

# ANNUAL REPORT



**THE** GENDER  
CENTRE  
**INC**

NOT  
PASSING  
BEING

**2016-2017**

## Our Patron



### **Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO**

Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO served as Governor of New South Wales from 1 March 2001 to 1 October 2014 and was the first woman to be appointed to the role. Born in Narrandera in the Riverina district of New South Wales, and educated at the Narrandera Public School and Sydney Girls High School, Marie Bashir completed a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Sydney in 1956.

Professor Bashir taught at the Universities of Sydney and NSW, increasingly working with children's services, psychiatry and mental health services, and Indigenous health programs. At the time of her appointment as Governor of New South Wales, she was Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Sydney; Area Director of Mental Health Services Central Sydney; and Senior Consultant to the Aboriginal Medical Service, Redfern and to the Aboriginal Medical Service, Kempsey. She was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1988 for her services to child and adolescent health, and was invested by Her Majesty, the Queen, with the insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order (CVO) in 2006.

In June 2014, Professor Bashir was named as a Dame of the Order of Australia for extraordinary and pre-eminent achievement and merit in service to the administration, public life, and people of New South Wales, to medicine, particularly as an advocate for improved mental health outcomes for the young, marginalised and disadvantaged, to international relations, through the promotion of collaborative health programs, and as a leader in tertiary education.

We believe her long and brilliant experience with young people and those marginalized by society will prove to be significant factors in her patronage of the Gender Centre.

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## **The Gender Centre**

*The Gender Centre has been providing services to the transgender and gender diverse communities of NSW for over thirty years.*

*We are committed to providing services that build the capacity of the transgender and gender diverse communities of NSW to make informed choices through the provision of a wide range of services, activities, information and resources.*

*Our mission is to operate within a social justice context where equity and diversity are embraced and strength based practice is applied.*

*The Gender Centre is a Specialist Homelessness and Health related service providing supported transitional housing and health related services to the transgender and gender diverse communities of NSW.*

## **Our Vision**

*A world that is inclusive and accepting of an empowered transgender and gender diverse person*

## **Our Mission**

*To lead the way in the delivery of innovative and empowering services to the transgender and gender diverse communities*

## **Our Principals**

*To provide confidential, client centred services and promote a holistic, integrated and strength based approach to service provision for the transgender and gender diverse community.*

*We operate within a strong transparent and accountable governance framework consistent with its Constitution, Vision Statement, Code of Conduct, Policies and Procedures and Service Agreements*



## The Services We Provide

- Counselling (including drug and alcohol counselling service);
- Outreach (including night outreach, court, cell and gaol outreach);
- Crisis accommodation program;
- Transitional accommodation program;
- Homelessness prevention and early-intervention program;
- Tenancy support program;
- Case management (including to residents, community clients and inmates)
- Aged and ageing support care services;
- Resource development service (library, kits and fact sheets, magazine, website);
- Transgender Anti-Violence reporting project;
- Training and support for clients, service providers, partners and loved ones;
- Social events and workshops;
- Advocacy service
- Youth & Family services
- School support services
- Rural & Regional support services
- Greater Western Sydney support services
- Policy development
- Support groups for men, women, youth, seniors and parents
- Safe Space Project.



## 1.0 President's Report 2016-2017

*“A world that is inclusive and accepting of an empowered transgender and gender diverse person.”*

*This is my last year as president of The Gender Centre. A position I have been extremely honoured to have held. Looking back on my time as president reminds me what an amazing experience it has been and what incredible things have occurred.*

*The constant commitment and dedication from the staff and volunteers of the service to gain more support, more funding and more equity for the clients and community continues to humble me.*

*This year has seen some wonderful achievements and a few losses for The Gender Centre. The Website got a much-needed overhaul and hopefully allows even more people access to quality information and support.*

*The Gender Centre had a strong presence at Mardi Gras this year. The parents group marched in the Maris Gras parade. Their proud and inspiring celebration of love and acceptance for their children and families again raised awareness and empowerment for themselves, their loved ones and also for the centre.*

*The Gender Centre's stall at Fair Day won the Mardi Gras award for the best community stall. Many people visited the stall, had their photo taken, spoke to staff and volunteers and got to experience firsthand how much strength there is in the community.*



*Unfortunately this year also saw the over 55s project coming to an end. Not that there are suddenly less over 55 transgender people requiring assistance as they navigate the health care system and the joys of ageing, because of course there are.*

*The funding ended and despite the huge efforts from the staff and manager of the service, further funding could not be obtained to continue this much-needed project.*

*The loss of this project and of Laurel Walter and Laura Wright was a huge blow to The Gender Centre. I would like to thank Laurel and Laura for their commitment to the centre and the clients. The loss of this service means The Gender Centre can no longer provide the support and assistance to these people at the level we would like; that they deserve.*

