



# 2020-21 Annual Report

Canberra Rape Crisis Centre Annual Report 2020-21



### **Canberra Rape Crisis Centre**

- Sexual assault counselling for women, children, young people, families and men
- Crisis and Counselling Line  
7am-11pm, 7 days a week
- Education and training

### **Crisis Line**

(02) 6247 2525  
7am-11pm, 7 days a week

### **SAMSSA**

(02) 6247 2525  
(support for men)

### **Nguru**

(02) 6247 2525  
(support for Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander community members)

### **Business/Finance**

(02) 6287 3618

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## Mission

Within a feminist framework, be an active, visible catalyst for social change through high quality services

## Values

Respect,  
Collaboration,  
Empowerment,  
Innovation

## Organisational chart





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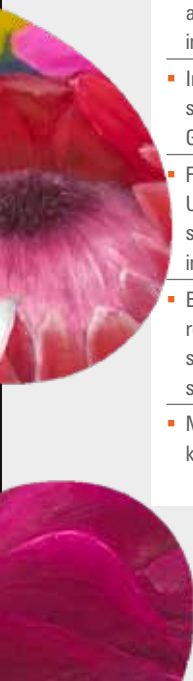
# strategic plan 2019–22

This plan informs our planning and reporting activities by providing a set of objectives and a framework for achieving these objectives over the next three years. It underpins our organisational budget, operational business plans, annual reports to Staff, Executive, The Board, performance reports to Government and our Annual Report.

**To eliminate sexual violence against women, children, young people, families and men.**

## Strategy 1— Community Engagement and Social Justice

Strategy	Priorities	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain links to the historical Feminist Movement recognising that Rape Crisis Centres are part of a global Feminist network and are agents for social change, as well as crisis, support and advocacy services.</li> <li>Advocate and increase awareness and knowledge of the causes and impacts of rape, sexual violence, and child sexual assault locally, nationally, and also internationally.</li> <li>Influence systemic and social responses to sexual violence in all its forms through all levels of Government.</li> <li>Forge links internationally through the focus of the United Nations on sexual assault, child sexual assault, slavery and trafficking of children and women, including those within war and combat zones.</li> <li>Build and maintain collaborative productive relationships with key agencies to address the structural causes of adult sexual violence and child sexual assault and improve justice responses.</li> <li>Market and strengthen the recognition of CRCC as the key sexual assault services provider in the ACT Region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Royal Commission Support Services to improve responses and support survivors of child sexual assault within institutions.</li> <li>Positive relationships with existing Media, community awareness campaigns and events to continue to raise awareness about sexual violence and the impacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The number of opportunities to raise the CRCC public profile sought with increased references in media, government and other forums.</li> <li>Increased community awareness about the impacts of sexual assault and child sexual assault through the media, community campaigns, systemic advocacy, and awareness raising events.</li> <li>Increased requests for participation on panels, committees, forums, training partnerships.</li> <li>High level of visibility at key strategic meetings both locally and nationally.</li> <li>Systemic advocacy is prime in all areas of CRCC planning.</li> <li>Networks developed and maintained.</li> </ul>





## Strategy 2—Organisational strengthening

Strategy	Priorities	Success Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Build and maintain an organisational culture and environment that values and supports all workers and Board members to deliver outcomes of excellence.</li> <li>▪ Respectful relationships are promoted.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate good governance through an engaged, professional Board of a diverse group, focussed on the broad strategic direction of the CRCC.</li> <li>▪ Maintain strategic leadership with a strong policy and procedural framework to guide the agency.</li> <li>▪ Build solid foundations for staff through their professional development to deliver the best outcomes possible for CRCC clients.</li> <li>▪ Welcome and encourage diversity and innovation amongst our membership and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Always focus on building a culture where staff are valued and respected through:</li> <li>▪ Appropriate support mechanisms, including debriefing and supervision, are in place for staff.</li> <li>▪ Continuous improvements in services are achieved through monitoring, review and action.</li> <li>▪ Professional development for staff.</li> <li>▪ Risk management and continuity planning is in place and functioning.</li> <li>▪ Membership growth of the Association to further develop the foundation of the services provided.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organisational culture and values are assessed through performance management, feedback, and other processes.</li> <li>▪ The needs of staff working in a crisis setting that responds to sexual violence are identified, implemented, and prioritised. Informal and formal staff support mechanisms in place and reviewed for effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Staff demonstrate contemporary best practice in all aspects of work.</li> <li>▪ Service and business quality indicators are measured and reviewed regularly.</li> <li>▪ All relevant policies, procedures, risk management, business continuity plans are in place and reviewed annually.</li> <li>▪ Workplace health and safety and risk management is part of all work and monitored for effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Continued growth in Association membership.</li> </ul>

