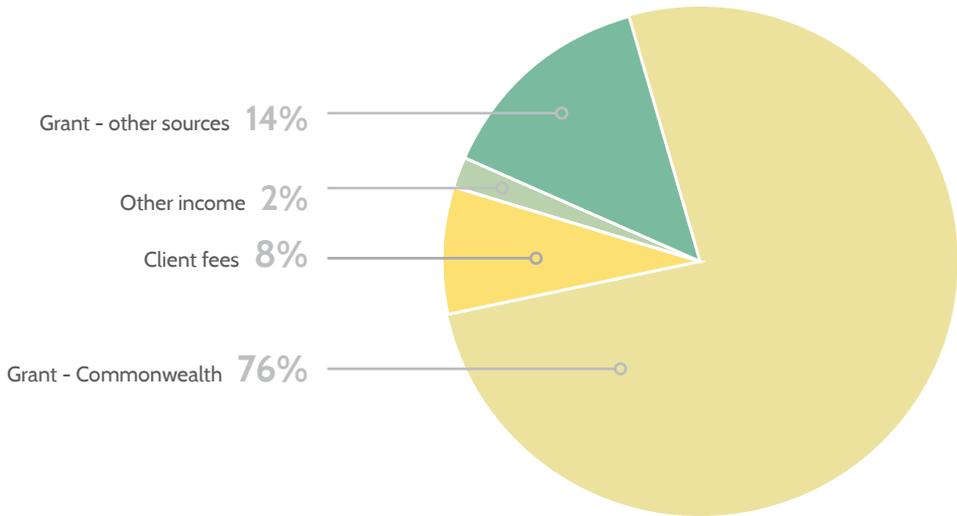
	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
REVENUE		
Grant income and fees	8,851,208	8,456,149
Other income	128,791	205,707
Total Revenue	8,979,999	8,661,856
EXPENDITURE		
Employees	7,096,761	6,819,840
Other operations	1,651,879	1,484,169
Total Expenditure	8,748,640	8,304,009
NET SURPLUS	231,359	357,847

Funding by Service Type 2016-2017

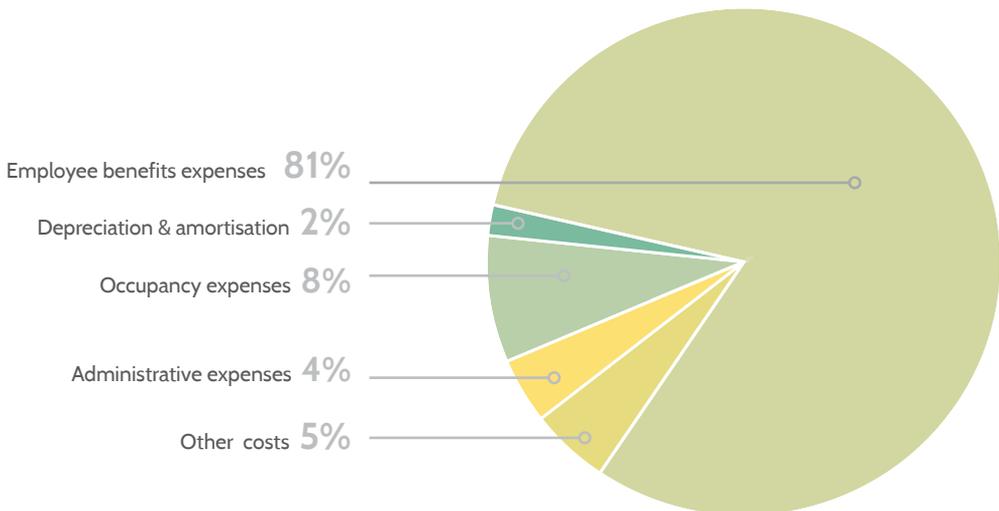


A complete set of audited financial statements is available from the organisation upon request.