*The Gender Centre continues to strive towards the goal of acceptance, inclusion and empowerment for transgender and gender diverse people. Locally and within the community, with families and friends this goal is still the focus.*

*That's how we feel, but media and global politics would have us believe otherwise. This last year has also seen some ignorant, divisive and dangerous changes towards transgender people.*

*I like to think that politics is like the law of physics. In physics when there has been a swing one way there has to be a swing back in the other direction. For a few years there were some great gains for the community. Currently we are having one big swing backwards. I would like to believe that soon the momentum and energy will have built up enough to propel us further forward than we could have ever dreamed.*

*Saying that does not mean what has occurred is OK. There have been some ugly and dangerous views expressed and policies made. We should never sit back and accept unjust treatment. Equity, equality, just being treated like a human being is something, that unfortunately, is still not understood by all.*

*But I refuse to allow these people to taint the fact that they, their little bit of power and their negative words shall soon pass. Transgender and gender diverse people shall flourish. Community, strength, passion, intelligence, love and humour will always win in the long run.*

*Finally I would like to say thank you. Thank you to the government departments that continue to fund us. Thank you to the staff and management of The Gender Centre. Thank you to the volunteers. Especially thank you to the clients and community who support the service. Together we can. Together we do. Together we win.*

*Maggie Smith  
President*

## 2.0 Executive Directors Report

The Gender Centre is a frontline service provider and organisation that works tirelessly to improve the lives of the transgender community of NSW. We have now been in operation for 34 years and offer essential support programs across the spectrum of the community. From children to the over 55s, from crisis and transitional accommodation in the inner city of Sydney to counselling in rural and remote areas, as well as helping trans people in gaols and advising employers and schools on how best to support transgender employees and students. Our programs are comprehensive and essential.

Our services, programs and projects have a direct impact on improving the lives of some of NSW's most disadvantaged marginalised and at-risk client group; men women and youth.

**The Gender Centre has a policy of 'no wrong door' and as such we do not turn any client away from accessing our support services in one way or another.**

Our client-centred ethos means we work as hard as we can to meet the needs of each individual client. The Gender Centre however is at a critical moment in its history.

A surge in our client numbers over the past few years reflects the efficiency and effectiveness of the centre's programs and services. However increased client numbers have not been matched with increased funding.

The Gender Centre is a vital service, and we continue to work hard to provide our clients with the critically important help they need. We make sure that our funding goes a long way.

During 2016-2017 the Gender Centre provided over **23,086** occasions of service provision to **2481** individuals identifying as either transgender, gender diverse, or gender questioning.

During the 2016-2017 financial year there has been an increase in demand for counselling services for young people under the age of 16 years, for families as a whole or parents independent of their children.

This demand for ongoing support for young people and families is still an unmet need that we are trying to address.

Every year we report on the increase in demand for services for young transgender children and their families. This past 12 months has seen this demand increase more dramatically than ever before.

The demand has shifted from just general questions and basic information to advocacy, peer support initiatives, and pathways for referrals for psychological and counselling support. Parents with children who identify as transgender or are gender questioning are now coming to the center seeking specialized support so they can successfully remain connected with and to support their children in navigating the complexities of gender .

This has been achieved through supportive wrap around case plans for the family unit and at times individual family members, as well as supporting families to navigate the health care system and find appropriate referral points for medical and paramedical support which is an integral part of our service delivery for this cohort. Over the past twelve months the service supported well over **128 families** across NSW providing support resources, referrals and school support.

Catholic and denominational schools continued to access the Centre to support their students in transition while still remaining in the school environment. While providing support and supervision to teachers and school principals this year the centre supported and worked with **36** schools across NSW including schools in the Mudgee and Hunter regions a supportive environment in schools can have a lasting impact on both the educational and lifelong outcomes for our transgender students.

The feedback from families has been that the support offered by the Centre has helped them safely navigate the complexity of understanding their child's diversity and feeling equipped to keep their child secure, healthy and safe.



The other demand placed upon the service which is increasing, is that of the need for support to young transgender people living in out of home care, who are under the care of the minister.

This year the centre continued to provided support to work colleagues, employers, government and non-government departments, health professionals and health departments across the state. This is essential education and advocacy work that impacts not just our clients, their family, friends and workplaces, but also the wider community. We ALL benefit when our most vulnerable and marginalised community members are cared for and supported; the centre does exactly that.