## Strategy 3—Services

Strategy	Priorities	Success Indicators
<p>Services to survivors and their supports seeking assistance for sexual assault and child sexual abuse, whether the trauma has been recent or historical.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Telephone crisis response to those seeking support for the impacts of sexual violence.</li> <li>▪ A 24 hour call out service to police and medical forensic services.</li> <li>▪ Counselling, court support and advocacy for women, children, young people and men, who are survivors of sexual assault, their families, and supporters.</li> <li>▪ Work within existing local, national, and international efforts to ensure that complex trauma frameworks are well understood within structures to address slavery, trafficking, and child prostitution, as well as rape used as a weapon in war and rape within military and combat personnel.</li> <li>▪ Support for those seeking support and information about the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse within Institutions.</li> <li>▪ Community support and engagement, capacity building, and counselling for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</li> <li>▪ Training and Community Engagement Programs.</li> <li>▪ Services providing support, advice, engagement and advocacy for the elderly and those with a disability, in home or institutional care, for recent and/or historical sexual assault.</li> <li>▪ Supporting engagement with the Indigenous community in assisting Elders to connect with Indigenous young people.</li> <li>▪ Developing strategies with schools to assist in the prevention of sexual assault, and assisting with policy and procedures for disclosure of sexual assault and child sexual assault.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Services for survivors of recent sexual assault, those who have been sexually assaulted in the past, and for those sexually assaulted as children within families, institutions, and other settings, are provided through crisis and call out services, telephone support, advocacy, counselling, group work, outreach, and other support services.</li> <li>▪ Reduce barriers for groups and communities who face multiple difficulties of disadvantage, disability, or culture, to accessing sexual assault services through innovating programs and strategies that fill gaps and better meet the needs of community groups accessing CRCC services.</li> <li>▪ Maintain service practice with international best practice guidelines and continue to develop and engage the community in specialist training services.</li> <li>▪ Maintain service funding and seek alternate funding for new innovations and growth.</li> <li>▪ Maintain visibility of the impacts of child sexual assault, trafficking and slavery within and outside of war zones and the military to support the important focus of UN Women in these areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crisis and first response service is maintained with an increasing number of services provided.</li> <li>▪ Counselling groups, advocacy, and support services are provided to survivors of sexual assault and child sexual assault.</li> <li>▪ Survivors of child sexual assault are supported to report to the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse within Institutions.</li> <li>▪ Clinical practice is continually updated in line with international best practice.</li> <li>▪ Community engagement and specialist training programs are provided.</li> <li>▪ Funding levels remain stable with increases to meet new service demands demonstrated.</li> <li>▪ Client feedback on services and education programs is used in quality review and improvement of service provision.</li> </ul>



## chair's report

When we issued last year's report we noted the difficulties presented by Covid during 2019/2020 (in addition to the bushfires) but could not have imagined that we would still be coming to terms with this 12 months later.

Nonetheless, the Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) has continued to manage the risks to clients which have been exacerbated by the necessity for victims to lockdown in homes, at times, in close and unbroken contact with perpetrators. In addition, staff and management have had to each manage their clients' safety, along with their own personal lockdown circumstances.

The Board is very proud of the way in which CRCC has been managed in relation to these increasing difficulties. Covid-19 procedures and requirements have been followed and adapted as they evolved, maintaining staff safety and client care.

We acknowledge that once again the CEO and Service Director have worked to adapt their own personal responsibilities, while also ensuring that staff members and clients were able to do the same.

CRCC have always maintained very high standards through the commitment and dedication of management and staff. The unique circumstances

of the last two years have posed rapidly evolving challenges to management and staff. However, they have served to illustrate the capacity CRCC has to quickly adapt in order to protect clients, while also supporting staff and management in ensuring that they can attend to their personal obligations. Without the commitment of staff and their co-operation with management CRCC could not have maintained their high standards throughout the threat of Covid-19.

