



Annual Report

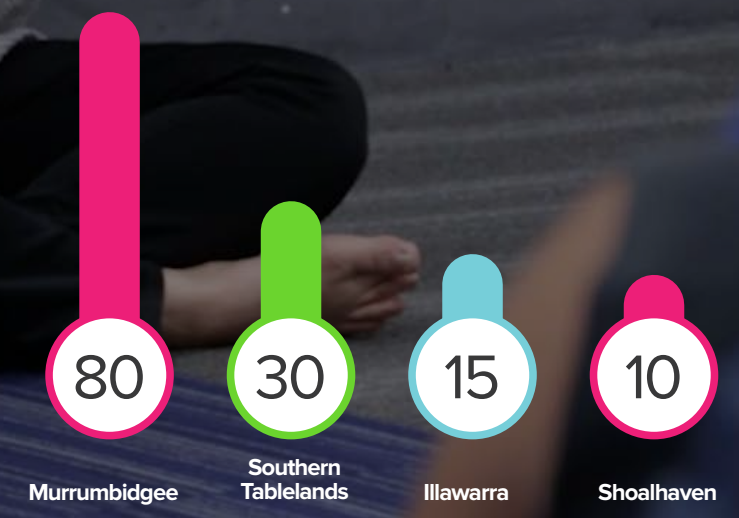
2014 - 2015

EVERYDAY
CareSouth

New initiatives



Annual Growth %



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A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Hello and welcome to CareSouth's 2014/2015 Annual Report. CareSouth has been operating for a little over 23 years, providing care and support to children, individuals, families and our communities. Our staff, carers and volunteers work extraordinarily hard everyday, and they must be congratulated for the work they do and the difference they make in other's lives.

We are very proud to have rolled out some incredibly exciting initiatives this year, including:

- Inaugural Everyday Traineeship
- Leadership Training
- Induct online induction program
- The Client Manager Database
- Research Department
- Everyday Afterhours Service
- Trauma Informed Practice
- Shoalhaven Youth Support Service Outreach Model

Over the past 12 months we expanded our reach, significantly increasing our ability to deliver quality services to children, adults and families in areas of identified need.

We continue to forge strong partnerships across our footprint. These relationships are vitally important in strengthening our ability to expand our reach and deliver positive and sustainable outcomes in areas of identified need.

CareSouth continues to respond to significant reform and we've positioned ourselves extremely well. We're adaptable and preparing ourselves for the future.

This year we firmly cemented ourselves in the Illawarra with the opening of our new, state of the art offices in Berkeley. This is a fantastic space for our staff. It is a vibrant and welcoming space for those we support and others to visit.

We are also very excited to have recently settled into our new office space in Deniliquin, one of our newest areas of operation. We're incredibly proud of these new facilities and the opportunity it presents for us to strengthen our connections and support within these local communities.

CareSouth's vision and key priorities moving forward are to ensure that we continue to keep the people we support front and centre of all that we do; that continuous improvement in our service delivery will remain a key focus; that we will keep applying our learnings from our experiences and work hard to build our capacity to influence positive social change; and remain active in all the work we do to bring about better outcomes to those we support.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our extraordinary staff for their generosity and commitment; our Board for their leadership and unwavering support; our inspirational carers, funders, sponsors, donors, government and non-government partners; and of course our communities.

Thank you so much for your support. We would not be able to achieve the incredible work that we do without your steadfast commitment EVERYDAY.

I hope you enjoy this year's fresh new look Annual Report. I encourage you to explore our website and connect with us if you are seeking assistance or wish to support CareSouth in any way.

Debra Tozer
CEO



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The 2014-15 Annual Report will highlight a number of the key achievements of CareSouth over the last twelve months. It has been a privilege to be part of the story of CareSouth over this last financial year, where CareSouth has continued to surge forward in a challenging yet rewarding environment.

When so much has happened, it needs to be remembered that it was only within this last financial year that the CareSouth offices at Berkeley were opened and that CareSouth's CEO, Deb Tozer, was awarded both the Shoalhaven and Illawarra Business Person of the Year awards. These landmark events embody the boldness of CareSouth, the respect with which it is held within the community and the quality of its leadership. Congratulations to Deb and all of your team.

These high profile successes are made possible by the innumerable everyday successes that are achieved by all of the staff, carers and supporters throughout CareSouth.

My sincerest thanks to you all for what you have been able to accomplish to provide better futures for children, young people and people with disabilities in our communities.

I have since stepped down from my role as a Director and Chairman of the Board of CareSouth and will be focusing on my academic and research leadership responsibilities. It has been an honour to work with the Board and Executive of CareSouth during my tenure. I wish you all the best for the coming years and have confidence that you will take CareSouth from strength to strength. I will remain as a Member of the Board and a supporter of CareSouth. I look forward to hearing of CareSouth's ongoing success in the coming years. I hope that this Annual Report for 2014-15 provides inspiration for what can be achieved in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Bonney

CareSouth Chairman of the Board 2014-2015

THE BOARD

We asked the Board to tell you about their skills and experience, length of tenure, and what motivates them. Their answers and a full bio for each of our Board can be viewed online at caresouth.org.au/annual-report/2015/



Jim
McEwan

Peter
Murphy

Rebecca
Keen
absent

James
Parrish

Christine
Cook

Nicholas
Sims

Theo
Boyle

THE BOARD

JIM MCEWAN

BOARD CHAIRMAN

Jim McEwan was the driving force behind the establishment of CareSouth. From 1992 through to 2010 he managed CareSouth in his honorary role as Executive Director. During 2011, following a major restructure, he was co-opted by the Board to assume the CEO role for a 12 month period. Then, with the long term appointment of Debra Tozer in 2012, Jim resumed his position on the Board, but this time as Chairman. Jim holds a BSc (Mathematics) degree from the University of NSW. He was Managing Director of a local Shoalhaven company for 30 years and a former casual high school teacher. He has lived on the South Coast since 1978 and has three children and five grandchildren. His interests (apart from CareSouth) are road trips, bridge, squash and golf.

PETER MURPHY

BOARD DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Peter Murphy was a member of the Board for 15 years before becoming Deputy Chairman in 2006. For over 43 years, Peter has run a small business in Nowra. He draws on 18 years service as Councillor to the Shoalhaven City Council, including two terms as Deputy Mayor. Peter holds a position on the Boards of Tyrepower Marketing NSW Limited and Tyrepower Limited.

