



**2021/2022**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We would like to acknowledge and pay respects to the Traditional Owners of the Land on which we meet, live, work and learn. We pay respect to the Elders of each Nation - Past, Present and Future - and promote the continuation of the cultural, spiritual, and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

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## OUR VISION

Our community is resilient and thriving.



## OUR MISSION

To provide tailored and diverse services that empower our community to live independent lives and make choices aligned to their aspirations and wellbeing goals.



## OUR VALUES

We cultivate Social Justice, Inclusion, Participation, Access and Equity.

# ABOUT CORE COMMUNITY SERVICES



CORE Community Services is a not-for-profit community organisation which has been operating in South-West Sydney since 1979.

From its beginnings as the Cabramatta Community Centre teaching conversational English to migrants, the organisation today provides local communities throughout South-West Sydney region with a wide range of services, activities and programs. These are conducted across the key service areas of Aged & Disability Care, Children's Services, Multicultural Communities and Youth Services.



# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The last Financial Year was another huge year for CORE Community Services which is now moving forward from the trials of the COVID Pandemic to a focus on organisational planning and delivery.

Even though we continued to grow as an organisation despite challenging times, our future expansion by becoming a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) is a big step forward to meet the demand in training our own staff and people in the local area who would like to take on community support roles.

The future also has an expansion in women's services – particularly support for women who are victims of domestic violence which follows CORE's purchase of a property at Mt Pritchard and the development of a new model of care. Growth in our children's services area is also high on the agenda.

The Board is increasing its role with the addition of three new members who bring new ideas and incredible experience in community engagement, multi-cultural communities, marketing, and strategic planning. They will complement the existing Board and help ensure the good governance of the organisation.

There is a broad commitment by Board members to network with stakeholders and the community, attend conferences and events and to keep up to date with issues and the skills needed to undertake their role.

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**My message is to remember to acknowledge and respect each other and what we do every day and at work.**

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CORE Community Services is a special organisation because of the commitment demonstrated by its staff, and because of its ability to bring people of all levels who share their skills and knowledge through good communication, networking and developing solid co-operation.

I am looking forward to a new era in strategic planning and very excited about getting everyone involved in the process to develop new ideas and directions and to keep the momentum going.



We have created a team of people with incredible knowledge and skills along with a culture of respect, open communication, and empowerment. However, it is important we do not become complacent and take the time to reflect on what we can do differently or better at all levels. For its part, the Board will be investigating new ways for checks and balances on our policies and finances.

The theme of this year's annual report is 'recognition' which is something all human-beings need. As individuals it should be imbedded in our everyday communication and interaction with others and in the culture of CORE Community Services. As an organisation this must go one step further by holding events and giving awards to individuals and outstanding programs.

My message is to remember to acknowledge and respect each other and what we do every day and at work.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to all staff, our partners (in NGOs, community leaders, businesses and Government departments) for your ongoing support in helping to make CORE such a wonderful organisation.

**Yvonne Santalucia**  
**Chairperson**



# BOARD



## **Yvonne Santalucia (Chair)**

Yvonne holds a Bachelor of Adult Education and has over 33 years' experience working in multicultural health. Yvonne joined CORE in 2012 as a member of the Board and has also been involved with many community groups for the last 40 years in a volunteer capacity working across access and equity issues. She is passionate about social justice and has a strong interest in helping people from CALD backgrounds.

## **Ali Mokhtar. (Secretary)**

Ali is a principal at AMG Law Firm and specialises in Family Law. He attained a Bachelor of Business (e-Business) and a Bachelor of Law from Western Sydney University. Ali's continued involvement in community service is well recognised through his family law experience and voluntary work in community services. He joined the Board in 2014 and provides guidance on the direction of the organisation and support to the community.



## **Jasvinder Pal Kaur (Director)**

Jasvinder is a Senior Project Manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), with industry experience that spans over 25 years on a national and international level. A seasoned Project Manager with an IT and Financials background, Jasvinder has been a director on the CORE Board since 2005. She holds strong community values.

## **Amanda Salama (Director)**

Amanda is a senior lawyer, human resources professional and non-executive board member. She is currently the In-house Counsel and HR Manager for Salcorp Civil. She joined the CORE Board of Directors in 2020. Amanda has earned qualifications in Economics and Law, including a Master of Laws from the University of Sydney. She is motivated to use her skills and knowledge to elevate the strategic direction of CORE Community Services.



## **Zafirah Akbar (Director)**

Zafirah holds a Bachelor of Arts (Social Inquiry) and Honours in Humanities, both from Western Sydney University. She also holds a Master of Social Change and Development from the University of Newcastle. Zafirah worked at CORE Community Services for over 11 years across various projects and services. She has since worked at other not-for-profit organisations in roles including social housing tenancy, community development projects, Settlement Services and Youth projects.

## **Jimmy Mtashar (Director)**

Jimmy holds a Bachelor of Arts and a master's degree in Education and has over 15 years' experience working in the non-for-profit sector. He has held senior roles in community organisations in service delivery, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning and governance. He has provided expert advice to national and international organisations, government departments and parliamentary committees, and is widely acknowledged for his work in mental health, youth, and community development.