We have yet to see all of the consequences of this second isolation period when families were again closely confined and there was no privacy to seek assistance. There were periods of escalated complexity and difficulty evident after the first lockdown and an escalated crisis presentation to CRCC Services. As we come out of the second lockdown period CRCC is well equipped to provide the required assistance.

The Board itself has welcomed three new members during 2021 which has further strengthened and consolidated our work. They are Valerie Papin, Rossana Carr and Carolyn Brassil. It is an ongoing privilege to work with such focused, intelligent and committed women. They are all volunteers but never shy away from the work that





their role on the Board brings. They are all proud of and support the service CRCC provides to clients and to the community at large.

This year the Board reluctantly farewells three hardworking members. Rosemary Dupont is leaving to travel and to spend time with her family, including a new grandchild she is yet to meet.

Kate Ord has taken on new responsibilities in her employment, which bring a greater workload. Catherine Elrick is also looking to new horizons which take her away from giving time to the Board. We will miss all of them personally, but we will also miss their passion and commitment to CRCC.

Looking into the new year we all dare to hope that life will become more settled and that challenges will return to the 'usual' critical level. We remain committed to ensuring that the standards delivered by CRCC and its Staff are well supported and we look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that clients and the community continue to receive the very best response possible in services.

**Lessli Strong**  
**Chair of the Board**

## crcc board

<b>Chair</b>	Lessli Strong
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	Kate Ord
<b>Treasurer</b>	Valerie Papin
<b>Secretary</b>	Catherine Elrick
<b>Members</b>	Juliet Moody
	Rosemary Dupont
	Rossana Carr
	Carolyn Brassil

**Lessli Strong - Chair**

Lessli has been a practicing Solicitor since 1984. She specialises in family law, domestic violence and child welfare. She has been a researcher, instructor, lecturer, mentor and examiner in family law. Lessli established and manages an esteemed sole practice legal firm, specialising in family law, domestic violence and child welfare matters, she also practices in Wills and Estate matters. She represents children in the Family Court, the Federal Circuit Court and in the ACT Children's Court.

Lessli has been the Vice President and founding member of the Canberra and Region Family Law Professionals Association. She was a member of the advisory panel for the introduction of Working With Vulnerable People Legislation in ACT and also a member of the advisory panel for the introduction of Sexual and Violent Offences Legislation Amendment Legislation in ACT. She is the current Chair of the Family Violence and Children's Committee of the ACT Law Society



### **Kate Ord – Deputy Chair**

Kate is an Assistant Director in the Commonwealth Public Service with 23 years of experience in a variety of roles in science, information analysis and HR. In 2018, Kate managed the Australian National University's Respectful Relationships Project responding to the Australian Human Rights Commission's report into Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in Australian Universities. In her early 20s, she taught self-defence for women and girls including working with survivors. Over her career, she has developed many policies and procedures and coordinated/provided training on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response, Domestic and Family Violence and Work Health and Safety. Kate brings a thorough knowledge of government processes and an excellent understanding of policy frameworks to the Board. As a former Union Secretary and Chair of a departmental Disability and Carers Network, Kate also has a background in advocacy. She has a Bachelor of Science from the Australian National University and a Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety.

### **Valerie Papin-Treasurer**

Valerie is a Director at ACT NoWaste, part of the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, where she works on major projects, data intelligence and internal business processes. She is a Certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and has completed most of the training required by CPA Australia as she spent most of her career acting as a Business Analyst and a Management Accountant in her home country of Canada. Valerie holds a dual MBA from Cornell University and Queens University and has previous experience volunteering with non-for-profit organisations.

### **Catherine Elrick – Secretary**

Catherine is a Human Resources Manager who has worked in various Government agencies for over 30 years. She has worked on major projects the most recent being the development of a recruitment strategy and action plan for the recruitment to 130 positions located in the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines new office in Armidale NSW. Previously she has worked in injury management, provided support and advice to senior managers on performance management and Workforce Planning and is currently working in the Department of Agriculture in HR strategy. Catherine is in the process of obtaining a Certified Practitioner in Human Resources through the Australian Human Resources Institute.

### **Juliet Moody**

Juliet Moody is a comedian, musician and writer, best known for her role as the short-half of musical comedy duo Sparrow-Folk. In 2016, she founded the Fearless Initiative – a charity organisation using comedy as a platform to raise funds and awareness for victims of family violence. The organisation has raised over \$100,000 for charities supporting survivors in the ACT community. The initiative was created to mark 10 years free from her own experience of Family Violence and to provide hope for other victims. Juliet was recently recognised for her work in violence prevention in the community as a finalist in the 2018 ACT Australian of the Year Awards.