Again the Gender Centre's goals and projects were achieved and again the Centre exceeded all aspects of our funding agreements and obligations. While maintaining our normal services the Gender Centre has also:

- established and maintained strong and positive relationships with a wide range of agencies and service providers in rural and regional areas of NSW;
- continued to review the ways in which services are delivered to ensure the relevance of the programs and publications to our community;
- continued to advocate on behalf of the community across a wide range of issues with a special emphasis on issues facing transgender and gender diverse people in the health care system;
- responded to family and youth issues through the provision of early intervention support;
- continued to promote the issue of equity in employment for transgender and gender diverse people particularly with the NSW Public and Private Sectors;
- continued to promote policy development in external agencies with regard to transgender access and equity;
- continued to update our range of resources and policies;
- continued to provide placements for students and engage in onsite training at both TAFE and universities;
- worked closely with the Board of Directors and through Polare magazine to ensure every opportunity for community input;
- conducted numerous training sessions for both NGO's and government organisations as well as training in the corporate and private sectors;
- continued to overhauled the Centre's processes, including the redesign of standard forms and documents which is all part of the Gender Centre's ongoing Continuous Quality Improvements;
- reviewed all client data collection systems; and
- continued to monitor and improve service delivery with the implementation of quality management services to ensure ongoing quality improvement in the provision of all services provided by the Centre.

As always the agency collects a comprehensive range of data across all aspects of service delivery from clients entering the Gender Centre for counselling, case-management, groups, community awareness, workshops, courses, information sessions employment training, outreach and so on.

This data is collected every day and at the end, of each session. The data is then compiled on our data base system this, data is used to inform the direction of service provision and determine outcomes for clients.

This data covers all clients who have a relationship with the agency where service provision has a bearing on ensuring their health & welfare needs are met and therefore include early intervention and post crisis support

## Client Statistics

All visitors entering the Gender Centre are entered onto our database, which enables us to accurately reflect the number of episodes of service provision delivered to each client accessing the service for support.

Between July 2016 and June 2017 the Gender Centre provided over 23,086 occasions of service provision provided to 2481 individual transgender gender diverse gender questioning people and their family members and work colleagues .

### **During the 2016-2017 financial year the Gender Centre provided services to:**

- Counselling clients;
- Outreach client;
- Community clients
- Residential clients; through our Specialist Homelessness Services
- Over 55s group;
- FTM Connect group;
- Transtopia youth group;
- Metro parents group;
- Young Women's group;
- Women's group;
- Wollongong parents group
- Dubbo group
- Clients residing in gaol
- Queer Agenda group
- Schools
- School counsellors
- Employers
- Counsellors
- G P's



Training this year was provided to

- TAFE
- Mental Health units
- Accident and Emergency Department
- Universities
- Police Force of NSW
- Schools
- Anti-Discrimination Board

Events provided by the centre this year were

- Day of Remembrance
- Transgender Day of Visibility
- Mardi Gras Fair Day

### **Dubbo Sexual Health Clinic**

On site face to face services continued during the 2016-2017 financial year with Dubbo Sexual Health Clinic providing specialised outreach to transgender and gender diverse people in this region on a regular basis, Gender Centre staff fly in and conduct services with pre-arranged clients.

### **Residential & Community Clients**

The database for residential and community client services has been analysed from the Specialist Homelessness Client Information Management System and is as follows:

- Individual clients having recorded contact through our homelessness programs: 214
- Total recorded homelessness contacts made by The Gender Centre: 4255

## **3.0 Service Report**

### **3.1 Funding Bodies 2016-2017**

The Gender Centre would like to thank our funding bodies, the Department of Family and Community Services (Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) program), Sydney Local Area Health District for their ongoing financial support during the past year, and the Department of Social Services for the Over 55s Support program.

#### **NSW Department of Family & Community Services Funded Projects**

- Homelessness prevention and community awareness of homelessness;
- Early intervention homelessness support (i.e. case-management);
- Post crisis support;
- Supported homelessness accommodation; and
- Supported independent living (i.e. case-management).

#### **NSW Health /Sydney Local Health District Funded Projects**

- Supporting and providing services to clients experiencing gender and health related issues;
- Providing services that raise awareness of gender and health related issues;
- Maintaining a clear and accountable organisational structure;
- Service evaluation; and
- Maintaining links with other support organisations

#### **Department of Social Services Funded Projects**

- Developing links with mainstream aged care services
- Provision of appropriate and relevant entry and exit points to aged care support services
- Front line support to aging transgender clients

We look forward to continuing these partnerships to continue to enhance and improve service delivery to the transgender and gender diverse communities into the future.

## **One-Off Grants**

- Aurora
- Inner-west Council

## **3.2 Board of Directors**

The directors are constituted in the terms of the "Associations Incorporation Act 1984" and the organisation in general, including the director's functions as provided by the act and the regulations.

No service can function well without an effective and committed Board, and as Executive Director of the Gender Centre I look forward to many more years of committed and dedicated Board members assisting the service to function effectively.

