



Canberra Rape Crisis Centre  
Annual Report 2021-22

12,631 Canberrans accessed the Centre in this period



### 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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# at a glance

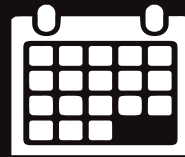


12,631 people accessed CRCC



12-15 years

are the largest group accessing CRCC



5,727

counselling sessions provided



533

call-outs



23,525

calls to the crisis line



## mission

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

## values

Respect,  
Collaboration,  
Empowerment,  
Innovation

## organisational chart



# 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  |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Services to survivors and their supports seeking assistance for sexual assault and child sexual abuse, whether the trauma has been recent or historical.</li> <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

It seems that the intense difficulties coming out of the bushfire and Covid years are starting to settle down. The Board is proud to report that Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) has successfully weathered those storms, due only to the concentrated and strenuous focus of management and to the dedicated and hardworking staff.

Across those years CRCC carried additional management responsibilities for staff and for the additional risks to clients brought about by lockdowns and illness, often causing close and unbroken contact with perpetrators. Covid-19 procedures and requirements were followed and adapted as they evolved, maintaining staff safety and client care.

We appreciate that the difficulties of these years have been cumulative and would like to acknowledge the CEO who consistently and persistently adapted her own personal responsibilities, ensuring that CRCC was able to continue standing guard for vulnerable clients.

CRCC continues to maintain very high standards, which could not have happened without the commitment of staff and their cooperation

with management through some difficult but necessary adjustments, across what we hope has been the final year of Covid intensity.

We had one new Board member join us this year. Melinda Tarrant has worked as a financial services senior executive and business leader, contributing to strategy development and driving business results. She has contributed to several other Boards and not for profits in both Director and management roles. She recently retired and is transitioning to Canberra where she is keen to be an active volunteer supporting the local community.

Once again it has been a privilege to work with the focused, intelligent and committed women who make up the Board. They all have busy lives with many and varied commitments, they volunteer their time and 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 will reluctantly farewell Juliet Moody and Carolyn Brassil who have increasing family responsibilities and a greater



workload in their other roles. Juliet's pragmatic and thoughtful input will be missed, along with pop up visits from her other persona, the comedian, providing much needed relief when least expected. Carolyn has been an incredible Secretary managing to round us up where necessary and we will miss her gentle nature.

We will also be welcoming three new Board members at the AGM and they are looking forward to supporting the work of CRCC. They are Greg Aldridge who has been approved by the Board as a community sector representative for a period of 12 months, Deborah Inge, a very experienced family and child psychologist and Katherine Hayes, a well-respected financial adviser.

For my part, I will conclude my four-year term as Chair at the AGM and will be leaving the Board. I have been enriched by my experience as an ordinary member of the Board and then as Chair. I have learnt so much about the goodness and decency of people, which may seem odd given the nature of the work CRCC does. However, it is just such work which brings the best of people to the fore.

I have had a front row seat, observing the endurance of management and the commitment of staff in working to surround and protect the most vulnerable. I have had the privilege to meet and work with so many women who have joined the Board and given of their valuable time and energy for the same cause. Good people are remarkable people and my experience with CRCC has blessed me with a much-improved hope for our community.

The Board is energised and ready for the new year. They remain committed to ensuring that

the standards delivered by CRCC and its Staff are well supported and are looking forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that clients and the community receive the very best response possible in services.

**Lessli Strong**  
**CRCC Board Chair**



## crcc board

|                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Chair</b>        | Lessli Strong   |
| <b>Deputy Chair</b> | Rossana Carr    |
| <b>Treasurer</b>    | Valerie Papin   |
| <b>Secretary</b>    | Carolyn Brassil |
| <b>Members</b>      | Juliet Moody    |
|                     | Melinda Tarrant |

### 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

### 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 recognised for her work in violence prevention in the community as a finalist in the 2018 ACT Australian of the Year Awards.