# BOARD



## Cristina Le (Director)

Christina is Senior Strategy and Planning Lead at Uber Technologies. She has extensive experience in strategy, operations, and innovation. Christina holds a Bachelor and Master of Psychology (Organisational) degree from UNSW. She is committed to creating communities where everyone can participate and thrive, and passionate about supporting women achieve economic empowerment and independence.

## Thang Ngo (Director)

Thang Ngo holds a Bachelor of Commerce and has over two decades of multicultural marketing with a focus on client, media, and agency roles. He has worked with Australia's largest advertisers including the Australian Government, NSW Government, Sydney Water, nbn, Lexus and SunRice. He is passionate about helping everyone to succeed regardless of background and initial disadvantage.



## CORE Board And Board Committees Held During Year Ended 30 June 2022 and number of meetings attended by each Director

The following table sets out the number of Directors' meetings (including meetings of Board committees) held during the year ended 30 June 2022 and the number of meetings attended by each Director.

Directors		Directors Meeting (Inc. Special Board/ AGM Meetings)		Committee Meetings			
		Board Meetings		Governance Meeting		Finance and Risk Meeting	
		Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended
Yvonne	Santalucia	7	7	3	3	3	3
Ali	Mokhtar	7	4	6	6		
Jasvinder	Pal Kaur	7	5			3	3
Amanda	Salama	7	7	2	2	2	2
Zafirah	Akbar	7	6	5	5		
Miro	Lojanica	7	4			3	3

*Thank you*

to Miro who has stepped down from the board



# CEO'S REPORT

The past financial year brought so many new challenges for CORE Community Services, but the organisation should be proud of the way we worked successfully through those challenges while still meeting the critical needs of the community.

The pandemic led to huge demand for material assistance and care packages. Desperate families needed food hampers, others needed financial support to pay for utility charges and some required packs for home schooling. On top of this CORE kept going with childcare services despite the lockdown, continued support to the aged and disabled, and kept vulnerable young people in our refuges safe.

The logistics of maintaining critical care, safety concerns for our staff and clients, reduced hours for contact, and respecting isolation requirements added to the complexity of an ever-changing situation.

CORE performed exceptionally well. Work practices were altered internally to meet community needs and externally, we reached a level of co-operation and collaboration with other agencies not experienced before to address increased needs and to advocate for our clients at the same time.

I believe a highlight for 2021/2022 is the way CORE as a place-based organisation was able to engage with peak bodies and government agencies. We played a critical role in providing constant feedback to ensure the wellbeing of our community and help provide a better response to the COVID emergency.

I want to recognise the incredible work of all staff and those 'caring professionals' who put their own health at risk by working at the childcare centre, visiting the elderly and disabled in their homes and turning up to the youth refuges in full Personal Protective Equipment.

It is important to acknowledge the great support of the Board and the flexibility of the funding bodies that allowed us to use funds to meet critical needs

rather than apply strict criteria for spending -especially in aged care. I also want to thank the management team who made my role so much easier.



It is very humbling to have been personally inducted in the Zest Awards Hall of Fame for the work done by CORE when it is everyone in the organisation who has gone over-and-above the call of duty to help those we serve.

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A goal is for CORE is to have greater autonomy and independence that allows us to respond to community needs and develop new pilot programs that are less dependent on government funding.

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We can't stand still however with so much to do. We are expanding our support to victims of domestic violence, becoming a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to enable new employment pathways, and increasing our involvement in the NDIS.

A new five-year Strategic Plan 2022 – 2028 will review our past performance and look to the future including areas such as income diversification, less reliance on Government, fund-raising, and alternative income streams.

A goal is for CORE is to have greater autonomy and independence that allows us to respond to community needs and develop new pilot programs that are less dependent on government funding. CORE Community Services strives for excellence in the work we do for the community. We will continue to work with like-minded organisations and the community to best serve those in need.

**Juana Reinoso**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT CARD

## -PROJECTS DELIVERED



### Capable and Ready

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- ✓ Achieve whole of organisation Quality Improvement Council (QIC) accreditation, including review and update of all policies
- ✓ Implement a new induction and on boarding process
- ✓ Develop & embed a new process for performance review/appraisal & development
- ✓ Increase employee wellbeing, engagement and recognition
- ✓ Invest in staff learning & development
- ✓ Review IT systems and assets and identify next phase of development and resource requirements
- ✓ Review business requirements and select software solutions/applications to support the key business areas of:
  - Client & case management
  - HR & payroll - Finance
  - Staff & visitor sign in
- ✓ Implement and embed new standards for aged care
- ✓ Putting clients first - Care plan process
- ✓ Clinical care review - nursing practice
- ✓ Implement Targeted Early Intervention (TEI) Reforms



### Empower Community

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- ✓ Implement a new induction and on boarding process
- ✓ Increase employee wellbeing, engagement and recognition
- ✓ Implement Targeted Early Intervention (TEI) Reforms
- ✓ Review IT systems and assets and identify next phase of development and resource requirements
- ✓ Implement and embed new standards for aged care



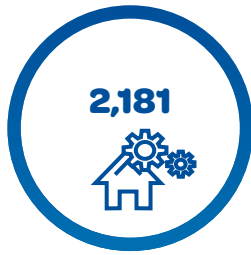
### Financial Sustainability

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- ✓ Develop a financial sustainability plan centred around growth & diversification of income (including investments and fundraising) and improved financial management

# HIGHLIGHTS

## AGED & DISABILITY SERVICES



Home modifications completed



In NDIS clients, from 30 to 50



Hours of service



New clients

## MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES



New clients



COVID relief packages delivered



Enquiries responded to and received by Miller Hub.