NICHOLAS SIMS

BOARD DIRECTOR

Nicholas Sims has been a CareSouth Board Member since 2007. Formerly a Science teacher, Nicholas has worked for the NSW Department of Education and Training as a School Counsellor for over 15 years. He has been a registered NSW Psychologist working for the Royal Australian Navy Reserves for the past seven years, in addition to running his private psychology practice. Nicholas has a Bachelor of Science and Graduate Diploma of Education (Science) from the University of Sydney, as well as his Masters of Education, Psychology and Post Graduate Diploma of Psychology from Charles Sturt University (CSU).

CHRISTINE COOK

BOARD DIRECTOR

Christine Cook has been a member of the Board since 2004. Christine has been a secondary school teacher for over 30 years, spending 27 years at Bomaderry High. She has been the Producer of Bomaderry High School's Rock Eisteddfod productions since 1995, mentoring over 100 students during rehearsals. Christine is also a member of the Management Committee of the Nowra Show Society. She has a Diploma of Teaching and Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment. She is married with three children and two grandchildren.

THEO BOYLE

BOARD DIRECTOR

Raised in foster care from age eight to 15, Theo Boyle joined the CareSouth Board in 2004. He has lived in Nowra since 1969, where he has operated a successful bicycle business since 1980. Mr Boyle and his wife have two children.

REBECCA KEEN

BOARD DIRECTOR

Rebecca Keen was appointed to the Board in 2012. She has over twenty years of finance and accounting experience and is currently Chief Financial Officer of a large private organisation based in the Illawarra.

Rebecca holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Wollongong. She is CPA qualified and continues professional development by way of CPA courses and executive development at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

JAMES PARRISH

BOARD DIRECTOR

James has been a Board Member since 2012. He is currently completing a combined Arts/Law double degree at the University of Wollongong. James currently holds Board positions on the University of Wollongong Council and UniCentre Ltd. James is also a Lieutenant in the Australian Army Reserves.



WHAT WE DO

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR SERVICES

CareSouth supports vulnerable children and their families across Southern and Western NSW through a range of programs including Foster Care, Residential Out-of-Home Care, Aunties & Uncles, Brighter Futures, Family Connections, Youth Support Service, Disability accommodation and support, drop in support and family choices. Our vision is to create a positive future for children, young people, individuals, families and communities, providing opportunities in which people can enhance their quality of life.



EARLY INTERVENTION:

Aunties & Uncles
Brighter Futures

CareSouth's Aunties & Uncles program aims to support disadvantaged children by linking them with comprehensively assessed and carefully selected volunteer carers. Our Aunties & Uncles simply include a child in their activities, while also giving parents a break. This gives children new skills, raises their self-esteem and builds trust in others.

Brighter Futures supports families through tough circumstances like domestic violence, mental health issues or drug and alcohol problems. The program helps people battling to bring up their children without support, with significant learning difficulties or those finding it hard to manage a child's behaviour.

With home visits, parent groups, playgroups, and child care among the services we offer, we can help take some of the weight off their shoulders – and help give their children the best possible start in life.



OUT OF HOME CARE:

Foster Care
Residential Care

CareSouth's Foster Care program supports children from 0 to 18 years of age. Foster care is needed when a child or young person cannot live at home. This may be because of abuse and neglect, parental mental illness or drug and alcohol abuse. These children and young people may have witnessed domestic violence or general family crisis or breakdown.

Children and young people in foster care are just like other children except they have experienced some disruption in their life. This may impact them physically, emotionally and behaviourally. Our Carers are the link to their stability and the reason for our program's successes. Along with our caring staff our Carers make a lasting difference in their lives.

Our caring staff support these young people around the clock to create a stable home environment for them to live and grow.



DISABILITY SERVICES:

Supported Accommodation
Drop-In Support
Family Choices

CareSouth offers supported accommodation for adults and children living with a disability in a community setting. Our focus is to provide a genuine home environment and real life experiences for all.

The Drop-In Support model assists young adults, usually between 18 and 24, transitioning from formal or crisis care into independent community-based living. Participation is completely voluntary.

Family Choices provides regular respite care and long-term foster care for children and young people with disabilities. Our Family Choices carers are trained and supported by CareSouth to care specifically for children and young people with disabilities.



FAMILY CONNECTIONS:

Supervised Contact
Mentoring

We provide a safe environment for children to connect with their birth families. Our staff are there to monitor behaviour and uphold calm, positive relationships while keeping notes on each and every contact. Our transport staff drive children from their home to contact venues. We also take children to school, summer camp and special events. You'll find us on the road, from Sydney to Ulladulla, responding to contact needs of children and families.



YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE

Our Shoalhaven Youth Support Services provides a comfortable temporary home for young people aged 16 to 24 years who require crisis or medium-term accommodation. We also offer an Outreach service for those struggling to stay at home or the accommodation they are in or to remain in accommodation, providing short-term support to both prevent and stabilise accommodation for any young person.



OUR COMMUNITIES

CareSouth works to provide new futures for children and families in some of the most disadvantaged communities across southern and south-western NSW. These communities experience a web of entrenched disadvantage, with high rates of criminal activity, domestic violence, unemployment and disengagement from education, and low education levels. (Vinson et al, Dropping Off the Edge 2015)

Our work in the Berkeley, Port Kembla and Warrawong communities takes place in communities amongst the most disadvantaged in NSW. There are a number of other locations in which we work that are among some of the most disadvantaged in NSW.

Our client profiles confirm this pattern of socio-economic disadvantage, with 83% of our clients living in postcodes in the bottom five Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) deciles. (Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Our Out of Home Care, Brighter Futures, Youth Homelessness and Aunties & Uncles programs all contribute towards breaking intergenerational and place-based disadvantage. We aim to build pathways towards new opportunities and a thriving, healthy life.

OUR FOOTPRINT

Our reach is great through regional NSW, throughout the southern and western regions. CareSouth offers services in the Illawarra, Shoalhaven, Southern Tablelands and far western NSW.

GRIFFITH

DENILIQUIN

GOULBURN

BERKELEY

NOWRA

ULLADULLA

Berkeley

Programs:

Out of Home Care
Brighter Futures
Aunties & Uncles
Supervised Contact
Family Connections
Residential

What's Berkeley like?

The District of Berkeley sits on the north western bank of Lake Illawarra, on the traditional lands of the Tharawal people. It is built upon a series of hills that roll down to the lake shoreline. This southern suburb of Wollongong is one of the Illawarra's most populated suburbs with 7,427 residents. Berkeley also has the Illawarra's highest unemployment rate at 9.3%. The key businesses in Berkeley are Coles, BWS and of course CareSouth. Other notable destinations in Berkeley are the Nan Tien Temple and the newly developed Berkeley Skate Park on the lake shore. Both sites draw people from all around the region.