### **Valerie Papin**

Valerie is an Executive Director in the Digital and Technology Practice at Synergy, where she works on major projects, data intelligence and business process improvement within the Australian Public Service. 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 not-for-profit organisations.

### **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 4 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 8 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.

### **Melinda Tarrant**

Melinda has worked as a financial services senior executive and business leader, contributing to strategy development and driving business results. She has a Bachelor of Commerce (UNSW). She has served on the Board of Bicycle NSW since 2014 to create a better environment for bicycle riders and currently holds the role of President. She has contributed to several other Boards and not for profits in both Director and management roles. She recently retired and is transitioning to Canberra where she is keen to be an active volunteer supporting the local community. Melinda joined the Board in February 2022.



# chief executive officer's report

**2**022 Wow what a year! 2022 was a year of getting through all of the complexities raised in the previous years. I have been impressed with the commitment of all of the Staff. Thank you to all of you for trying so hard to put CRCC back together after the trials and hardships of the last few years. We are more consolidated as an Organization and this consolidation assists us to go forward into a healthy future.

Sexual Violence continues to dominate the headlines and we watch on in horror as lives are rocked by the insanity of our systems. These are times where the risk is that there is less access to justice than the small amount there was before the headlines. One thing we are all united on is the importance of our messages of belief and care—and also the need to build a better path for all those impacted by sexual violence in all its forms.

Sexual Violence continues to be the biggest challenge for governments, systems, communities and groups. This is evident in our headlines and division inherent in issues that are harder for us as people to respond to. We often consider at CRCC that if the issue of sexual violence is “too much for people” to see or hear about—how hard it is for those impacted directly by sexual violence. They do not get a choice about how they feel, the

impacts of their trauma or the path before them in the aftermath of what has happened in their lives. This is the reason we stay strong in our work towards a better way.

12 months on, as part of our work with the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) we have developed a set of standards for responding to child sexual assault to build on the general set of standards we developed the previous year. This continues our drive to assist those embarking on a career in this field of trauma.

We continue our work with the Aboriginal Community to support the direction they are leading us in. We have been privileged to have Paula McGrady back at CRCC fulltime to assist with this focus.

We are 12 months on from a greater focus within CRCC on the importance of Staff support in our everchanging world landscape. The newly planned HR role has helped us navigate this focus.

We continue to take the challenges of the community members who need our services to the places their words need to be taken locally, nationally and internationally. Advocacy remains

a crucial part of the services we provide to people of the ACT—because it is still necessary. We thank those involved in our funding- we cannot do any of the great things we do for our community without your support.

This year we said goodbye to some Staff and we particularly wanted to acknowledge Savannah Rupert as she goes off on different adventures. Savannah you will be greatly missed and I know I speak for everyone when I thank you for all your hard work and wish you all the best for your next chapter. We won't say goodbye to you though as we might see you again someday soon.

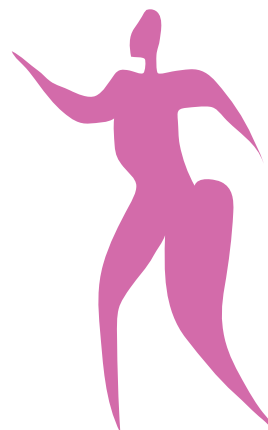
We also say goodbye to some Board members, Juliet Moody, Carolyn Brassil and Lessli Strong—and thank you for everything you have contributed to keep CRCC going in the right direction. Lessli we particularly want to say thank you to you. Your leadership, humour, heart and sheer determination to see CRCC thrive against all odds is deeply admired by those of us looking on. We all thank you for everything you have given to us and CRCC and know your support has helped us manage our tasks too. We are always stronger when we are supported by strong people.