Households supported by COVID-19 grants



Families supported by food relief hampers

## YOUTH SERVICES



In clients accessing TEI youth programs



Total clients across all youth programs



Back to School packs provided



Clients attended 23 Alcohol and other Drug Workshops

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Hours of care for pre-school children



Families connected to playgroups



Identified as needing Fee Relief/ Subsidised Inc Low income and/or Additional Needs



Virtual stories read by an educator



# OUR IMPACT

## HOPES AND DREAMS BECOMING A REALITY

Mike is a 30-year-old young man filled with hopes, dreams and aspirations to be 'stable' and independent, hold down a job, have a successful relationship, and obtain his licence.



He was diagnosed with Schizophrenia, Depression, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and Anxiety in his teenage years. For him, living with mental illness is like a roller coaster ride without wearing a seatbelt.

Mike's journey has been far from easy, often being described as a tropical cyclone ripping through his family. He experiences frequent graphic, horrifying and irrational delusions, which has led to four attempted suicides. He also experiences low moods, reduced motivation and feelings of loneliness and isolation because of his condition.

Whilst Mike's mother has played a crucial role in supporting and advocating for him, he has required psychiatric intervention and hospitalisation numerous times due to suicidal ideation. Some hospitalisations were for extended periods.

Mike's diagnosis has had a debilitating impact on his life affecting the way he thinks, feels and acts. He experiences difficulties with executing daily functioning such as self-regulation, organisation, planning, memory, focus, time management and developing and maintaining relationships.

After an attempted suicide 12 months earlier, an application for NDIS eligibility was declined. In early 2022, after the fourth attempted suicide and a three-month hospitalisation the family engaged CORE Community Services for support as they did not know where to turn.

CORE's Aged & Disability Services supported Mike and his mother to re-apply for NDIS and ensured sufficient evidence of functional impairment was submitted along with the NDIS application. After achieving a successful outcome, Mike engaged CORE Aged & Disability Services to support him with understanding his NDIS plan, coordinating, implementing, and monitoring his NDIS plan and funded supports.

In the last six months Mike has enrolled in a Diploma Course in Screen and Media, and is working one day per week on Fridays at a fruit shop. With support worker assistance, he is also learning meal planning, shopping, and cooking new recipes each week.

Mike's support workers provide practical support with daily self-management such as assisting him to attend his medical appointments, completing his daily self-care routine, planning, organising, and engaging in the community with a sense of safety.



# OUR IMPACT

## TRAINING TO IMPROVE INDEPENDENCE

By Fiona Bryant - People and Culture Manager



One of the strategic directions for CORE was to diversify our income streams so we were not reliant on government funding. As a HR professional I am also concerned about staff retention and keeping good people at CORE in a competitive labour market.

In 2020, CORE was in partnership with another peak community-based organisation when they decided to withdraw service contracts which impacted our staff roles. It was a sad day when I let some staff know that after 10 years, we were not able to fund their positions and that further staff reductions may happen in the future if other contracts were withdrawn or changed.

One of the ways that I thought as an individual that I could assist in diversification of funding was to propose that CORE become a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

I had some previous experience with RTOs and thought that this would align perfectly with CORE's vision and staffing skillset. I went through the steps to put together a proposal that was presented and approved by the Board.

I will have an opportunity to see my vision of not only having the option to redeploy great staff to other positions within CORE but see profits from the RTO redirected to projects that CORE deems important and able to self-fund without restrictions from the funding body.

In Human Resources we don't always get to deal with the positive parts of managing staff. To be given this opportunity to see my idea go through the journey to implementation and knowing that my project may help someone in the community really feeds the soul.



# OUR IMPACT

## UNDERSTANDING HIS COMPLEX NEEDS GETS 'J' BACK ON TRACK

J (21-year-old male) has a history of couch-surfing and homelessness as a teenager and has a strained relationship with his family.



He has had sporadic engagement with CORE Community Services since 2017 - seeking housing, social skills building, material aid and drug use assistance. For various reasons, J has had repeated disengagements from CORE programs.

J was placed in refuges through external services however these placements broke down because of J's complex trauma and cultural needs. Many of the refuges were found unsuitable due to a lack of cultural awareness and support, with J needing wrap-around support to ensure his ongoing safety and wellbeing.

In response, J was placed in Quest Liverpool during the lockdown and provided with ongoing support, which has helped him to overcome significant barriers to employment, health care and accommodation.

J reached out to CORE Community Services in September 2021 and was referred to Donna (ALO). Donna identified that J needed assistance with cultural support, housing, employment, material assistance and health matters. He did not have a Medicare Card, identification, or access to documentation to support an application for these items. J stated that he had not had any medical or dental check-ups since he was a child and needed assistance locating services to assist him.

J was not vaccinated and could not get vaccinated without his Medicare Card, resulting in him being socially isolated because he couldn't enter shops or community spaces without vaccination. He had not been able to prove his eligibility for

vaccinations and could not find a health service to assist him with his vaccinations.