CareSouth operates one of its main offices from the Berkeley Community. In what we call the "Hub" are a wide range of services including Foster Care, Brighter Futures, Aunties & Uncles and Family Connections.

Nowra

Programs:

Out of Home Care
Disability Services
Aunties & Uncles
Family Connections
Residential
Youth Support Services
Family Choices

What's Nowra like?

The city of Nowra is a regional centre with a bustling commercial industry. Nowra is built on the banks of the Shoalhaven River, the traditional land of the Yuin Nation. Nowra is a location for many local, state and federal government offices. The major industries around Nowra include tourism, manufacturing and the Australian Navy Base HMAS Albatross, which is a large part of the attraction of the city.

Nowra is also the home of CareSouth's Head Office, where our organisation was founded in 1992. However, it is not only our administration centre. Nowra also offers programs such as Foster Care, Residential Foster Care, Aunties & Uncles, Family Connections, Mentoring and Disability Services.

Milton

Programs:

Out of Home Care
Aunties & Uncles

What's Milton like?

Milton is a town located in the Shoalhaven region. Although Milton's population is only around 1500, the development of several new housing estates nearby is setting the scene for growth. The landscape of Milton is in summary truly where the country meets the sea.

Goulburn

Programs:

Out of Home Care
Family Choices

What's Goulburn like?

Goulburn is Australia's first inland city, established in 1833. Goulburn epitomises a country city with agriculture as its primary industry. Goulburn wasn't inhabited by just one group of Aboriginal people, but was a gathering place for many such as the Aboriginal people of Mulwaree, Tarlo, Burra Burra, Wollondilly, Wiradjuri, Gundungurra, Dharrook, Tharawal, Lachlan, Pajong, Parramarragoo, Cookmal and Gnunawal. Goulburn is known for its world renowned wool production as well as having a highly successful juice industry. Other notable locations in Goulburn are the NSW Police Academy and the Big Merino. The climate in Goulburn is diverse depending on the seasons with temperatures frequently falling below 0 degrees in winter and soaring above 40 in summer.

We have been offering Foster Care and Family Choices in the Goulburn area for many years and will continue to support the Goulburn community.

Griffith

Programs:

Out of Home Care
Family Choices

What's Griffith like?

Griffith is a diversely multicultural community in western NSW with a population of 17,600 people of which only 28% of people have Australian ancestry. Griffith is located in the heart of the Wiradjuri Nation - the largest nation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. The city was originally established in 1916 as part of the state government's Murrumbidgee Irrigation Act, which was trying to stem water for farming from the Murrumbidgee River to western NSW. The climate is often very warm with temperatures frequently hovering around 30, which served to aid Griffith to become a productive agricultural region in Australia.

We currently operate Foster Care, Our Place and Family Choices from the Griffith area.

Deniliquin

Programs:

Out of Home Care

What's Deniliquin like?

Deniliquin is a prominent western NSW town, with a strong agricultural district producing rice, wool and timber. It is on the lands of the traditional Wamba Wamba and Perrepa Perrepa people. Deniliquin or "Deni" as it is known is a rural town with a population of 7500 community members vastly spread out over a series of farms. Being in western NSW Deniliquin has semi-arid climate with dry hot summers and warm winters. CareSouth is proud to meet the needs of the Deniliquin community through our Foster Care program.

OUR PEOPLE

From 30 June 2015 we employed 239 people in a wide range of positions across the Shoalhaven, Illawarra, Goulburn, Queanbeyan, Deniliquin and Griffith. CareSouth continues to work on providing our staff with a work environment that allows each person to reach their individual potential through.

Our commitment to building a bold, innovative, committed and high-performing workforce is our priority.

We offer all employees opportunities for personal and professional development, supported by a comprehensive range of contemporary human resources policies and procedures.

Apart from the formal programs for our staff, CareSouth prides itself on creating a work environment that is socially engaging and inclusive. We do this through a variety of wellness programs: Employee Assistance Program, all staff development days, social events including seasonal lunches allowing our diverse workforce to showcase their cultural background through the sharing of culture-specific meals.

CareSouth is committed to gender equality and is compliant with the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012. We are dedicated to maximising the full potential of our female and male talent through learning and development opportunities, career pathways, as well as reward and recognition programs.

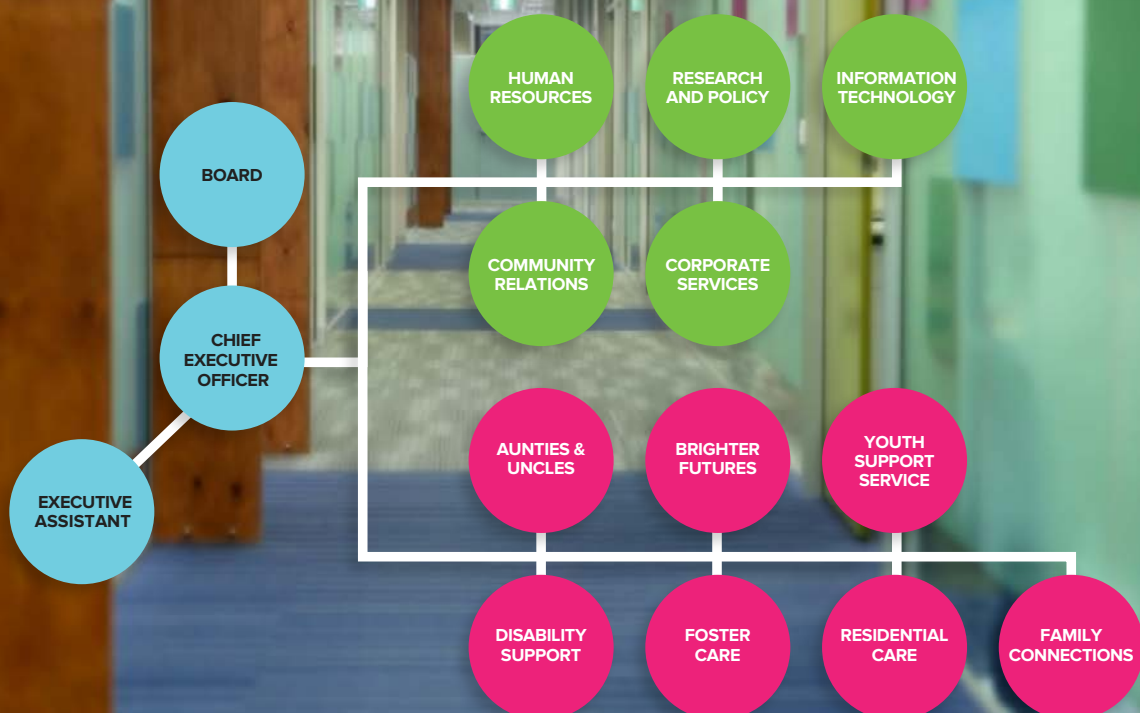
Benefits include:

- Above Award salary payments
- EPAC and Salary Packaging
- Extra three days leave for staff not working a 24/7 roster.
- Permanent full-time and part-time staff working a 24/7 roster have access to an additional five days leave.
- Staff not covered by the SCHADS Award also receive leave loading
- Discount on HCF Health Insurance
- Free Employee Assistance Program
- Meal and Entertainment Card
- Staff Development Days
- Flexible work options
- All staff End of Year Party

136
permanent
staff

103
casual staff

OUR ORGANISATION



OUR PEOPLE

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

Recruitment and Retention of a Skilled Workforce



- Review and implementation of an integrated HR system
- Consistent implementation of the system
- Implementation of a consistent brand image across the whole organisation

1. Implementation of Policy & Research department
2. Everyday CareSouth staff uniforms implemented
3. Staff training in Youth Mental Health First Aid Training, Understanding Trauma and Attachment, The Care Manager, Work Health and Safety
4. Strategic Leadership Group and Operational Leadership Group Leadership Training
5. All Staff Development Days – NDIS Matters, OOHHC, After Hours Service, TCM, Practice Framework Implementation, CareSouth Vision and Values
6. End of Year Function
7. Implementation of Reward Program, Remuneration Framework and Partnering to Reach Your Potential
8. Executive Team road trip to Southern Tablelands and Western Regions
9. Inaugural Everyday Traineeship

Boldness and Innovation in Our Service Design



- New opportunities identified
- New initiatives trialled and implemented
- Leader of innovation
- Community partnerships through innovation

1. Shoalhaven Business Awards:
 - Innovation, Business Excellence - Finalist
 - Business Leader of the Year – Winner
2. Illawarra Business Awards:
 - Business Leader of the Year - Winner
3. NSW Business Awards:
 - Business Leader of the Year – Finalist
4. Specialist Homelessness Service model implemented for Accommodation and Outreach to homeless or at risk of homeless young people
5. End of year giving campaign
6. Collaborative carer recruitment media campaigns
7. Development commenced of the Visionary Strategic Plan 2016-2021

Funding Security



- Existing contracts renewed
- Existing funding base diversified
- New contracts secured where identified need exists

1. Successful tender to continue operating Shoalhaven Youth Support Service
2. Successful in ANSVAR Grant to fund Homework Hub Pilot
3. Success in Homeless Youth Assistance Program funding
4. New growth in Out of Home Care Services in all regions
5. End of Year Giving campaign, development of donation strategies

Compliance with Standards



- All relevant standards identified and complied with

1. Achieved Third Party Verification, preparing for NDIS
2. "Our Place" Therapeutic Model of Care re-accredited with OCG
3. Compliance with end of financial year audit and Accounting Standards

Implement Evidence-Based Best Practice Design



- Evidence of research undertaken across the organisation.
- Embedded practices informed by evidence-based research.

1. Implementation of After Hours Service
2. Aboriginal Young Mothers Residential Model of Care introduced in partnership with The Housing Trust
3. Implemented Operational Leadership Groups Focus Groups in Internal Systems, Practice Framework, Culture and Learning and Development
4. Homeless Youth Assistance Program developed and implementation of pilot
5. Host Organisation for University of Wollongong's Univariate program – Early Intervention: An International Comparison
6. University of Wollongong Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Partnership

Embed Robust Support Systems



- Review and development of integrated service support systems.
- Staff trained.
- Consistent implementation and maintenance of systems.

1. IT Infrastructure upgrade and migration to Windows Environment
2. Implementation of The Care Manager, client management software
3. Implementation of Remote Desktop and improved IT systems security
4. Implementation of Shared Drive for all staff
5. HR3 integrated HR and Payroll system, phase one implementation

Participate with the Broader Sector and Peak Bodies to Support the Work We Do with Clients and Families



- Influential peak bodies identified.
- Relevant forums attended.
- Relationships with members of the broader sector established and maintained.

1. CEO, Debra Tozer, became ACWA Board Member
2. Elizabeth Henry House Aboriginal Young Mothers Pilot partnership with The Housing Trust
3. Partnership with Cummbeyan Aboriginal Corporation to create Jullagung Children's Services
4. Formation of the Illawarra Disability Alliance
5. Child Protection Week partnering with FACS and NGOs in Family Fun Day and Professional Development Day
6. CEO meeting with Minister for Family and Community Services, Minister for Ageing Disability and Home Care, Members of Parliament
7. Partnership with University of Wollongong's Early Start Discovery Space
8. Partnership with FACS, co-location of staff and delivery of training

Engage with Communities to Support the Work We Do with Families and Communities



- Core community groups identified.
- Key relationships established and maintained.

1. Berkeley Office Opening – Smoking Ceremony and Opening officiated by Uncle Gee, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor and Minister for Ageing Disability and Home Care
2. Thank You Media Campaign
3. Habitat for Humanity partnership project
4. Southern Cross Ten media partnership
5. Hosted Illawarra Business Chamber's "Business After Hours" event in Berkeley
6. Channel 7's House Rules renovation of Residential OOH service
7. Project 291, partnership with Community Organisations and NGOs



OUR LAW AND POLICY CONTEXT

CareSouth operates within a complicated law and policy environment, governing the suite of our activities and programs for children, young people, people with disabilities and families. 2014-15 saw many changes to the law and to government policies and these have affected several NSW and federal programs impacting on our work. Some of the main ones included:

Safe Home for Life Reforms

At the end of 2014, the NSW government introduced a new legal framework for care of children who cannot be adequately cared for by their birth parents. Changes to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 were aimed at providing a safe and stable home for children and young people in care, by promoting early decision-making around creating permanent homes for children. Foster care is now considered as a last resort, after restoration to the family, guardianship and open adoption have been canvassed as possibilities. To promote good parenting and encourage restoration to birth parent(s), parent contracts and court orders to build capacity have been introduced.