We wish to thank those who need us, for trusting us with your stories and for allowing us to help and keep your dignity in tact

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



## treasurer's report



| Who                            | \$           | Program     |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Medibank                       | 293,379.21   | 1800RESPECT |
| Australian Sports Commission   | 111,036.97   | ASC         |
| Community Services Directorate | 13,415.52    | Disability  |
| Community Services Directorate | 162,692.80   | Nguru       |
| Community Services Directorate | 200,167.93   | SAMSSA      |
| Community Services Directorate | 2,153,823.95 | Sched 2A    |
| CSP, CSD                       | 162,005.00   | SAMSSA      |

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

2021-2022 has shown continued demand on the Service, especially following the COVID lockdown and restrictions. New funding has also become available because of these difficult times and also, following other unfortunate events which increased the spotlight on sexual assault and consent.

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, some new operational costs were incurred and more are planned for

the coming year as CRCC realigns its internal processes and systems for team members. CRCC will continue to ensure as much funding as possible is deployed to the crisis services as it continues on 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 Papin**

CRCC Board Treasurer

## coordinators reports



### Programs

I would like to thank all the staff at CRCC for their support, commitment and courage for the work we do. Their amazing contribution to CRCC has given me the opportunity to take on the role of Program coordinator and I could not have done this without their support. I came into the role of Program Coordinator in the beginning of March 2022 and it has been a rewarding and challenging experience and I look forward with excitement to see what the next year holds.

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

SAMSSA continues to provide counselling support and Advocacy to the ACT regions men, their supporters and families and have been providing this support since 1997. It can be difficult for men to reach out for support due to the cultural expectations of manhood that men experience.

Often the fear of ridicule and sense of shame has prevented men from seeking support. Over the years we have seen an increase in men and their families seeking out support and SAMSSA continues its valuable work in this area.

### Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC)

During the covid 19 pandemic and the numerous lockdowns outreach services to the AMC have been a challenge. More recently CRCC has been able to resume our Advocacy and support services out to the AMC. CRCC staff are undertaking training to better support them in the work CRCC does at the AMC. We look forward to providing more Advocacy and support to survivors in this space and expect an increase in the uptake of CRCC services in the coming year.

### Aging persons

CRCC has been focused on reducing barriers of accessing sexual assault services for older persons in our community. Older persons can experience numerous difficulties in accessing crisis support and advocacy. CRCC is working towards reducing these barriers for older persons who live at home or in institutional care facilities. With the aim to improve access to CRCC services through systemic and individualised advocacy, outreach, crisis telephone support, to support survivors, their supporters and their caregivers. CRCC has been collaborating with

OPAN, Celebrate Aging and the Older Womens network NSW to work towards our shared goal in this space.

### Disabilities

CRCC continues it's work towards eliminating sexual violence. Women in the disability community experience much higher rates of sexual violence than those without a disability.

CRCC continues working towards breaking down the barriers faced by the Disabilities community in accessing Justice and support. Through Advocacy and working with other community stakeholders to address the barriers faced. Shamefully the prevalence rates of sexual violence in the Disability community remain high. CRCC remains committed to continuing our crucial work in this area.

**Summer McGinty**  
Program Coordinator

### 1800 Respect

Throughout the 12 month period, CRCC had an agreement with Medibank to participate on the National Sexual, Domestic, & Family Crisis line, 1800Respect. CRCC allowed the National Crisis line to have the presence and expertise of a Sexual Assault Service to better support those who are currently experiencing or have a history of sexual violence. On July 1, 2022, Medibank handed over 1800Respect to Telstra Health. CRCC is currently in contact with Telstra Health, however no word has been given if an agreement will be in place for CRCC as of yet due to the limited services having a presence on the line for this tenure.

### Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS)

CRCC is currently providing education and information at the CYPS office for families or anyone who has questions regarding services and how to receive support by CRCC. CRCC staff visit the CYPS office every other Tuesday from 1pm-5pm. There were a total of 16 CYPS reports made by staff throughout the year. CRCC strives to support families within the CYPS system and continue to maintain a strong relationship with the service. CRCC and CYPS are discussing new and better ways to provide service to those who visit the CYPS office.