He had been repeatedly turned away from other services and was struggling with the impacts of COVID lockdowns, plus past trauma. J expressed that this social isolation was difficult for him, as he was away from his family and friends and struggled with escalating mental health concerns. Donna maintained regular contact with J and helped him to cope throughout the lockdown period. Donna assisted J with emergency accommodation in a local hotel, access to food, and by liaising with culturally appropriate health services to book appointments for vaccination and other health-related issues. Donna also helped with a booking with the provider for Mental Health Assessment, obtaining cultural supports and supporting J in attending appointments

Through casework with Donna, J received his vaccinations and mental health assessment, completed AOD counselling with CORE Community Services and gained employment in warehousing, and transitioned from crisis accommodation to stable accommodation.

Donna assisted staff in ensuring they were culturally sensitive in their interactions with J and provided a central point of contact for all services to avoid overwhelming J.

Through case work with our ALO, J could identify his goals and aspirations. J also improved his health through exercise and abstaining from alcohol and drugs.





## AGED & DISABILITY SERVICES

# 'CRAZY' TIMES MET WITH DEDICATION, PASSION, AND ADAPTABILITY

**Nhu Tran.**

Aged and Disability Services

Aged and Disability Services Manager Nhu Tran describes the constantly changing circumstances brought on by the COVID Pandemic and the Government response as the most severe and challenging situation ever experienced by her team.

The Fairfield Local Government area was hit hard by the pandemic leading to the NSW Government implementing a five-kilometre lock-down on residents – meaning many of CORE's 2,500 Aged & Disability clients were at the centre of massive restrictions that could derail critical home-care services.

"It was challenging for us. We needed to get approval for our support workers to visit our

high-needs and elderly clients. We had to deal with constantly changing rules and restrictions.

“We also had to manage and respond to the well-being of our staff. Clients who reported positive (to the virus) meant staff who visited them had seven days of isolation which then impacted on their family and activities,” Ms Tran says.

CORE’s Aged & Disability Services team focussed on essential services at the height of the pandemic including meals preparation, medical support, personal care, and social support. Support workers helped clients set-up their mobile phones available through the home care fund that allowed them ‘face-time’ with medical professionals, companions, family and others.

“Our biggest achievement was the ability to maintain continuity of care despite the problems with changing rules and restrictions, and revisiting what we could implement and what we couldn’t. Our dedicated and passionate team adapted to the constant changes to meet the needs of vulnerable people,” Ms Tran explains.



“Our clients were very supportive of what we were doing. They understood the risks with COVID and support services we were trying to provide in a safe way. I believe the key to our success at the time was open communication with our clients.”

This communication guided many clients who were confused by multiple and sometimes conflicting reports in the media, and there was little public information on ‘in-home’ services help.

Ms Tran says it is important to not only recognise the unfailing dedication her support workers, but also to acknowledge the role of carers and family members who stepped in to help high needs disabled and elderly clients who were suffering from the virus.

From February onwards this year there has been a return to more normal operations for aged and disability services.

There has been an increase in demand for home modifications such as the installation of handrails and ramps which assist with independent living at home for the elderly, and home care services have picked up again by 30 to 40 percent after declining from the middle of last year.

Disability services have also more than doubled in number in the last 12 months. These services include providing support with daily activities and supporting the co-ordination of government funding.

Looking forward, Nhu Tran says the experiences of the past year have helped her team to better learn to adapt, plan, and prepare.

Bringing back the social support group halted because of the pandemic is a priority and getting people together and organising more community outings is really needed and missed a lot by clients and staff as well, according to Ms Tran.

“We aren’t seeing the impact (of the lockdowns and isolation because of COVID) right now, but depression and mental health issues are a long-term concern. Social contact is necessary for us all.”



## CHILDREN'S SERVICES

# SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP STEERS CHILDREN'S SERVICES WITHOUT INTERRUPTION

**Debra Rose**  
Children's Services Manager

The special relationship between parents and educators at CORE Community Services Preschool allowed childcare services to continue without interruption despite a turbulent 12 months caused by the COVID pandemic.

This is according to Children's Services Manager Debbie Rose who says the vigilance by parents in keeping sick children at home and the tireless effort by educators to ensure the wellbeing of families and children made a big difference.

"Parents were diligent (during the pandemic) and educators were in constant phone and email contact with families when a child was





Debbie Rose says six staff members including herself are kept busy - particularly at the preschool which is catering for an increasing number of 'additional needs' children who require educators with special skills.

"Keeping our services going without interruption and maintaining full enrolment in the preschool despite the pandemic not only shows the strength of our team but reflects CORE's solid reputation with the community," she adds.

The Children's Services Manager however wants to expand with a new preschool in the future that helps to cater for the waiting list demand.

"In the long term, I ideally would like to see a one-stop service that can cater for 50 to 60 children along with occupational and speech therapy support, as well as general well-being services that provide a wholistic approach. I would also like to increase the ancillary services provided to families.

"This has been a goal for the last few years and hope to see it happen in the next few years."

Debbie Rose concludes by saying the success of Children's Services comes down to inclusiveness and being supportive and responsive to the needs of children by educators and parents working together.

"The relationship and rapport between our educators and parents provided the solid foundation needed to get through the pandemic."

absent from pre-school. We put together take-home packs that could be delivered or collected at the door and made videos for our Facebook page that had teachers reading stories, doing yoga and funny exercises to keep children at home engaged and active."