### **Rosemary Dupont**

Rosemary joined the CRCC Board in January 2019. She has prior experience on two other Boards, Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators Australia and Pedal Power ACT. She has a good understanding of Board procedures, governance and HR and comes with a keen interest in feminist issues. Rosemary originally trained in Social Work but since 1995 has run her own company specialising in dispute resolution and HR consulting.

### **Rossana Carr**

Rossana has a Bachelor of Arts (Management) from the University of Canberra and a strong focus on staff and industry engagement. She is a Director within the Commonwealth Public Service with extensive management experience gained through her 20 plus year tenure. Rossana specialises in the management of remote operational teams and outreach programs. During her career she has managed programs responsible for human resources, business and risk management, training and assessment and industry engagement. One of Rossana's major achievement is the implementation of an outreach program for exporters worth over \$13 million over four years, covering all states and territories within Australia.

### **Carolyn Brassil**

Carolyn is a Partner of Callida Consulting, a mid-tier Canberra based consulting firm where she leads the strategy, operations, workforce and change capabilities. Prior to consulting, Carolyn worked for nearly 20 years across the Australian Government including over eight years in the senior executive service leading compliance, strategy and corporate services. Carolyn has a Bachelor of Business Administration, is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a certified professional member of the Australian Human Rights Institute. Carolyn joined the Board in May 2021.





## chief executive officer's report

2021 has brought us many of the same challenges as 2020, but the paths have all been trodden before, so the Organisation was better prepared for the difficulties and complexities that come with such rapidly changing landscapes.

We worked hard this year to focus on the local issue of sexual assault in the ACT and how this impacts the community. Thankfully we had the backing of all areas of our Government, led by Minister Berry's Office. Such collaboration is crucial to achieving the cultural change necessary to end sexual violence. It was also clear from the commitment of all areas of government that the need to address the issue of sexual violence transcends politics. This piece of work has been long needed in the ACT and our hope remains that all those impacted in our community will be better for this effort.

On a national front we have contributed to the development of the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) Standards. A challenge for CRCC, and the broader sector this year, is how to share the knowledge that sits in our heads to better enable new Staff to be resourced in their work. The Standards were written to provide direction to policy makers

and staff in frontline services across the country and are perhaps the most comprehensive guide for sexual assault response prepared by the Australian Sexual Assault movement in many years. We thank the University of NSW for their expertise, intellect, and commitment to developing a guide that will assist workers and clients for decades to come.

At CRCC we face each challenge in a harder environment and this year we navigated all that confronted us with the usual enthusiasm inherent within the workplace. Sadly, CRCC saw a higher rate of Staff turnover than usual, and greater change of people in the broader ACT Community Sector. Marcia Williams left Women's Health Matters into retirement and we will miss her energy and collaboration in supporting sexual assault. The lockdown of 2020 had such an impact on everything we know of the world, and many decided they needed a change.

This year we will farewell one of our longest serving Staff members, Penny Pestano. After more than a decade of incredible commitment to CRCC, Penny will retire at the end of the year. This will mean a big change for CRCC, and we all will miss you Pen but really wish you well for the next stage of 'Pen's Puppyworld'. Long term



Summer McGinty also moves on to new pursuits and we will miss you too and miss your focus process. We farewell Wayne as well who has worked at CRCC for a number of years. We thank you Wayne for your enthusiasm and commitment to the Nguru Program.

We also thank the Board for guiding us through the treacherous year that has been. Thank you for all your support and for assisting so enthusiastically to all that was needed. I also thank our ACT Housing Contract Managers, Kim Williamson and Biljana Petrova for all their support.

As we look forward, we are seeking ways to strengthen our Organisation on the business side of CRCC. We have added a Human Resource

position to our team, as well as an Administration Assistant and Executive Assistant. These positions strengthen CRCC in a different way to services and client support, and highlight the continued evolution of CRCC as it grows and changes to meet community need. To all the CRCC Staff thank you for another year of highs and lows. There are sure to be many more adventures as we go forth into 2022.