Members of the Board during 2016-2017

Maggie Smith	Dr Col Eglinton	Rainer Jardin
Eva Karagiannis	Virginia Mackay	Caroline Bugg
Kimmi Eversson	Eloise Brook	Danielle Miller

## **3.3 Staff**

### **Staff**

Phinn Borg	Elizabeth Ceissman	Elias Christofi	Viola Leyshon
Louisa Roberto	Robert Knapman	Elan Zavelsky	Soda De
Candy Jacques	Nicola Williams	Anthony Carlino	Nicola Sloane
Ann Maree Sweeny	Birdie	Laurel Walter	Laura Wright
Katherine Cummings	Stacey Perkett		

### **Volunteers:**

Rachel Smith	Chelsea Champion	Alicia Abela	James Lyons
Eloise Brook			

### **Students**

Katherine Wolfgramme	Alicia Abela	Tessa Douglas
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### **Contractors**

Tim Kitto	Serena Cooray	Aquila Wolf Wild
Dave Harvey & Trent		

## **3.4 Staff Training & Development**

Staff have attended the following training, seminars and forums during 2016-2017:

- Domestic Violence and A.D.V.O.s –
- Clinical and Research Updates in Alzheimers and Fronto-Temporal Dementia
- 2<sup>nd</sup> National LGBTI Ageing and Aged care forum
- Case discussion complex trauma and co-occurring issues
- Principles in practice-Supporting Survivors of Complex Trauma
- Working Collaboratively to address the social and emotional wellbeing of older LGBTI people
- Case discussion Dissociative Identity

- *Mental Health practitioner Course*
- *Working together to support people who self-harm*
- *Working collaboratively to manage comorbid mental health and methamphetamine use*
- *Timely diagnosis of Dementia*
- *Working with Clients with Hepatitis C - Hepatitis NSW*
- *LGBTI Aging - Australian Association of Gerontology*
- *The Aged Rights Service Forum*
- *Living Well, Living Longer Seminar*
- *The Suicide Closet Workshop*
- *Fire Training*
- *Governance workshop*
- *Hoarding Workshop*
- *Mental Health Recovery Workshop*
- *Jung Society Workshop: Ageing;*
- *Planning Ahead Seminar;*
- *Client Information Management Systems*
- *Trauma-Informed Care for Caseworkers*
- *First Aid Course*
- *Mental Health First Aid*

*Clinical supervision is provided for all staff involved in client service delivery.*

*Staff training is conducted with the aim of strengthening staff skills in major areas of client service delivery and organisational development.*

### **3.5 Education & Training for Service Providers**

*The Gender Centre has continued to provide training to a broad range of services regarding a variety of issues relating to gender and to transgender and gender diverse persons.*

*The aims of the education packages are:*

- *To encourage service providers in all areas to work effectively with transgender and gender diverse clients, and provide support to employers in workplaces where a staff member is in transition.*
- *To encourage employers to uphold anti-discrimination legislation and employ transgender and gender diverse persons who present as the best person for a position.*
- *To encourage all organisations to treat all people, including transgender and gender diverse people, equitably.*
- *To support organisations to develop policy and procedures with the intent of affording transgender and gender diverse people equitable rights, opportunities and access.*

*The steady demand for education and training from the Gender Centre has served to reinforce the improved commitment of the wider community to become informed about transgender and gender diverse people.*

*The response from those attending the training has been overwhelmingly positive.*

During the 2016-2017 financial year training was provided to over 600 individuals through the corporate sector, specialist women's services, universities, and employers.

Gender Centre staff also spoke at the forums, conferences listed below and provided a "webinar" (a seminar conducted over the Internet) sessions.

### Education and Training Conducted by the Gender Centre

**Table 1:** Training provided and people attending during the 2016-2017 financial year.

Location	Attendees	Location	Attendees
Headspace Dubbo	5	Headspace Nowra	6
Annandale high school	24	Annandale OOSH	12
De identified employer	121	Coogee early childhood day care	10
James Meehan High school	28	Wyndham High School	40
Rozelle private medical practice	7	Truscott Street primary school	29
GROW rehabilitation program	9	Training at Cessnock: interagency day	30
Gladesville primary school	34	Pure aesthetics practice	4
Justice connect	18	Clinic 16 at Royal North Shore hospital	13
Legal aid conference	<b>90</b>	Heathcote OOSH	9
WHOS	<b>37</b>	Mosman Private hospital :	10
NSW police force	30	University Sydney Masters Students:	20