CORE's Children's Services has 20 pre-school children each day at their centre in Cabramatta for 47 weeks of the year. They also support playgroups with other services and community connections, and offer 10-week workshops for two hours once a week for kids aged between four and five. Family information sessions are also run when possible.

Fifty families have children in preschool with another 70 on the waiting list. Up to 15 families are involved in the playgroups once a week, while another 15 registered on the preschool waiting list take advantage of the workshops.





## MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

# 'FIGHTING SPIRIT AND PASSION' DELIVERS FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES

### **Shama Pande**

Service Manager Multicultural  
Communities

A community fearful of the COVID pandemic lock-down and unable to understand measures taken to control the spread of the virus presented a frightening new dimension for support provided by CORE Community Services.

Service Manager for Multicultural Communities Shama Pande describes how her team worked around the clock in the hardest hit Fairfield area to address the mental anguish felt by residents but also to provide emergency food and other relief at community hubs in South-West Sydney.

"I must recognise the extraordinary effort of my team. They did an outstanding job. Their fighting spirit and the passion that drives



them demonstrates the critical partnership they have with the community in times of need. The volunteer support from community leaders was exceptional.”

CORE’s Multicultural Services through its Settlement Program works with front-line bodies to assist migrants and humanitarian entrants in their first five years in Australia. Clients are helped with settlement services including employment, English language skills, educational opportunities, social integration and building cultural heritage and community capacity. This is provided through various programs, advocacy, and casework, and in partnership with other organisations.

Another important part of the work done by Multicultural Services is through their Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Service program supported by two tiers government funding through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice and the Federal Department of Home Affairs.

“Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services provides integrated and coordinated response to domestic and family Violence. It aims to improve increased access to service provision and better coordination of services to adult and child victims.

The program intervenes following the identification of DFV (domestic and family violence) and provides support to escape and recover from abuse,” Shama Pande says.

Domestic and family violence cases are usually identified by police, schools, child protection and other support services.

A separate Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) program is also managed by CORE Multicultural Communities which focuses more on getting to the problem before it reaches the point of an unstoppable downward spiral. TEI is available to everyone and included in activities at community centres in South-West Sydney.

Yvonne Santalucia  
Award (inaugural  
Award) to John  
Buraho Program  
Manager





“The program targets those who are experiencing or at risk of vulnerabilities. It works towards meeting client needs early on by addressing issues and behaviours and to prevent the escalation to violence,” says Shama Pande.

The Multicultural Communities Service Manager cites the successful inclusion of TEI into the broader Miller Hub program which provides the residents of Miller with access to widest possible range of social and community services promoting inclusion and participation by all residents.

Reflecting on the previous financial year, Shama Pande says providing emergency relief funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice during the height of the pandemic and the lockdown was a big task, but at the same time, other increasing challenges could not be overlooked.

“During the COVID crisis, our intake of clients requesting settlement services increased by 231 per cent in Fairfield - one of the high-density areas targeted by the NSW government for strict lockdowns which had deleterious effects on the community saw a significant increase in calls for assistance. Despite this, overall settlement funding will dip by 10 per cent between now and 2024 and we face rising operational and wage costs of more than 11 per cent.

“Our case work went up by 146 per cent, and unfortunately domestic violence is on the rise.” Shama Pande says another challenge is the end to funding in June next year by the NSW Department of Health for the South-West Connect Sporting program which uses sport and physical activities for newly arrived young migrants and families for social inclusion and helping build harmonious communities.

“I am very hopeful that the connection we have established with the sporting industry through this grant will profoundly assist to young people to maintain their active participation.”

For Shama Pande, the way forward for Multicultural Communities is to establish a strong financial base that ensures sustainable services and resources for the organisation that also allows the introduction of new and innovative programs.



“We need to diversify. There is a load of opportunities to improve access to services and address issues in future.”

She sees a huge benefit in investing in a different approach to domestic violence through the perspective of men’s behaviour and getting men on board with early intervention and making them responsible for their actions.

“We need to change the narrative. Shift the focus from blaming the victim with statements like ‘Why didn’t you just leave?’ and ‘See what you made me do!’ More men must be brought into our conversations to create a new awareness for the next generation.”

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“During the COVID crisis, our intake of clients requesting settlement services increased by 231 per cent in Fairfield. Despite this, overall settlement funding will dip by 10 per cent between now and 2024.”

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A Place For All



## YOUTH SERVICES

# LEADERS 'STAND-OUT' WHEN SERVICE DEMAND DOUBLES IN TROUBLED TIMES

**Melissa Wise.**  
Youth Services Manager

Just months into her role as CORE's Youth Service Manager, Melissa Wise is singing the praises of her three program managers and staff for meeting the challenge of an exponential growth in services accessed by clients while facing the huge impact of a pandemic.

Citing demand from 8,347 service users in the 2021/22 Financial Year compared to 4,027 the previous year, Melissa squarely places the ability to meet this extraordinary need on the "professionalism, compassion and dedication from my three managers (Lisa Thompson, Stacey Stynes and Ashlei Hay) across the CORE Youth Team" who she describes as "amazing".



Youth Services is responsible for 107 programs conducted across the Fairfield, Liverpool and Campbelltown regions ranging from activities for homeless youth, food and material assistance, education support - to culture, craft, recreational activities and much more.