## Australian National University (ANU)

CRCC is currently working with ANU's Respect for Relationships and ANU counselling service along with a case manager on site for reports of SA on the ANU campus. CRCC is also supporting students and staff who have experienced SA and desire education about it. There are currently events by ANU that receive support from CRCC whether to provide information, education, or a presence at events to continue to show the unity among both organisations and strengthen their relationship. ANU and CRCC will continue to have an ongoing relationship to collaborate on various projects and ideas for future events.

## Title for WHS here then (WHS)

CRCC is committed to maintaining a hygienic and effectively safe environment for both staff and clients. WHS meetings are being attended by six WHS representatives from each hub within CRCC. The WHS committee currently meets every three months to present issues, discuss, explore, and problem solve issues that need to be addressed from each area. WHS coordinator takes in concerns and questions from staff in between meetings in addition to proactively handling any WHS issues that arise. WHS have registered courses to further their knowledge and skills to better serve in their roles.

## Reclaim The Night (RTN)

CRCC is hosting RTN this year on Parliament House Lawns. RTN is a peaceful global event that raise awareness of sexual violence and supports victim-survivors to have the right to feel safe in public spaces. CRCC has advertised on various social media platforms, media outlets, clubs, community organisations, and on buses during this time. RTN planning meetings are held 1-2 times a month or more in the months leading up to the event. RTN merchandise such as shirts and beanies are sold online and at RTN.

RTN coordinator has to delegate roles, tasks, and responsibilities for staff who willingly participate in RTN. Public land use documents, Stage setup, Risk management, Waste management, advertising, social media, speakers, and performances are divided into groups and tasks are delegated among them by the coordinator.

The coordinator keeps track of the budget allowance, purchasing supplies, contact with contractors and upkeep of documents that need to be uploaded into the RTN folder throughout the planning process and upon conclusion of the event.

### Abigail Cherian

Program Coordinator





## Speech from the CRCC CEO at Reclaim the night

CRCC has a message to all those impacted by sexual violence and those who care for you.

Working in the field of sexual assault we are tough; we don't tolerate fools. Why would we... but we certainly know of suffering.

Sometimes it is suffering through fatigue, our own pain of past or present, sometimes it is suffering of our own making for what we are not saying or cannot say.

We are the keepers and the carriers of your painful secrets especially for the many who have left us, are with us or who have come before us. We will always protect your stories because it is our honour to hold them. Our honour, you have trusted us with them.

We are with you when your heart breaks the first time you try and tell, we know there will be many times across your life you will seek the words and many many times you have already tried to say.

We are with you when you try to speak of the harm, at the hands of those who claimed to love you or care for you, and as you question your own truth.

We are with you in the tears of a child, a young person's rage, a father's anger, a mother's heartbreak, partners horror or friends outrage and communities overwhelmed. we hold your terror as you fear we will not believe you.

We are with you with police or hospitals as you try and speak about who hurt you. And with you through to the war of the privileged that protects the human rights of the powerful. We are with you in this impossibility.

We are with you and beside you in the drive for better policy, practice and understanding, for funding and the fight to keep you seen.

We are with you to write plans for the future. Plans that mean this hurt will be less or no more.

We join with governments, workplaces, schools. We join with great academics to find a path for you and make it better for those of our future your future.

We are not afraid of the shame that should be theirs, the flashes and the nightmares. We are not afraid of your grief and sadness and loss. We are not afraid to speak with you-and for you when you ask.

We see you, your age, ability, cultural identity, cultural difference, group, sexuality, identity and vulnerability. We know you are women, children, young people and men.

We know sometimes you wear uniforms, are teachers, counselors, government officials, soldiers, defence personnel, ministers, performers.