There were also three student placements in 2016-2017

## 3.6 Committees & Consultation

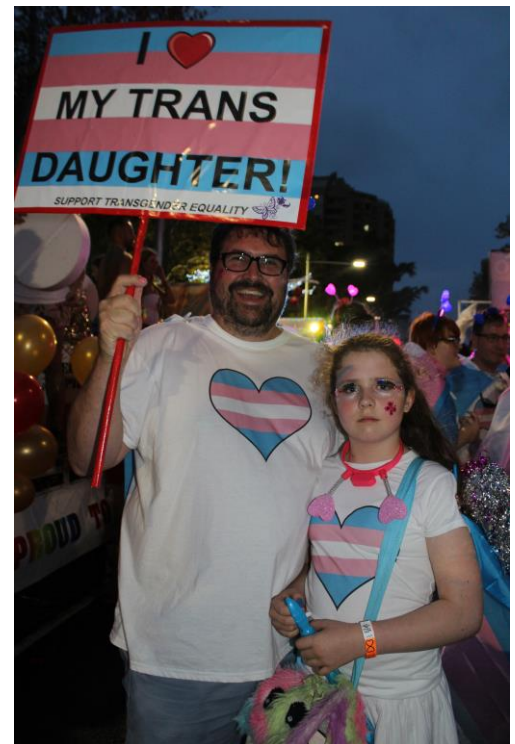
Staff have maintained their representation on or liaised with a number of committees, interagency groups and working parties that address issues of priority to the client group of the Gender Centre. These include:

- SHS Interagency meetings
- Safe Relationships Project meetings
- Consumer & Community Advisory Council (SLHD)
- Professional counsellors meetings
- Show-net meetings.
- Central & Eastern Sydney PHN Community Council Member
- Health Interagency
- DHIG: District Homelessness Itinerancy Group
- Premier's Priority on Reducing Youth Homelessness working group
- the NSW LGBTI Domestic and Family Violence Interagency
- Greater Sydney aging LGBTI interagency

### 3.7 Agency Networking

Staff at the Gender Centre have continued to network with a wide range of services over the 2016-2017 year. Some of these services include:

Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Sexual health, St Bede's Home South Hurstville  
Anglicare, Wise Employment, Marrickville, APM Employment Services Ingleburn  
Community Care Northern Beaches, SW Sutherland Hospital, SW ACAT South Care  
Department of Corrective Services, Westmead Children's Hospital  
Resource and Education Program for Injecting Drug Users (REPIDU)  
Taylor Square Medical Clinic, the Asylum Seeker Centre, NSW Department of Education & Training, Sex Workers' Outreach Project (SWOP), NSW Anti-Discrimination Board  
Youth Block, Catholic Care (ALIVE Program), NSW Department of Housing Burwood  
NSW Police Surry Hills, NSW Department of Housing Surry Hills, Taylor square medical centre, Dr Hespe Glebe Family Medical practice, Cerebral Palsy Association, Wentworth Housing, Hume Housing, The Marie Bashir Unit, Concord Hospital Mental Health Centre  
The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Renal Dialysis Unit, NSW Federal Police  
Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, Employers Federation  
NSW Police Service, Homelessness NSW, Salvos  
Gorman House, The Women's Housing Company  
YWCA, Centrelink, Dubbo Sexual Health  
Haymarket centre, AIDS Council of NSW (ACON)  
NCOSS, Oasis program, Sydney Women's homelessness alliance, Menai High School, Inner City Legal Centre  
Twenty 10, Ashfield Community Health Centre  
Uniting Care, Marrickville Community Health Centre  
Marrickville police, Aboriginal medical service  
Aboriginal legal service, Tony Merritt (ATAPS program)  
Long Bay Jail, Head Space, City of Sydney Council  
TAFE NSW, Wesley Mission, Medicare CAPS program  
Women And Girls' Emergency Centre (WAGEC)  
Vinnies Burwood



### 3.8 Media Liaison

The Gender Centre has enjoyed a strong presence in the media and in public resources with the following contributions:

- SBS world news
- ABC Radio
- Guardian
- 2SER Radio
- ABC

## Media Activity

This year the gender centre has shifted gear and begun to engage its media potential by selective participation with the media.

One of our main media projects has been the introduction of a trans media project. At the end of last year The Gender Centre was awarded a grant from AURORA and Inner West to run a media awareness program to help improve relationships between journalists and the trans community.

That project is currently on-going and hopes to increase the participation of trans people in speaking on behalf of their own community by giving them media skills and then connecting them to various media sources in Australia. The project is expected to finish up the first half of 2018.

## 3.9 Donations

I would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who kindly donated their time, effort, patience, goods and services and/or cash donations to the Gender Centre throughout this financial year

Your efforts and assistance are greatly appreciated.

## 4.0 Services Provided

### 4.1 Residential Service

The Gender Centre maintains three supported crisis housing facilities providing thirteen bed spaces and twenty one supported transitional housing facilities providing twenty one bed spaces for transgender and gender diverse people who find themselves in need of our residential service.