**Chrystina Stanford**  
**CRCC Chief Executive Officer**





## treasurer's report

All recurrent funding for the Centre is received from the ACT Government. During the financial year, the following funds were received (ex GST):

Department	Amount	Program
National Affordable Housing Agreement, Social Housing and Homelessness Services, (SHHS), Community Services Directorate (CSD)	\$656,011	Adult Women and Children's Counselling Team
Community Education Program	\$367,077	First Response Team and Community Education Program
Sexual Assault Reform Program, Justice and Community Safety (JaCS) administered by CSP, CSD	\$156,266	First Response Team
Safer Families (incl additional resources)	\$441,622	
Prevention of Violence Against Women, (CSP) CSD	\$181,581	Adult Women and Children's Counselling Team
CSP, CSD	\$248,155	SAMSSA
CSP, CSD	\$256,786	Nguru
<b>Total Recurrent Funding</b>	<b>\$2,307,498</b>	

In addition, the following grants were received during the financial year (non recurrent):

Source	Amount	Outcome
Department of Social Services	\$417,510	Royal Commission Community-based Support Services
<b>Total Grant Funding</b>	<b>\$417,510</b>	
Australian Sports Commission	\$58,000	Responding to sexual misconduct
ANU	\$6,000	FTE counsellor on campus
1800RESPECT	\$421,000	National crisis phone line for survivors of sexual violence and domestic violence

CRCC has continued as a financially robust and viable organisation through accountable financial management and reporting processes. Due to the increasing demand for services and a need to become more efficient, there are new operational costs expected for the coming year as CRCC realigns its structure and internal support processes for staff. CRCC will continue to ensure as much funding as possible is deployed to the crisis services as it enters this new phase of its journey.

CRCC would like to thank the auditing team at Nexia Canberra for ensuring that there are no irregularities in the accounting and internal control systems and that CRCC has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements.

If you would like a detailed copy of the CRCC audited financial statements please email [crcc@crcc.org.au](mailto:crcc@crcc.org.au).

**Valerie Pain**  
**CRCC Board Treasurer**





## service director's report

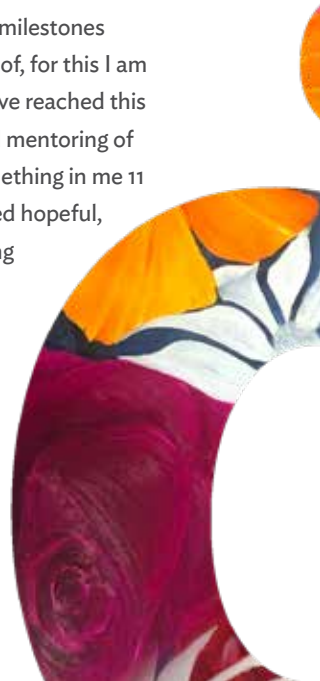
Another amazing year has taken place for the team of CRCC. It has been another busy one, catching up after last year's COVID restrictions eased and then going back into restrictions again this year. The transition into restrictions appears to be a little easier with time as we all get used to what is required to continue to support our clients. This year was closer to home and brought additional challenges for clients and staff alike. Considering the circumstances that surrounded us all, everyone stepped up and managed the restrictions calmly and efficiently.

I will keep it short and sweet this year, so that I can share with you events on a more personal level. I have made the decision to retire my position with CRCC, this will be my last Service Director report. This has been a thought for several years now, one that I didn't really think would become a reality for a few more years. However, things change, and it generally helps to go with the changes, rather than fight them!!!!

I have been with CRCC for almost 11 years, a great deal longer than I could have ever anticipated! These 11 years have meant so much more, to me, than just a job. The saying "find what you love to do and make it your job" rings true for me and my

time with CRCC. To start with I have loved the work involved with all the clients I have had the privilege of engaging with, then my role changed, and I loved helping new and existing staff create and maintain their craft and skills. When I didn't think it could get any better, therapy dogs came into the realm of possibilities! With the unspoken philosophy of 'what's better than one therapy dog?... lots of therapy dogs!' creating the Furapy Healing Puppy team. This expanded from the Furapy Puppy Team helping clients in counselling, reporting to Police, going into schools, to working with clients to train for Service Dog status through ACT legislation, seeing CRCC being accepted as trainer and tester for the Public Access Testing.