As a result of these changes, courts are issuing more Interim Orders, while the options for each child are reviewed. In some of our regions, more of our casework is being used by the courts as evidence to inform their decision-making, and we are working on more contact opportunities between children and their birth families, during the time the court undertakes processing of final orders. In the coming years, the full impact of these reforms will become apparent.

Youth Homelessness and 'Going Home, Staying Home'

In June 2014, CareSouth were successfully awarded the tender to continue to operate youth homelessness services in the Shoalhaven, under the new 'Going Home, Staying Home' policy framework. 'Going Home, Staying Home' requires homelessness services to provide wrap-around client-centred, intensive case-management, which addresses the issues leading to homelessness and provides for a more consistent response across child protection and homelessness services. It also enhances the safety-focus of crisis housing. CareSouth has been well-positioned to work in this space, with early intervention and client-responsive, holistic support being a hallmark of our practice in youth crisis housing.

Disability Law Reforms

The Disability Inclusion Act was introduced in NSW last year. This created a new pathway for reporting to the NSW Ombudsman serious abuse or neglect in supported group residences for people with disabilities. The Act also requires organisations to conduct a criminal history check on employees, consultants, volunteers or Board Members working with people with disabilities. This new pro-safety framework is welcomed by CareSouth, as it provides extra protection for the people with whom we work to support and empower.

OUR ACTIVITIES



**Supporting Families:
Aunties & Uncles**

38

children were part of our Aunties & Uncles program during the year

21% were Aboriginal children



Helping Illawarra Families at Risk: Brighter Futures

During 2014/15, we helped

253

families, with a total of 287 children through our Brighter Futures program

90% of the children were under 3



Supporting Independence: Disability Drop-In

20 clients were provided with

3780

Drop-In Support visits during the year



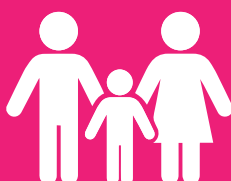
Helping Homeless Youth in Nowra: Shoalhaven Youth Support Service

During the year, we provided accommodation for

45

homeless young people

Our Outreach Program, which commenced in November 2014, has worked with 38 young people



Providing Out-of-Home Care: Foster Care and Residential Care

231

children and young people were in our Out-of-Home Care programs

15 were in our residential homes.

209 were living with foster or kinship carers



Providing Facilities and Supervision for Parent/Child Contact: Family Connections

CareSouth provided

7450

hours of supervised contact for **90**

family groups with 225 children

BEYOND OUR CORE BUSINESS

A Case Study on CareSouth's Homework Hub

CareSouth values education for children and young people in Out-of-Home Care (OOHC). This year CareSouth has trialled an important new initiative to tackle educational disadvantage – the Homework Hub. We understand that children and young people learn and achieve in a variety of educational settings and that individual differences, life experiences and family history impact on outcomes.

Research has found that children and young people in OOHC generally have poorer educational outcomes compared to their same-age peers. The Pyjama Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation which aims to improve literacy and numeracy for children in OOHC, has found 92 per cent of children in foster care have below average reading skills by the time they are seven years old and it is a struggle for them to catch up.

The Homework Hub pilot program aims to close this gap and contribute to improving educational outcomes and fostering a love of learning for children in OOHC.

The Homework Hub's mission is to help students living in OOHC reach their full learning potential. It was developed to improve Literacy and numeracy skills in key learning areas

- Study Skills
- Emotional literacy
- Learning engagement
- Self-belief by facilitating positive relationships with educators and social skills development with peers
- Partnerships with caseworkers, carers and teachers

The program provides a 24-week volunteer-run homework assistance program for two hours each week. Each Tuesday, The

Homework Hub helps students aged 7 – 17 years with a broad range of educational activities across key skill areas. In this year's pilot of the Homework Hub, there was a core group of eight students.

The Homework Hub relies on the generosity of volunteers to provide their time each week to mentor and support children and young people in OOHC, both educationally and emotionally. The volunteers for this year's pilot were each given an induction pack which included resources on working with traumatised children.

Volunteers have come from different backgrounds like teachers, university and TAFE students. They have been matched with Homework Hub students according to their expertise and the student's needs. The relationship between volunteers and students has grown organically into that of mentor/mentee. Volunteers have noted improvements in both educational outcomes and social skills amongst the core group of eight.

Strong peer relationships have also developed amongst the students, who regularly chat with one another about their experience of foster care. This has helped the Homework Hub students to feel supported, safe and engaged in the learning program. An example is a flourishing friendship between a Year 6 and Year 8 student. It has been heart-warming to watch this friendship grow – one week the pair sat together in the reading corner taking turns to read aloud a chapter book to each other, with the Year 6 student drawing upon his unique cultural background to explain some of the themes in the book.

“The Homework Hub is beneficial for the children as they get one-on-one help that they need for school. By enhancing their skills in school it gives them the tools they need for the future. Homework Hub is this and more.”

Sarah, Volunteer

“I like that the homework hub helps me get my school work done and I can concentrate there. I also like all the individuals involved as they are all such a great help.”

Student

Homework Hub Outcomes

Inputs/Activities

6-12 students, 6 volunteers, 1 Coordinator	2 hours activities over 24 weeks	Physical environment supporting emotional regulation. Healthy afternoon tea	Regular meetings with key stakeholders
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Outputs

80% students complete	regular meetings/communications with each stakeholder	24 catered afternoon teas provided with nutritious food and water	regular volunteer attendance
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Outcomes

50% of students who complete show increased literacy and numeracy and positive feelings about schoolwork	90% of caseworkers report positive partnership with HH	50% of carers report positive partnership with HH	90% of students eat regular nutritious snack over 24 weeks
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OUR YEAR IN FOCUS

July 2014

- New Chairman Professor Andrew Bonney, Jim McEwan Deputy Chairman
- All Staff Development Day – Practice Framework Implementation Workshop
- Berkeley Office Opening, Smoking Ceremony and Opening Ceremony officiated by Minister for Ageing Disability and Home Care, The Hon John Ajaka MP, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor, Clr Gordon Bradbury OAM, Chairman Andrew Bonney and CEO Deb Tozer
- Success! Specialist Homelessness Service funding awarded for the Shoalhaven Youth Support Service
- Aunties & Uncles “Thank You” media campaign
- Southern Cross 10 television advertising campaign began
- University of Wollongong Univariate Host Organisation – Early Intervention: An International Comparison