### Residential Service Statistics for the 2016-2017 Financial Year

Table 2: Residential Service Statistics for the 2016-2017 financial year shows how critical this service is to the ongoing well-being of transgender and gender diverse individuals

**Needs Identified, Services provided and Referrals Arranged - services counted once per support period**

Services	Needs Identified		Support Provided		Referral Arranged	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Short term or emergency accommodation	77	2.2%	38	1.4%	43	4.0%
Medium term/transitional housing	84	2.4%	40	1.5%	51	4.8%

### Accommodation Provided between 01/07/2016 and 30/06/2017

#### Short term emergency accommodation

Total number of bed nights provided within the reporting period	3264
Residents housed in short-term emergency accommodation	32
Average length of accommodation for completed accommodation periods (night)	95.7



### **Medium term/transitional accommodation**

Total number of bed nights provided within the reporting period	6666
Residents housed in short-term emergency accommodation	32
Average length of accommodation for completed accommodation periods (night)	428.7

## **4.2 Tenancy Support Program**

Very often transgender people are excluded from the opportunity to access long-term housing, including private rental, because of the pre-conceived ideas and assumptions that others might have about transgender people or their appearance may not be as expected.

A transgender person's capacity to manage a tenancy is often based on these superficial assumptions and not on the more important issues of having the capacity to manage a tenancy, paying the rent, maintaining the property to a high standard and being a good neighbour.

The Gender Centre can assist with referrals for tenancies and by providing a commitment to support the new tenant in preserving their tenancy.

We can provide early intervention support for tenancy providers such as landlords, real estate agents and community housing providers when they have identified issues that place their tenant at risk of becoming homeless, as well as early intervention and support for tenants who are experiencing difficulties with rent or rental arrears by arranging brokerage for the tenant.

We can also provide support for tenants who are experiencing life issues that place their tenancy at risk - such as difficulty with neighbours.

The successful management of tenancies means long-term tenants, lower vacancy rates and less need for turnaround in occupancy.

The risk of issues arising within the tenancy such as poor property maintenance issues lessens as our case workers support tenants who may be struggling to manage a property due to life issues or changes.

By providing training to prospective tenants on how to preserve a tenancy, so that housing providers can be assured that the applicants referred by the Gender Centre have a solid knowledge of the skills and issues they need to give consideration to when undertaking a tenancy.

Benefits can also include tenancies being more successfully managed so that any tenant who may be struggling can be provided with support before issues become too problematic or require tribunal or other legal action, and the engagement of private enterprise in working with marginalised populations such as transgender people is good corporate citizenship and global corporate social responsibility.

## **4.3 Counselling Service**

The Gender Centre provides a high quality professional psychological service to the transgender and gender diverse community, including residential clients, community clients, partners, family members and friends of transgender and gender diverse people, five days per week at no cost.

The values underpinning our counsellor's work include integrity, respect and compassion.

### **We offer:**

- a commitment to assisting clients reach their full personal potential through the provision of our psychological counselling services and programs;

- a commitment to achieving this with fairness and integrity;
- acknowledgement of human rights and respect, dignity and confidentiality. It is of particular concern to remove any barriers to a clients' achievements resulting from their gender, age, cultural , national and/or socio-economic background or disability;
- an assurance that our counselling service operates within the bounds of ethical guidelines, and the relevant codes of behaviour for psychologists, counsellors and social workers, including the maintenance of client confidentiality; and
- an assurance that access and equity issues are met for all.
- specialized gender counselling also includes but not limited to:
  - referral to specialist medical services for the purpose of medical transition.
  - guidance and referral with regards to legal transition.
  - support in relation to social transition and associated milestones such as coming out to family, development of gender-identity confidence and self-expression.
  - Provision of specialized support and training for other mental health professionals.

The counselling service also provides support and education to school counsellors as well as counsellors in rural areas. The Gender Centre's counselling service can also provide referrals to psychiatrists, endocrinologists and other specialists; supervision to counsellors who have a transgender client; and placement opportunities to student counsellors.

Our counsellor participates in a quarterly professional meeting with other counsellor's endocrinologists, psychiatrists and GP's who have a relationship with our clients, as well as attending monthly supervision for personal development opportunities.

### **Counselling statistics for the 2016-2017 Financial Year**

Individual counselling clients	202
Face to face counselling sessions	799
Telephone counselling sessions	465
Skype counselling sessions	45
Episodes of email contact counselling support	585
Counselling clients aged between 16-25	67
Counselling clients at risk of harm	4
Clients referred to Mental health Crisis Teams	2

**Table 3:** From July 2016 to June 2017 the Counsellor had a total of 202 individual counselling clients and a total of **1894** counselling sessions, contact supports and email correspondence.

As can be seen from the figures above, the number of clients referred to mental health crisis teams is low. This low number is a direct result of our Counsellor effectively working with each client to effectively stabilise their particular mental health crisis.

The clients most commonly accessing the Gender Centre counselling service are those in the process of exploring their gender issues. They commonly present with a range of issues that vary widely from person to person. The more critical issues frequently experienced by clients accessing our Counselling service include suicidal ideation, family rejection, depression and anxiety.