Sources of Income 2016-2017



Areas of Expenditure 2016-2017



Members of Relationships Australia Tasmania Board



Mary Bent, President



Kristian Falconer, Treasurer



Wendy Key, Vice President



Kim Barker, Southern Representative



Ella Dixon, Secretary



Emma Quinn, Northern Representative



Daryl Lohrey, North West Representative



David Dilger, General Representative



Mandy Matthewson, General Representative

Patron

Her Excellency, The Honourable
Kate Warner AC, Governor of
Tasmania

Honorary Life Members

Mr Giffard Causon
Mrs Margaret Watson
Mrs Greta Marshall
Mr Ron Adams
Dr Russell Pargiter
Mr Graham Marshall

Management Team

Leadership Group



Mat Rowell, Chief Executive Officer



Navin Ram, Chief Financial Officer



Michael Kelly, Chief Operating Officer



Ruth Davidson, Director Family Law Services



Kristy Brown, Director People & Culture



Jules Carroll, Director Early Intervention Services



Simon Reeve, Manager Post Separation Services North/North West



Jan Wallace, Manager Mental Health Services



Yvette Cehtel, Manager Early Intervention Services North/North West



Robin Black, Manager Early Intervention Services South



Claire Jones, Manager Post Separation Services South



Craig Allen, Manager Client Intake Services

Services and Locations

RA TAS CENTRES

Hobart

18 & 20 Clare Street
New Town 7008

38 Montpelier Retreat
Battery Point 7004

Launceston

6 Paterson Street
Launceston 7250

123 York Street
Launceston 7250

Devonport

68 & 70 North Fenton Street
Devonport 7310

OUTREACH AND PROGRAMS

Counselling:

Dunalley Neighbourhood House;
Kingston Community Health;
Smithton (one day per fortnight)

Gamblers Help:

New Town; Launceston

Community Based Mental Health Services:

New Town,

Aboriginal Cultural Connections:

Ulverstone; Devenport; Launceston;
Cape Barren Island

Elder Relationship Service:

Launceston

Men Engaging New Strategies (MENS):

Devenport, New Town, North West

Empowering People

Empowering Communities:
Launceston

Reconnect:

Launceston

Post Separation Services:

Family Relationships Centre and
Mediation:
New Town; Launceston; Devonport

Children's Contact Service:

New Town; Launceston; Devonport;
Burnie

Parenting Separately

(Parenting Orders Program):
New Town; Launceston

Young Aboriginal Support Program (yAsp):

Launceston

Rural Support:

Circular Head

Royal Commission Community Based Support Services:

New Town, Launceston, Devonport

Forced Adoption Support Service:

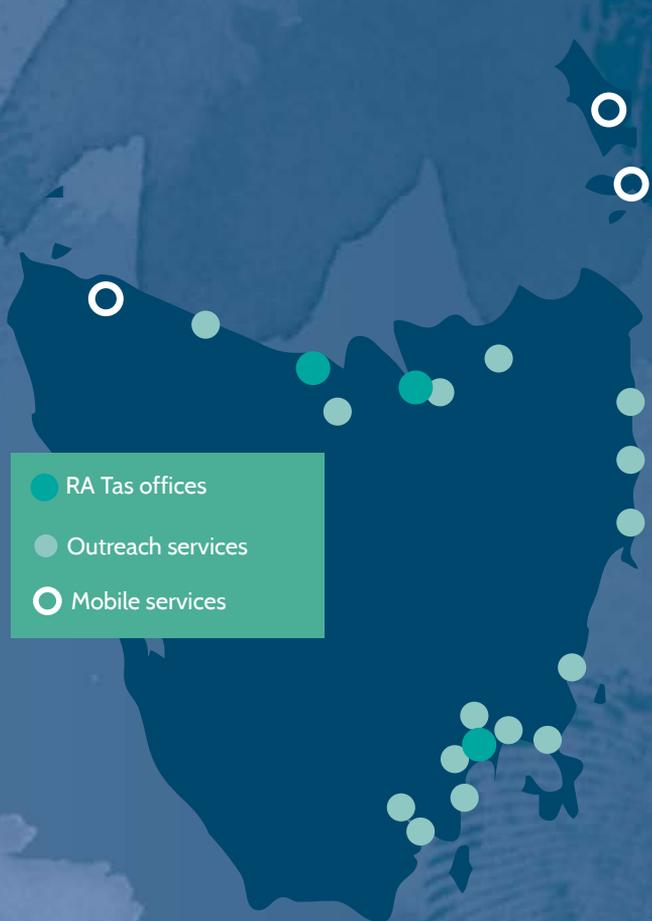
New Town; Launceston

Find and Connect: New Town,

Launceston, Devonport

MOBILE SERVICES

Cape Barren Island
Circular Head
Flinders Island



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