It also manages two youth refuges and early intervention programs for young people.

A total of 248 clients - 143 females, 83 males and 22 children – were supported in the Intensive Support Program which includes co-ordination of transitional accommodation, Transitional Plus Accommodation, The Rent Choice Youth Program and Outreach. 142 intake enquiries were also received at the time.

“The continuum of care provided to our clients means we can support the child’s needs. The three program areas (Homeless Services, Refuges and Early Intervention) do not work in silos, and this means clients can move unilaterally across programs as required. It also means we can better support the client and not re-traumatise them by having to tell their story repeatedly,” Melissa says.

Referring to the impact of COVID crisis, the Youth Services Manager says her team navigated through the challenges of hard lockdowns in the local area, the restrictions and fear this caused, clients in financial stress, job loss, shutdown of services, and young people angered by rules discriminating between Eastern and Western Sydney. Moving homeless clients into accommodation was difficult because removal companies weren’t allowed to cross suburbs.

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“I love that CORE is intimately connected to the community. The good work and achievements are testament to the values of the organisation.”

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“COVID impacted our ability to provide face-to-face support,” Melissa says.



On top of normal staff turnover, the lockdown and COVID led to more people working from home and a critical shortage of qualified workers available to support vulnerable families which continues today to be a problem.

Despite COVID and increased demands, the youth services team met the crisis head-on by redirecting staff to critical areas, reallocating funding and priorities, establishing new and better partnerships for programs and service delivery, and putting new initiatives in place. One new initiative – the Pack to Schools pack provided to 350 students which has now grown in demand to 1000 requests – earned them a nomination in the coveted Zest Awards ZEST Awards that showcase the work of the community sector across Western Sydney.

Melissa mentions “new initiatives included providing PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) such as mask, wipes and sanitiser to those who could not afford these products; material assistance including school supplies, school uniforms and whitegoods; pop-up vaccination clinics for young people; stay-at-home craft and well-being materials and food hampers; and much more”.

“I love that CORE is intimately connected to the community. The good work and achievements are testament to the values of the organisation.”



But it is the response by the community and other services to CORE's work reflected in feedback comments like: 'Oh wow, thank you so much. This is amazing'; We don't have the money to buy these things, so it is a special treat. Thank you'; and 'Your gift reminded me that there is still good in the world', that focuses Melissa's attention.

"When you hear things like this, you know that you are making a difference. It makes it easier to do the work that we do."

In the year ahead, CORE Youth Services will keep the wheels turning on critical help for youth, while tuning into a new focus on connection and programs for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, a new Youth Frontier program, wider collaboration with external businesses and agencies to help homeless young people, more community events, assistance to parents and carers of teenagers, and streamlining their administrative and financial systems.

"It's a big agenda for a stand-out team".





## OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM



### **Juana Reinoso (CEO)**

Juana Reinoso joined CORE Community Services in 1994 as a project worker and since then has held various roles in the organisation across several services. She became the CEO in October 2014, after successfully holding the role of Service Manager for the Aged and Disability Care Service for 10 years. Juana holds a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Psychology and Science and Technology.

### **Shama Pande**

CORE's Multicultural Community Service manager, Shama Pande, has a Master of Social work from University of Sydney, Master of Communication and Journalism from the College of Journalism and Mass communication, Nepal. She is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Law from the University of New England.



### **Melissa Wise**

Melissa Wise joined Core Community Services in May 2022 in the position of Youth Service Manager. Melissa has a Bachelor of Social Science majoring in psychology and criminology and has worked in the human services industry since 2000. After 15 years working for the government Melissa secured a position at an NGO, overseeing a number of youth based programs targeting earlier intervention.





# OUR MANAGEMENT TEAM



## **Debra Rose**

Debra Rose is the Service Manager for Children's Services at CORE. A trained teacher, she holds a Diploma in Early Childhood and a Bachelor of Teaching. She has worked extensively in the early and middle childhood industry for the past 35 years.

## **Nhu Tran**

Nhu Tran is CORE's Aged and Disability Care Service Manager. Nhu holds a degree in Occupational Therapy from Sydney University partnered with extensive knowledge, a strong passion for aged and disability care. She has over 17 years' experience working within the aged and disability sector of CORE Community Services.



## **Joanne Robertson**

Joanne Robertson joined CORE in May 2022 as the Strategic Performance and Analytics Manager. With more than 15 years working in the not for profit sector, Joanne is an executive leader working in direct partnerships with other senior executives and with the Board to ensure ongoing viability of organisations through a strategic focus and business acumen. Joanne has a Bachelor of Health Administration and a Graduate Diploma in Business.

## **Fiona Bryant**

Fiona Bryant is CORE Community Services' People and Culture Manager. Fiona has a Bachelor of Business majoring in Human Resources and Industrial Relations. She has over 25 years' experience working in human resources in large public and private organisations providing compliance with laws and regulations, HR planning, consultancy, advisory and support on a range of specific human resource functions, policies, and systems.



## **Matthew Harden**

Matthew Harden joined CORE Community Services as the Operations Manager in 2019. He has a master's degree in Commerce and brings with him more than 11 years' experience in the Community Services sector - the last six years in senior management with a large Not-for-Profit organisation. Matthew has served on a number of Boards, Management Committees and Advisory groups in small NFP's and local Government.