**The following list includes topics that were addressed with counselling clients during the 2016-2017 financial year:**

- accommodation
- anxiety
- bullying
- cross-dressing
- depression
- discrimination
- drug and alcohol
- employment
- family issues
- fear
- financial issues
- gambling
- violence
- harassment;
- hormones
- isolation
- mental health
- passing
- relationships
- religion
- school issues
- self-harm
- sexual assault
- sexuality
- suicide
- surgery options
- transition

### **4.3.1 Psychological Support Service**

*In the second half of the 2016-2017 year, The Gender Centre's Consortium was the successful recipient of a tender from the Primary Health Network to provide Psychological Support Services to vulnerable clients. This program offered three therapy groups (trans-women, trans-men and trans-youth specific), as well as one-on-one counselling sessions, for clients who were eligible to be referred by their GP. Clients presenting in this program were commonly facing issues surrounding gender, as well as high rates of suicide ideation, depression and anxiety. The groups and individual sessions had a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy focus, and showed success in improving mental health outcome scores on standardised tests.*

## **4.4 Case-Management**

*Case-management is provided to all clients who access the Gender Centre; this encompasses the three levels of support that FACS identified in the Going Home Staying Home reforms. Clients are able to access community early Intervention case management in order to prevent homelessness, crisis support in accommodation provided by the Centre or post crisis support to re-establish stability once a housing crisis has been resolved. Case management has been particularly useful in providing assistance to clients with a complex range of needs in the past year. Transgender people are among the most marginalised in society and many of our crisis accommodation clients, and some of the community clients present with a complex range of needs.*

*As a result many of these clients require and use a wide range of services and different forms of assistance including housing, income, health, employment, education and training. In order to achieve positive outcomes and sustainable futures for our clients; case management and support planning are integral parts of both the Gender Centre's residential programs and the services that we provide to the transgender and gender diverse community in general.*

*For clients residing in our accommodation programs, our case management process reinforces the progress-based nature of our residential service, providing a mechanism whereby realistic goals can be formulated and a comfortable level of progress can be gained by each resident. Support planning assists each client and our staff in working effectively with each other in order to facilitate progress on the part of our clients.*

The case management service enables clients to formulate their own individual support plan with the assistance and encouragement of the case worker.

The support plan may encompass short, medium and long-term goals and strategies. Each support plan attempts to address the needs of the client and to work from the client's own view of progress, taking into account any current social, emotional and/or physical limitations that the client may be experiencing, while also assisting them to progress within the Gender Centre's housing program.

### **Client Support Provided for the 2016-2017 Financial Year**

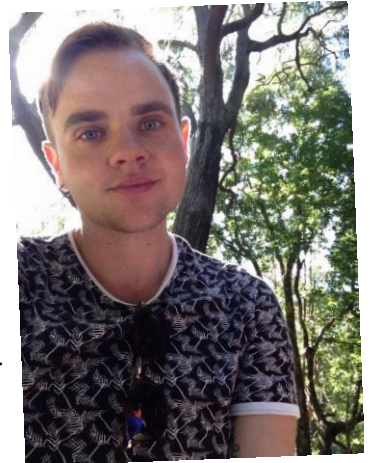
<b>Services</b>	<b>Needs Identified</b>	<b>Services Provided</b>	<b>Referral Arranged</b>
Short term or emergency accommodation	940	653	146
Medium term/transitional housing	1209	681	255
Assistance to sustain tenancy or prevent tenancy failure or eviction	1176	979	29
Employment assistance	289	171	39
Family/relationship assistance	460	394	44
Assistance with challenging social/behavioural problems	1732	1508	74
Assistance to connect culturally	1640	1572	45
Culturally specific services	2003	1916	41

**Table 3: Age Range by Distinct Persons and Contact Details**

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Distinct Persons</b>	<b>Person Contacts</b>
9-11 years	1	22
12-14 years	0	0
15-17 years	5	30
18-20 years	15	366
21-25 years	30	506
26-35 years	52	1013
36-45 years	40	902
46-55 years	41	609
56-65 years	19	313
66-85 years	10	272
85 + years	1	168

## 4.5 Nutritional Clinics

2017 saw the introduction of a Nutrition Clinic providing complementary healthcare to Gender Centre clients. The clinic strives to close the gap of health outcomes for trans populations by providing free nutrition consultations for clients of the Gender Centre. James Lyons heads the project in conjunction with the Gender Centre team to run the clinic 2 – 3 times each month. James is a nutritional medicine practitioner with special interest in food justice, transgender health, HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C support, and sexual health. Consultations involve in-depth assessment of each client's general health, diet, lifestyle factors and health goals, with prescription of diet changes, lifestyle modification, and by providing free access to personalised nutrition assessment and advice, the Nutrition Clinic provides Gender Centre clients with a trans-friendly space to discuss any issues with food security and access, eating habits, and how dietary choices impact their health and total well-being. Personalised consultation and education empowers the trans population to make autonomous choices about nutrition, providing a key preventative measure against chronic illness and exacerbation of existing conditions. During its eight months of activity, James has seen clients with a diverse range of backgrounds and health goals. Weight management and preparing for medical transition is just the tip of the iceberg – the Nutrition Clinic provides health support and facilitates improvement for clients with chronic pain, mobility issues, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, degenerative diseases, mental health conditions, insomnia, general stress, and more. As an evidence-based nutritionist, James works interrogatively with each client's established support network and health providers, and facilitates linking clients to additional providers to create a professional support network.