August 2014

- The Care Manager (TCM) training rolls out, first step in implementation of client management database
- IT infrastructure upgrade phase one and migration from MAC to Windows environment commenced
- Partnership with Cummbeyan Aboriginal Health Service in Jullagung Children’s Service
- Aunties & Uncles Inter-regional Child Activity Day at Berry Sport and Recreation Centre



September 2014

- TCM configuration and testing begins, next step in implementing our client management database
- Formation of the Illawarra Disability Alliance, cooperative with disability services providers to promote and advocate for services in the Illawarra
- Shoalhaven Business Awards – Finalist Innovation and Business Excellence, Winner Business Leader of the Year
- Child Protection Week media campaign, partnering in Family Fun Day and Professional Development Day
- Foster Care Week carer recruitment media campaign

October 2014

- Meeting with Minister for Family and Community Services, the Hon Gabrielle Upton MP and local Members of Parliament, The Hon Shelley Hancock MP and Mr Gareth Ward MP
- Illawarra Business Awards – winner Business Leader of the Year
- Children's Week carer recruitment media campaign.
- Carer Chris Loft received the Compassion and Courage award in the Pride of Australia Awards 2014.
- Partnership with Habitat for Humanity to renovate and extend Binbeal, Residential OOHC property

November 2014

- NSW Business Awards – Business Leader of the Year Finalist
- Strategic Leadership Group attends Leadership Training Retreats
- Specialist Homelessness Services model for Shoalhaven Youth Support Service (accommodation and outreach service) implemented
- All Staff Development Day – NDIS Matters, Presentations on NFPs in the Australian Economy, OOHC, After Hours Service and TCM Demonstration

December 2014

- Christmas Giving Drive success with gifts distributed across all regions for children, young people and families
- Operational Leadership Group Leadership Training at Berkeley Office
- Staff End of Year Celebration, Silos Estate Berry
- After Hours Services implemented
- ANSVAR Grant of \$45,000 awarded to fund the Homework Hub pilot in Berkeley

January 2015

- Reward Program, Remuneration Framework and Partnering to Reach Your Potential implementation completed
- Elizabeth Henry House opened, Aboriginal Young Mothers residential support program in partnership with The Housing Trust

February 2015

- TCM end user training completed. Client management database goes live
- Remote Desktop implemented allowing staff to access their work from outside our offices
- NDIS Third Party Verification achieved, preparing for the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- CareSouth hosted Illawarra Business Chamber's Business After Hours event at our Berkeley office, attended by over 180 guests

March 2015

- Executive Team Meet and Greet Trip to Southern Tablelands and Western Regions
- All Staff Development Day – Future Vision, Travelling Together and CareSouth Values
- OLG Focus Groups formed – Culture, Practice Framework, Systems and Learning and Development
- CareSouth's first Everyday Traineeship commenced, a two year program targeted for young people who have recently exited OOHC

April 2015

- HR3 implemented for Payroll, further roll out to include Human Resources
- Channel 7's House Rules complete renovation and make-over of Wahroonga Residential OOHC house, airs in July 2015
- Visionary Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 development begins with stakeholder and community consultation
- Project 291 delivered at Bellambi Beach in partnership with Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Children for Communities, Northern Stars Swim School, Bellambi Surf Life Saving Club, Surf Education International and Youth Off The Streets. The program increases swimming skills, raises surf awareness and promotes water safety for children and young people





May 2015

- Partnership with FACS to deliver Understanding Trauma & Attachment training to FACS and CareSouth staff
- Wahroonga Residential OOHHC staff fundraise to take the young people on a holiday to Queensland
- IT infrastructure upgrade phase two commenced and migration to Windows Mail Server and Shared Drive
- Deniliquin office moves to new premises owned by CareSouth
- Goulburn office moves to new, larger premises providing the opportunity for all Goulburn staff to be located together
- Families Week carer recruitment marketing campaign across all carer programs (Foster Care, Aunties & Uncles, Family Choices) and all regions

June 2015

- Partnering with FACS - Brighter Futures outreach co-location in OneFACS Service Centre
- Everyday CareSouth staff uniforms implemented
- Partnership with HeadSpace to deliver Youth Mental Health First Aid training to CareSouth staff
- Visionary Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 Board Members workshop
- Homework Hub pilot implemented at Berkeley, staffed by community volunteers
- Elizabeth Henry House opening officiated by Minister for Ageing Disability and Home Care, the Hon John Ajaka MP, The Housing Trust Board Member Jennifer Macquarie and CEO Joan Ferguson, and our CEO Deb Tozer
- Partnership with Campbell Page to deliver targeted support to prevent children entering OOHHC funded by the Homeless Youth Assistance Program
- End of Financial Year giving campaign launched
- Partnering with University of Wollongong to support work placements in Education and Community Services
- University of Wollongong Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Partnership

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS

Communication and systems are essential for us to deliver our services to a broad range of people across NSW, including remote areas.

The last year saw us undertake major IT system and infrastructure upgrades to support our staff in cities, towns and remote rural areas.

Some of the major projects from the last year were:

Network Infrastructure upgrade project

- Implementation of new servers, network switches and storage devices providing CareSouth with a much more secure, reliable and robust network system. We now have a highly resilient and available network which significantly reduced downtime of key systems.

Microsoft Windows 7 rollout

- A consistent standard operating environment for all staff. Consistent approach to troubleshooting, deployment, remote support for regional offices, compatible with TCM7 and other standard industry databases.

The Care Manager Database rollout project

- Design and implementation of The Care Manager client database across all programs. Standardised reporting, improved client management system and accurate quality data.