# FINANCES

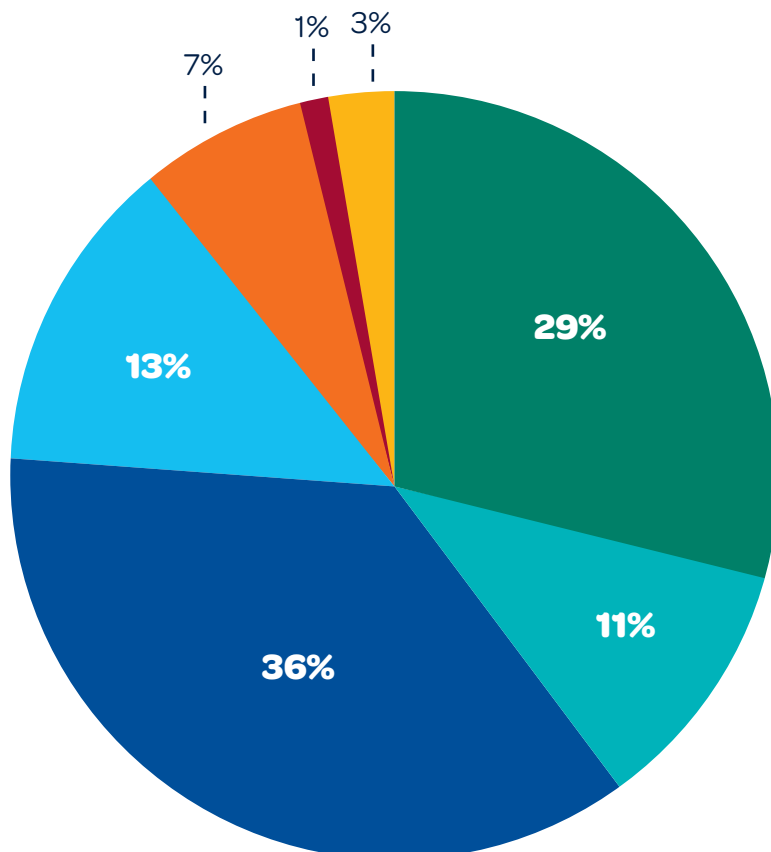
The COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause major disruptions to the operations of CORE Community Services this Financial Year. Despite the significant impact on service delivery, CORE remains fiscally strong.

## REVENUE 2021/2022

Commonwealth subsidy	5,508,417.00
Government support - COVID-19	2,094,597.00
Grants	6,662,206.00
Subcontracting fees	2,411,571.00
Client fees	1,372,888.00
Other operating revenue	159,499.00
Other income	551,832.00

**TOTAL**

**18,761,010.00**



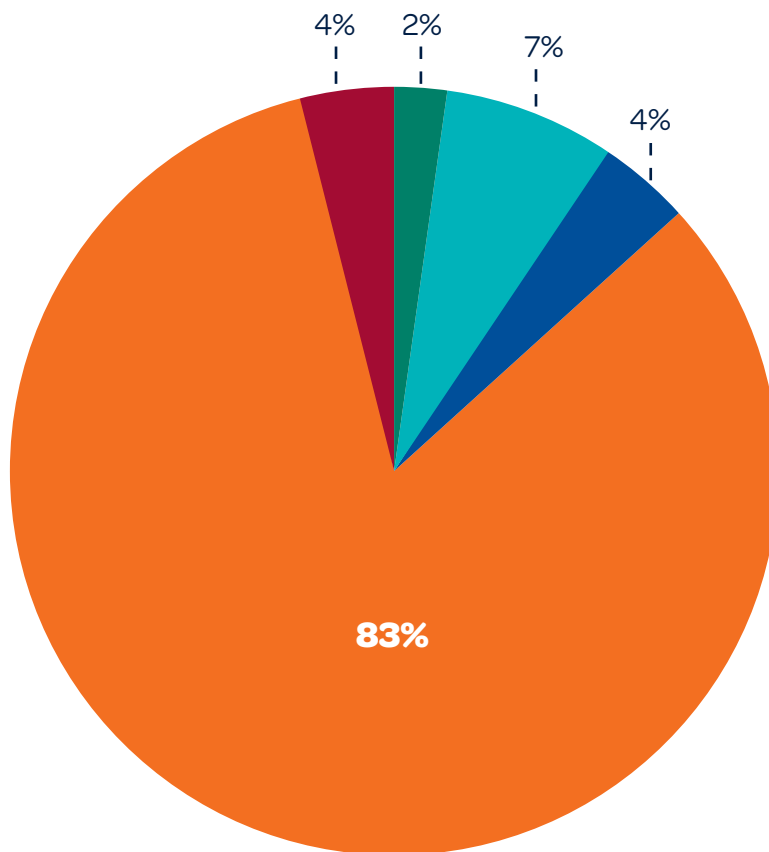
# FINANCES

## EXPENSES 2020/2021

Accommodation expenses	435,897.00
Administration expenses	1,301,522.00
Depreciation and amortisation	657,157.00
Employee expenses & service delivery costs	15,137,149.00
Other expenses	715,799.00

**TOTAL**

**18,247,524.00**



To obtain the 2021-2022 CORE Community Services Auditor's Report and the 2021-2022 CORE Community Services Centre Financial Statements or to view past reports and statements, please visit the ACNC website at: [Home | ACNC](#). These reports will be available to view online or to download.