There have been so many CRCC milestones that I have been able to be a part of, for this I am extremely grateful. I could not have reached this pinnacle without the support and mentoring of Chrystina, our CEO. She saw something in me 11 years ago, when I was a bright eyed hopeful, starting out my trauma counselling journey, and has supported and backed me ever since.... Thank you for allowing me to find my feet and shine.





Thank you to all my clients for allowing me to be a small part of your lives and travel with you for a time, I am hopeful that we have taught each other along the way, I know that you have taught me a great deal more than you would give yourselves credit for.

Thank you to all the staff that I have worked with during my time at CRCC, it has been amazing to work with you all.

I always thought that the prospect of leaving CRCC would be devastating, as it has been such a significant part of my life for over a decade.

My decision has come with mixed feelings of sadness and excitement. I am looking forward to my new adventures and pursuing my love of working with dogs. The prospect of breeding my lovable Labs and creating puppies with amazing temperaments is exciting, and helping owners to train and communicate effectively with their pups is something I genuinely love to do.

Take care and be kind to yourselves always.

**Penny Pestano**  
**CRCC Service Director**





2020-21 stats



187 young Aboriginal people supported in our schools



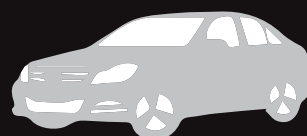
25,827 calls to the crisis line



10 unconditionally loving furry friends to support all



2,003 young people accessed counselling at CRCC



564 call-outs



1,276 counselling/ support sessions



7,862 people accessed CRCC



**3,339** women accessed counselling at CRCC



**1,083** men accessed counselling at CRCC



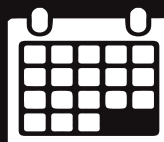
**59** family accessed counselling at CRCC



**12-15 year olds** are the largest group accessing crisis services



**41** children accessed counselling at CRCC



**6,524** counselling services provided



## crcc services

### Face to face counselling services

#### Nguru Program

#### Redress Support Services

#### Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault (SAMSSA)

#### Furapy and Healing Puppies

**C**RCC continues to grow and respond to all areas of sexual violence. It is always a challenge to such a large area of violence with so many different crimes that are the abuse of power. Sexual Violence contains harassment, enforced child marriage, trafficking and child pornography, date rape, sexual assault in workplaces, drug and tech facilitated abuse, rape within marriage, organized abuse, institutional child sexual assault and child sexual assault within the family and broader groups and sexualized behaviours in children and young people. This means there are enormous amounts of legislation governing the response. Many focus

on the legislation at the expense of the support and care necessary to assist those impacted. This negates the fact that people may need particular support across different stages of their lives.

A focus on the crisis of disclosure or sexual assault having just occurred is crucial and so is the support beyond—to allow for an effective response to all members of the community—those who have been harmed recently or those harmed long ago. Without this dual focus groups are left behind, relying on systems and services without the capacity to effectively support—as their focus is different. On average women spend up to 12 years in the mental health system before

receiving a trauma related diagnosis. This type of response means people spend a lot of their lives trying to reach the right help. The cost to our communities and the lives of those living within communities, is enormous- and unnecessary.

For all clients, these services include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Counselling and Group Work to women, children, young people, families and men
- Support to attend Police and Forensic Services
- Systemic and individual advocacy for clients with government and other agencies
- Community engagement, education and training
- Cultural connection -Nguru Primary School programs
- Redress Support Services to those sexually assaulted as children within institutions
- Systemic Action and Advocacy-Social action through representation on a broad range of local and national forums and expert reference groups
- Professional Consultation
- Sexualised behaviours intervention for those under 18.
- Support to non-offending parents, carers and supporters.

Despite the many years of advocacy and fight for the rights of survivors of sexual assault, and the horrific stories that follow, there is still much to do. Belief and disbelief remain the largest stumbling blocks with sexual violence, and community attitudes slip when there is not a movement to drive change for the positive- or pressure to do better.

There remain significant gaps in service provision in the broader government and community sector, which means there are members of our community that remain facing many barriers to seeking help and accessing services. It also means there are many groups within the community that are represented in statistics for sexual violence at higher rates than others.

These include women with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, those impacted by child sexual assault- within institutions and the family, young people and those from marginalised and vulnerable communities. We report these gaps every year and it remains crucial to have community members from these groups spoken for

## Counselling services



**7,862 Canberrans accessed CRCC**

A total of 7,862 Canberrans accessed the Canberra Rape Crisis Service in the 20-2021 period.