Disaster Recovery Solution

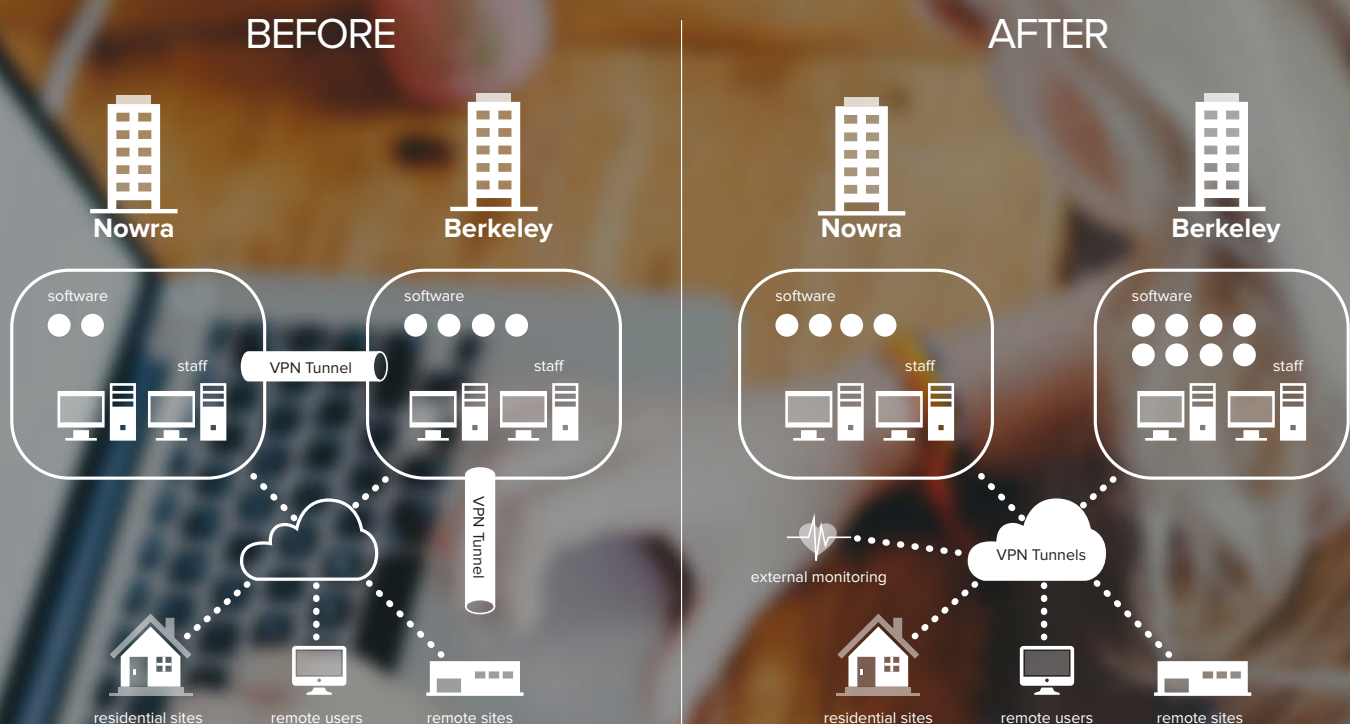
- Cloud based recovery methods to ensure restoration of all critical systems to the latest point in time. Minimal downtime to CareSouth production systems in case of emergency.

Team Structure

- On-site IT support available in Berkeley and Nowra. Engaged with IT consulting firms to provide regular checks and support in regional offices. Regular visits and remote support to our residential houses in all areas.

Homework Hub

- Provided computers and IT support for clients to use during their Homework Hub sessions.



PARTNERING TO BUILD OUR FUTURE

Case Study on Habitat for Humanity

CareSouth and Habitat for Humanity partnered together to renovate one of CareSouth's residential homes for young people. CareSouth's residential services provide young people who cannot live at home for a number of reasons, a nurturing, caring and stable environment. The aim of the partnership was to complete a much needed renovation to make it more homely for the young people living there.

Together with local tradesmen, the University of Melbourne's Habitat for Humanity volunteers and local business, the renovation was made a reality.



“It's a great thing because we have the capacity to offer more young people a safe place to live and refocus their lives.”

Tamara, Team Leader

“It was a positive experience for the kids in the house because they were able to help and it gave one in particular new skills.”

Jennifer Nelson, Community Relations Manager

COMMUNICATING OUR WORK



**Media
Outreach**

10,122
mentions
1.5million
people reached



Website

5000
visits per
month

Visitor Demographic of
25-34 year olds



Facebook

1625
likes

with 500 new likes
in financial year 2015-2016

“It was something that I always wanted to do. My mum had foster kids from when I was about 16, and it was a real eye-opener.”

Brent, CareSouth Foster Carer

Brent and Jamie
Picture by Christopher Chan
Courtesy of Illawarra Mercury.



“We just want to help expand their horizons and give them experiences that they may not get.”

Amanda, CareSouth Aunty

Amanda
Picture by Kirk Gilmour
Courtesy of Illawarra Mercury.



“When I started I did it because I wanted to make a huge difference in a child's life.”

Michelle, CareSouth Foster Carer

Michelle with her daughter Madison
Picture by Andy Zakeli
Courtesy of Illawarra Mercury





Thank You House Rules!

CareSouth is delighted to have been chosen as the latest recipient of a complete house renovation for Network 7's House Rules show. This year, it was CareSouth's turn with a residential care home for young people in Worrigea in the Shoalhaven getting a makeover. The Shoalhaven-featured show screened from Tuesday 7th July, 2015, at 7.30pm, and concluded on Tuesday 14th July with the big reveal.



The home provides long term care for young people aged between 12 and 18 who can no longer live at home, and underwent a total makeover.

Mary Warren, Team Leader Wahroonga said, "We don't have much funding so it was just a basic house. The kids don't ask to be in this situation, so it was nice to get something for them as well as making it a nice place for the staff who work there."

Wahroonga was selected as the property best suited for House Rules after an inspection of the property.

Network 7's House Rules host, Johanna Griggs said, "This renovation is an opportunity for the

teams to give something back to people who'll really appreciate their dedication and talent."

"CareSouth put their heart and souls into these kids; and this is a chance to say thanks for all the wonderful work they do. The teams are giving 100 percent during this renovation as they realise the results will mean the world to the kids who live there now and the ones who will pass through there in the future," Ms Griggs said.

Ms Warren said, "We are so grateful we were chosen. The change in behaviour of our young people since the work has been dramatic. It was a house, now it's a home."

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Image Gallery



NSW Business Awards



Christmas Giving Appeal



Pride of Australia Medal



Biggest Morning Tea



End of Year Celebrations



Child Protection Week



Shoalhaven Business Leader Awards



Official Opening Berkeley Office



Project 291

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Financial Performance

The financial performance is summarised from extracts of the audited financial statements of CareSouth for the period ended 30 June 2015.

Review of Operations

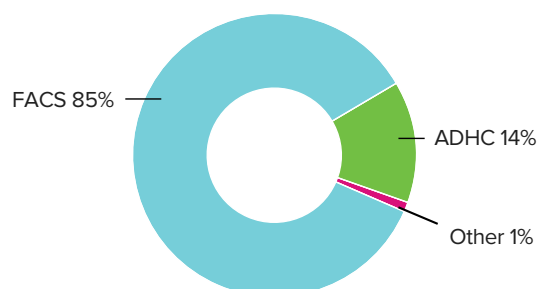
Growth in our Western Region, coupled with overall growth in Out of Home Care Services were the largest contributors to our growth from 2014 to 2015. Investment income was similar to the previous year. Donations were down slightly from 2014.