## SERVICE IS THE REWARD

Speech by volunteer Falah Abbo (at the CORE Awards May '22)

... I am beyond grateful to have been a refugee of a country as giving and wonderful as Australia, nine years ago.

I was pleased to join CORE as a volunteer in 2016, upon learning of their provision of dignified services to refugees. As such, I always voice that I am extremely proud to work for such an outstanding organisation.

I feel fulfillment and peace when I'm of service to others, and I'm provided with this opportunity through my work with CORE. The support provided to me by this dignified organisation encourages me to continue dedicating my time and energy towards helping others, and this ceremony and award today is an indication of that encouragement.

Going forward, I will continue my vocation to serve others as long as my health allows me to, through our noble program, "Australian Citizenship Our Common Bond".



## RECOGNITION

CORE Community Services is proud of the support the organisation provided to the communities of South-West Sydney in the past year. This support is due to the extraordinary commitment and effort of everyone involved who have gone 'above and beyond' to be there for those in need. CORE recognises the special role played by the Board, CEO, Management, and staff, as well as volunteers and partners in addressing the unprecedented demands created by the COVID crisis.

CORE has been recognised with the following projects by the Zest Awards:



**HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE**  
**JUANA REINOSO**



**EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP:**

**Nominated & Winner:** Fairfield Food Hub Partnership (Fairfield City Council, CORE Community Services, Woodville Alliance, The Parks, Community First Step)

**Nominated & Winner:** Ask the Expert (CORE & Navitas)

**Nominated:** The Intensive Support Program and Rent Choice Youth Program



**EXCEPTIONAL PROJECT IN A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION**

**Nominated:** Stay-At-Home Drive



**OUTSTANDING PROJECT PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY HARMONY**

**Nominated & Winner:** Support of Refugees and Migrants through one-to-one mentoring (Mentoring Men & CORE Arabic Men's Group)





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## - PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Afaq Culture, Arts & Sports Association  
Al Ahwazi Community  
Al-Khrbur Village People  
Arts & Community Development  
Ashcroft High School  
Asian Women at Work  
Assyrian Women's Organisation in Australia  
Australian Mandaean Sports Club  
Babylon Chaldean Sports Club  
Bonnyrigg High School  
Borderless Community  
Bunnings, Yennora  
Bunnings Villawood  
Bossley Park High School  
Budyari Community Health Centre  
Cabramatta High School – Intensive English  
Canley Vale High School  
Cambodian – Australian Welfare Council of NSW Inc.  
Chaldean Association  
Chaldean Australian Society  
Chaldean Youth Union  
Community First Step  
Community Links  
Commonwealth Bank, Fairfield Heights  
Costco, Casula  
Dandelion Support Network  
Domestic Violence NSW  
Exodus Foundation  
Fairfield City Council  
Fairfield High School – Intensive English Centre  
Fairfield Hospital  
Fairfield Local Court  
Fairfield Women's Health Service  
Fairvale High School  
Goods360  
Gymea Community Aid and Information Service  
Hume Community Housing  
Iraqi Australian University  
Graduates Forum  
Iraqi Women's League  
Land Council  
Legal Aid NSW  
Liverpool City Council  
Liverpool Hospital  
Liverpool Girls High School  
Liverpool Boys High School  
Local Community Services Association  
Mandaean Women's Association  
Mandaean Women's Union in Australia  
Mary Mackillop Catholic College, Wakeley  
Mentoring Men  
Mission Australia  
MTC Australia  
Multicultural NSW  
Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (MYAN) NSW  
Navitas  
NSW Council of Social Service  
NSW National Settlement Partnership  
NSW Department of Communities and Justice  
NSW Health  
NSW Police (Fairfield and Liverpool Police Area Command)  
NSW Refugee Health Service  
NSW Spanish and Latin American Association for Social Assistance Inc.  
Officeworks, Wetherill Park  
Officeworks, Wentworthville  
PCYC Miller  
Primo Food  
Refugee Council of Australia  
Rotary, Liverpool West  
Sabian Mandaean Association in Australia  
St. Hurmizd Assyrian Church of the East Cathedral  
St Johns Park Bowling Club  
St Mary's Church  
St. Mary's Assumption Chaldean Catholic Church  
St. Thomas The Apostle  
Chaldean & Assyrian Catholic Church  
St Vincent de Paul's Society  
St Zaia Cathedral Church  
Services Australia  
Settlement Council of Australia  
Settlement Services International (SSI)  
STARTTS  
South West Sydney Local Health District  
Sydney University  
Sydney Thunder  
TAFE NSW  
Telskuf Association  
The Chaldean League of NSW  
The Parks Network  
The Rev Bill Crews Foundation  
The Salvation Army  
The Smith Family  
Thread Together  
UNSW School of Business  
Urhi Chaldean Community Language School  
Vietnamese Australian Welfare Association  
Warakirri College  
Welcome Merchant  
Westfield High School  
Western Sydney Airport  
Western Sydney University  
Western Sydney MRC  
Western Sydney Community Forum  
Woodville Alliance  
Woolworths, Cabramatta

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**\*Many community donors who choose to remain anonymous**

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