We know sometimes you are homeless, alone, medicated, misdiagnosed, incarcerated, separated, misunderstood in our community. We know you walk amongst us and beside us in our fight.

We are with you each time someone fails to simply say they believe you and they are sorry- so you are not alone. We hold your hope, hate, harm and great humanity.

We dream of your victories against the monsters...it is your gift to us. When you need us know we are here.

We never forget all you have shown us. Your words, your stories, your dignity, tears and sometimes your passing...

Thank you for the privilege of hearing you. Never doubt our belief in you and what you say. As you fight for you so will we. If you don't give up nor will we. This is our fight together and you are worth every moment.

We are with you when you stumble, feel alone but cannot cry.

We are with you to tend to your wounds and to help you find another way.

We are with you when you feel you are failing or falling, so you are never alone.

Now as we walk- we walk in honour of you...

**Chrystina Stanford**



## Counselling services & support

Counselling services are provided to women, young people, children, families and men who have been affected by sexual assault. In this reporting period we started to recover from the uncertainty and isolation covid brought to the vulnerable members of our community. In those times we offered telehealth even if we realised it was not the same as before. As things are getting back to normal, face to face sessions have been resumed. Over the past 12 months we have provided 5,727 client counselling sessions, which is higher than previous years.

Our counsellors have been working hard to meet the needs of our diverse community in terms of age, gender, culture and developmental needs.

A high number of support letters have been provided to clients to assist clients with financial assistance, housing, deferred university courses and work certificates.

Despite high rates of gendered violence among youth, very few young women used to report these incidents to authority figures. We see now more and more women coming forward to report sexual violence and get support and counselling. It is overtly satisfying to see the young women taking life into their own hands and put the blame where it belongs. 30% of our clients for the last 12 months belong to this category.

Although CRCC has been working collaboratively with other systems and government agencies for many years to meet the needs of the community we have on average 10 new clients every week who have never reached out before.

### **Theodora Volti**

Face to Face counselling services and support letters



## Crisis & community Engagement

The CRCC crisis team has done an amazing job over the year of 2021–22. Even when challenges presented, the team were always able to put client welfare and wellbeing at the forefront. We welcomed a lot of new faces and the existing team was quick to assist them in their learning and development, which has seen new staff members turn into great assets to the crisis team. We are very grateful for the hard-work of the crisis team and all of the counsellors who help out!

This year we have seen a soaring number of requests from SACAT to support and advocate for survivors. We had a total of 533 call outs were booked. We have heard from clients of the service, their gratitude and appreciation of the support provided by CRCC staff members. We are interested to see how changes to the law around affirmative consent influence the work that CRCC does, and the way in which clients experience the criminal justice system.

The crisis line itself has had its peaks and troughs in terms of busyness, with some periods of time being significantly busier than other periods as 23,525 contacts were made to the crisis area. As always, as to the reason behind this can be anyone's guess, but the team has always been ready to act effectively and efficiently to support the clients of the service in a trauma-informed, caring and empathetic manner. The quieter times have allowed team members to assist in completing other roles around CRCC and allowing for completion of professional development.

I am incredibly proud of the work that CRCC does in terms of providing crisis services to our clients, and that comes from having an incredible team working on our crisis line. It has been an honour coordinating this aspect of the service and I have no doubt that CRCC crisis services will continue to support those impacted by sexual violence in the best way possible.

### **Savannah Ruppert**

Crisis and Community Engagement



# Community Engagement

## Community Engagement Program (CEP)

This year we launched our Consent presentation in High Schools and Colleges around the ACT.

This was inspired by our recognition of the importance of education as a preventative measure, as well as an opportunity to connect into school-aged teenagers who may be needing support following a sexual assault. Through the work of Advocates around Australia we have seen education reform that calls for mandatory, informative consent education in schools. We have seen schools be a bit slow on the up-take of this offer, but we are hopeful for what this new year may bring in this area.