Likely Developments

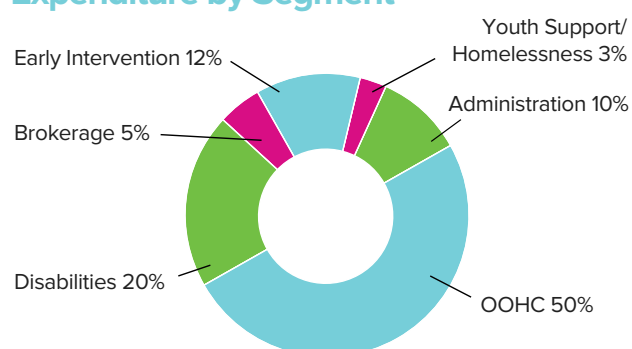
CareSouth intends to:

- Further consolidate its financial position by using cash funds to purchase premises where there is a long term focus. This investment based on current market trends, will mean that current interest on any loans required on the investment would be less than market rent. This strategy increases the long term security for the organisations clients and people with whom we support, in addition to reducing overall operating costs, and
- Continue to expand and duplicate the services we provide in all of our geographic areas, focusing on areas of significant need.

Income by Source



Expenditure by Segment

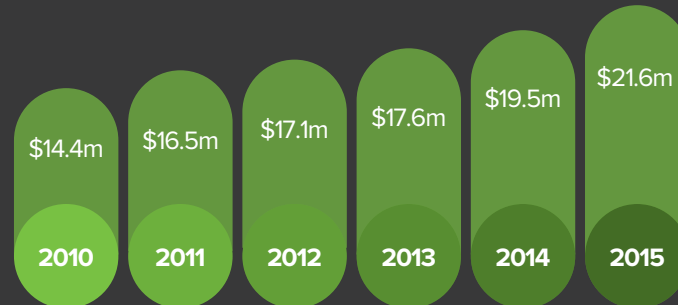


Consolidated Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2015

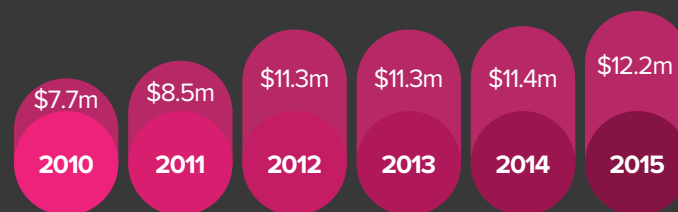
	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
Revenue	3	21,559,443	19,389,652
Interest income		114,825	113,047
Total revenue		21,674,268	19,502,699
Employee remuneration and benefits		11,311,778	10,514,653
Employee superannuation payments		961,426	860,865
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment		862,516	672,197
Operational costs	4	7,746,505	6,549,760
Finance costs		133,567	120,047
Total expenses		21,015,792	18,717,522
Operational Surplus		658,476	785,177

KEY FINANCIAL RESULTS

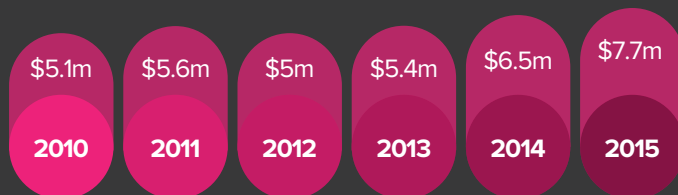
Revenue



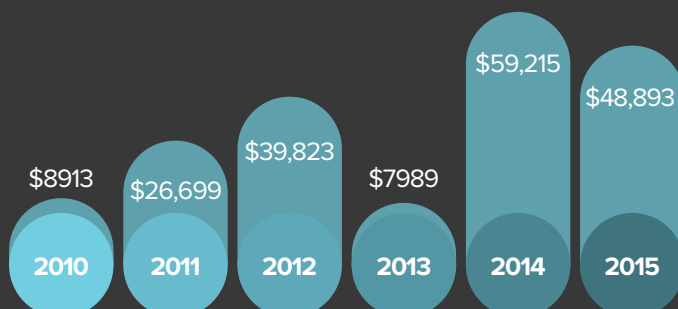
Employee Costs



Operating Costs



Fundraising and Donations



NOTE: Figure for 2014/2015 does not include renovation value as a result of Channel 7's House Rules which increased the value of our building assets by \$165k.

THANK YOU

to Our Funders & Supporters

Funders



Family &
Community Services

Grants

Ansvar Insurance

Clubs NSW

Donors

Berkeley Sports Club

Rotary Club Queanbeyan

Sleepout Shoalhaven

Westpac

Milton Ulladulla Bowling Club

Milton Ulladulla Ex-Servicemans Club

Mollymook Golf Club

Rotary Club of Milton Ulladulla

EVERYDAY GIVING

How You Can Help

You can make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable children, young people and families in your area. There are many ways to become an Everyday Giver for CareSouth.

Become an Everyday Donor

You can make a one-off donation, or a regular fortnightly or monthly donation; your gift counts. You can also give the gift of a product or service for our annual Foster Care Awards night, Christmas Giving Drive or to help those in Residential Care with everyday essentials.

Become an Everyday Fundraiser

Whether you're a community group wanting to help the vulnerable in your community, or an individual with a passion for sporting events, there are hundreds of great events you can participate in to raise money for CareSouth.

Workplace Giving

With a workplace giving program, you can offer your staff the chance to donate a portion of their pre-tax pay to CareSouth. This creates an immediate tax deduction for your staff, but also helps improve staff productivity and retention.

Become an Everyday Volunteer

There are many ways to volunteer for CareSouth, from assisting with fundraising to helping renovate our residential homes. You can volunteer as an individual or as part of a workplace volunteering initiative.

Of course we are always looking for Carers across our Foster Care, Aunties & Uncles and Family Choices programs.

Leave a Lasting Legacy

You can leave a lasting legacy by organising to donate to CareSouth in your Will, or you can give a gift on behalf of a loved one that will be remembered for years to come.

Celebratory giving is also becoming an increasingly popular way of honouring and remembering your special celebration such as a wedding or 21st birthday. Simply ask your guests to donate rather than giving gifts.

VIDEOS

Below are video links that you can scan the QR code to view via the CareSouth Annual Report website at caresouth.org.au/annual-report/2015







Annual Report

2014 - 2015

EVERYDAY
CareSouth

1300 554 260 | info@caresouth.org.au | caresouth.org.au