Group	Number
Women	6,998
Men	808
Young People	3,076
Children	41
Family members	59

Young people aged from 12-25 remain our largest group accessing crisis services. Whereas adults women remain the largest group accessing Counselling.



## 6,524 Counselling services

A total of 6,524 Counselling services were provided in the 20-2021 period.

Group	Number
Women	3,339
Men	1,083
Young People	2,003
Children	63
Family members	36

CRCC provides counselling services to many people impacted by sexual assault in and around the ACT. Demand for CRCC services increased enormously when Covid restrictions lifted last year. CRCC was faced with the challenge of trying to meet the needs of those seeking help at a time of significant pressure on the community at large. Following the lockdown period it took some time to work out a safe way to resume service provision once the world returned a little to what we had known before.

Following the lifting of restrictions of 2020 we examined what styles of service provision implemented in the time of lockdown could remain for people seeking CRCC services. Efforts were focused on providing more diverse services and also keeping combination services for clients. We focused on what we would continue but more importantly why we could keep certain aspects of service delivery. An example of these services is online support and also an increase in the use of text messages as well as the six week skills based crisis counselling program aimed to

provide services to people waiting to be allocated a counsellor.

This arm of CRCC makes the crisis area busier in the provision of diverse services however reduces the amount of time waiting for counselling.

Men reached out for counselling and phone support at higher rates during 2020-21. This help seeking change was attributed to the broader impacts of an unsafe world with fires and a pandemic and how these factors impact existing trauma.

## Nguru Program



The Nguru Program has built again to provide support to young men from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The program demand remains high and schools in the ACT continue to seek support from the Nguru Staff. The online presence extended to young people was not as successful as other groups within the client population and this makes it hard to remain engaged. As children and young people returned to the school environment engagement with the program grew again. The Nguru Team are working towards additional support for their students in the coming year with new programs to support leadership and work options for students. The Nguru Program supports many people from the Aboriginal Community and this year support 187 young people in schools.

## Redress Support Services

CRCC and SAMSSA continue to work within the Redress system to assist this very harmed group of clients. Work has begun on a local front within the ACT Government to progress the recommendations released from the Royal Commission's work.

## Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault



SAMSSA remains a focus for CRCC Staff with a number of Counsellors on the team now providing counselling services to men. In years gone by there were several Staff engaged in this work. The focus of the Royal Commission into those sexually assaulted within Institutions meant that many men within the community sought help for impacts of trauma.

## Furapy and Healing Puppies



2020-21 has been a big year for the Furapy Healing Puppy Program. CRCC worked out some years ago now that animals are able to bridge the language divide with humans particularly when a person is impacted by trauma. Sexual assault trauma takes many things from its victims, including language. Part of what our team does is help the client find the words through care and unconditional positive regard. CRCC is extremely impressed with the skills and quality of our growing team of Furapy Puppies, who are resilient and compassionate.

Gracie and Murphy joined the ever-growing pack of helper dogs: Mahlee, Charlie, Daisy, Darci, Bessie, Maggie, Frankie, Archey who continue to assist clients at Police reports, counselling sessions, and schools.



Instagram images found at [#furapyhealingpuppies](https://www.instagram.com/furapyhealingpuppies)

# statistics



## Call-outs



### 564 Call-outs to Police and Forensic Services

Call-outs continued to be in demand with 564 Call-outs to Police and Forensic Services for men women and children in the 12 month period.

Call-outs to Police and Canberra Hospital remain in high demand at CRCC. The Crisis area of CRCC remains the most resourced of all CRCC services with additional shifts—both inside the office and on-call shifts to meet the demand. Staff working in this area of CRCC require adequate support to continue to respond to ‘anything at anytime’. The capacity to meet the needs of community members in such a diverse way means that there is a tremendous focus on team work and capacity to respond to parents, professionals, individuals, community groups and those impacted by sexual assault. An informed response to survivors of trauma means that the dynamics and impacts of sexual assault are challenged. Speaking to someone who says “I am sorry. What happened is not your fault.”, directly challenges self-blame and shame and breaks down the isolation experienced by many people impacted by sexual assault. This type of response should not sit within a ‘specialised area’, it should be the common response within any place within society to a person disclosing

their pain. We hope as we go forward the struggle our community has in improving their responses to sexual assault will reduce.