The presentation itself has some seen really great impacts, including comments by students such as “[I learnt that] It wasn’t my fault”, “I learnt that rape is wrong and you always need consent”, and “never your fault”.

This year saw us presenting to DFAT on a monthly basis, as always garnering very good response and feedback from the team in charge of training at DFAT. We also did presentations to LegalAid, The Canberra Hospital, UC and police officers learning how to interview vulnerable witnesses. We are excited to see where the Community Engagement Portfolio can go for 2022–23, with some plans in the works to expand this portfolio and reach more of the community.



## Services position

CRCC 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.

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.

A total of 12,631 Canberrans accessed the Canberra Rape Crisis Service in the 2021-22 period. Young people aged from 12-25 remain our largest group accessing crisis services.





## 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 supporting those who needed to report sexual assault in the ACT but had nowhere to stay across this time. We have also directed resources to fund our work on Prevention in schools with what has been contributed from our community.

## 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:

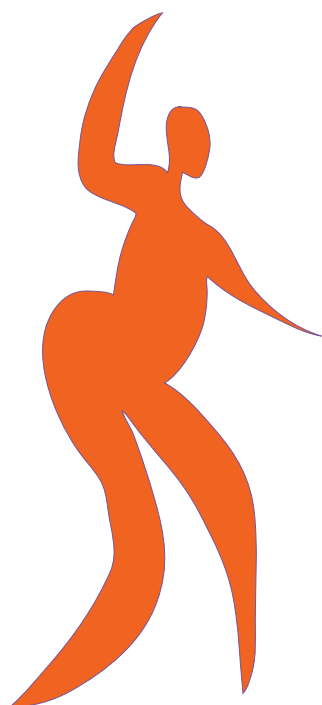
- Family Violence Intervention Program. Working group governing the mechanics of system responses to family violence
- Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW)
- Military Sexual Violence—nationally and internationally
- Wraparound. Oversees the system response and case tracking of victims of sexual assault
- 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, Office for Family Safety, Victims Support ACT, Office for Disability and Women's Health Matters.



# Organisational strengthening

The change within CRCC Staff has settled on the previous two years and we thank the current Staff for all their efforts.



## Comings & goings

### Current staff

Abigail Cherian  
 Amal Adan  
 Bec Hyland  
 Catherine Elrick  
 Chrystina Stanford  
 Courtney Radanovich  
 Eleanor Borgelt  
 Eshra McCulloch  
 Gurjeet Sandhu  
 Kathryn Cripps  
 Keira Jebb  
 Lauren Clarke  
 Lea Collins  
 Lizzie Waddell  
 Maddi Aldridge  
 Meagan Forward  
 Nida Ajmal  
 Nikita Sharma  
 Paula McGrady-Swan  
 Regan Knight  
 Savannah Ruppert  
 Summer McGinty  
 Theodora Volti  
 Zara Trinity

### We farewelled ...

Bridie Clifford-Liesegang  
 Chloe Hulse  
 Gabby Paleaee  
 Idit Ziv  
 Judith Clark  
 Julia Enriquez  
 Megan Andrews  
 Penny Pestano  
 Ray Simpson  
 Sam Leicht  
 Wayne Sloane

## Professional training and development

| Training/conference                                     | Provider   |
|---|--|
| Bereavement by Suicide Webinar                          | The Grief Centre                                     |
| NITES Indigenous Leadership Course                      | National Indigenous Training<br>Employment Solutions |
| DBT Skills  | Psychwire  |
| The Many Voices of Polyvagal Theory                     | The Polyvagal Institute                              |
| ACS Online Training Course for Professional Supervision | ACS Distance Education                               |
| Bullying & Harassment                                   | TCP Training   |
| CE Points for ACT for Beginners                         | Psychwire  |
| Schema Therapy Standard workshop                        | University of Western Australia                      |
| Cognitive Processing Therapy Training                   | CPT Training   |







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)