## Calls to the crisis line



### 25,827 Calls to the crisis line

Call patterns changed in this period with clients continuing to use text and email. Living within the current ever—changing environment means that people have adapted their help seeking behaviours so as to reach out for support as necessary—reduce the state of crisis. If there is not space to make a phone call many people are left with email and text. The very fact that a text message alone has reached a safe place connects people to hope and breaks down the isolation they are feeling. Whilst counselling cannot be done by text, reaching a safe place is important and can sometimes mean the difference between life and death, or be the reason someone leaves their house and participates in their day. A crisis response is not as well understood as counselling, as there is less written and researched about this type of work. When this is compounded by limited understanding of the impacts of sexual assault, it can mean there are many more.







# community engagement

## Community Engagement Program

Community Engagement largely has remained online across the year aside from the work inside schools by both the crisis and counselling teams and Nguru. Sessions continued with DFAT and the ANU in online meetings. This always poses a challenge in different forums as many of the interpersonal non-verbal queues we rely on are not available to us in the same way.

## Donations, community support and thanks

CRCC is the amazing service today because of the support of the community and government both locally and nationally. There is great ownership over CRCC by those living and working in the ACT. This year we were privileged to receive a record number of donations from the Canberra population.

These donations have assisted with individual brokerage for clients in need in very diverse ways. Donations have assisted with the Nguru program, SAMSSA clients experiencing homelessness and supported current program development to be delivered in schools. This year we received 40,701 in donations from the Canberra Community. We will be able to continue to support clients through the use of these funds.

## Local and national relationships

CRCC operates so successfully because of the relationships built both locally and nationally. CRCC has continued to represent the needs of those impacted by sexual violence within a range of government and non-government initiatives.

These include:

- Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (Prevention and Response Groups)
- Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Steering Group
- Family Violence Intervention Program. Working group governing the mechanics of system responses to family violence
- Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW)
- Health Steering Group
- Children Youth Protection Services
- Wraparound. Oversees the system response and case tracking of victims of sexual assault
- Domestic Abuse Program (DAP). Program for men in the community perpetrating violence within intimate partnerships.
- NASASV National Board

We also thank our closest stakeholders for their support and assistance throughout the year, including Beryl Women's Inc, SACAT Police, FAMSAC Staff and CaHRU medical practitioners, Victims Support ACT, Office for Disability and Women's Health Matters.

# Organisational strengthening

**C**RCC struggled this year with a higher rate of Staff turnover, than any previous year. When restrictions lifted, Staff moved. This turnover was largely due to the impacts of Covid-19. It is very difficult to work in trauma when the world is impacted by trauma in such a significant way.

Going into 2022 there will be a stronger focus on stabilizing the CRCC team to ensure high quality services to the Community.

## Professional training and development

Training/conference	Provider
Diploma of Counselling	Australian Institute of Professional Counsellors
Essentials of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy	Beck Institute x2
Inner Fitness Wholistic Counselling	EPSI
Certificate IV Indigenous Leader	AILC
DBT Online	Psychwire
DBT Online	Psychwire
ACT Therapy Beginners	Psychwire
Complex Trauma Cert 1 and 2	PESI
Dog Psychology Behaviour and Training	The Career Academy

## Staff members comings & goings

We welcomed ...	Current staff	We farewelled ...
Gabby Paleaee	Megan Andrews	Chloe Hulse
Eshra McCulloch	Keira Jebb	Jess Lewis
Lizzie Waddell	Theodora Volti	Leslea Eather
Idit Ziv	Savannah Ruppert	Emma Sait
Bec Hyland	Lea Collins	Natalie Gamble
Abigail Cherian	Nikita Sharma	Sandra Ngo
Chloe Hulse	Ray Simpson	Grant McKay
Maddi Aldridge	Summer McGinty	Chloe Hulse
Sam Leicht	Bridie Clifford-Liesegang	Phoenix Contis
Julia Enriquez	Chrystina Stanford	
	Penny Pestano	
	Zara Trinity	
	Kathryn Cripps	
	Judith Clark	
	Lauren Clarke	
	Melissa Wightman	
	Kayla Greenstein	
	Paula McGrady-Swan	
	Wayne Sloane	
	Regan Knight	
	Minnie Khera	





The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) is a non-government, not for profit, feminist organisation working to eliminate sexual violence against women, young people, children, families and men.

[www.crcc.org.au](http://www.crcc.org.au)