Going forward, the Nutrition Clinic hopes to partner with nutraceutical companies to provide Gender Centre clients with free therapeutic grade practitioner-only nutritional supplements to further improve health outcomes.

## 4.6 Greater Western Sydney Service

*The Greater Western Sydney (GWS) position is held in partnership with Wentworth Community Housing and connects The Gender Centre more directly with clients in Western Sydney and the Blue Mountains.*

*This role focusses on the key elements of the Going Home Staying Home reforms; early intervention and tenancy support. An underpinning process for the GWS role is to stop city drift by helping clients to resettle within the GWS area, reducing the strain on inner city resources.*

*Early intervention in the GWS area has included increasing support of families with transgender youth and working with their high schools to support transition. Transition in high schools involves working separately with the student cohort and the staff to ensure a smooth, supportive and successful transition.*

*Our GWS worker has delivered workshops to students to deepen their understanding of transgenderism, the components of transition, transgender health and how to apply best practice in medical services.*

*The GWS worker has forged relationships with other key support organization in the GWS area including Platform Youth, Mission Australia, Anglicare and Katoomba Women's Centre. Outreach engagement in the GWS area has included reaching out to clients during*

homelessness awareness week, and providing access to services for clients in outer suburbs areas with a high complexity of needs.

## 4.7 Outreach Services

The Gender Centre's Outreach Service provides specialised case management and outreach services to the transgender community who are confined to hospital, homes, and in correctional facilities within N.S.W.

The outreach service is of significant benefit to clients in addressing their health needs and concerns, through the development and implementation of holistic case plans the outreach team are able to provide wrap around service models that allow health and welfare concerns to be discussed and dealt with in a safe and honest manner. Through these discussions with service users, particular individual needs are identified and the appropriate health care services are targeted. The historical barriers to accessing services are identified and clients are then supported to access services that would meet their specific needs in relation to their transgender status and their health and general wellbeing. Outreach staff often accompany clients to appointments to advocate on their behalf.

The Outreach Education Service provides weekly Wednesday night outreach to “at risk” street based sex workers who can access the outreach services from a number of locations from the surrounding areas of Surry hills and Darlinghurst, Newtown, the Great Western Highway Eastern Creek, Canterbury Road and Penrith, The outreach education officer provides referrals to specialist medical, HIV/AIDS, education, legal, welfare, housing and other community services.

### **We also provide our client group with:**

- **Safe using** and safe sex equipment, at the Gender Centre, on the street, or wherever the need is arises
- **Health information**, not just about HIV, but other relevant areas as well such as other sexually transmitted diseases, injecting hormones, safe sex work, and many other health concerns that transgender people encounter
- **Home visits:** for clients confined to their homers
- **Hospital and prison visits:** Transgender people are often at their most vulnerable when in the hands of the jail or medical system.
- **Court/Cell outreach** which is available to all transgender, gender questioning and gender diverse clients
- **Information/Referrals.** If there is something that you would like to know about H.I.V., or one of the many transgender specific health areas; then please feel free to call us

The first Wednesday of each month we provide outreach to Sydney's greater western suburbs for transgender street-based sex workers, and the last Thursday of each month we provide case management at the Kirketon Road Centre, above the Darlinghurst Fire Station, entrance on Victoria Street, Darlinghurst from 6:00pm until 10:00pm.

### **Health Promotion Project /formally known as Condom and Lube Project**

The primary aim of the Health Promotion project is to ensure that members of the transgender community who engage in high risk behaviours or lifestyles are provided with appropriate information and resources to safeguard themselves and others from the risk of contracting or spreading HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and other Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs).

Outreach is an integral part of the Gender Centre's service plan as it continues to provide services to a wide range of clients who may have difficulty in accessing the service otherwise.

The total number of individual outreach clients for the **2016-2017** financial year was **187** and received a total of **1,567** episodes of service delivery during that same period.

These figures included our outreach team delivering **254** episodes of service delivery involving personalised education and information covering a range of topics including safe sex, safe injecting practices, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, mental health issues, blood borne viruses, alcohol and other drugs, housing, health, discrimination and legal issues.

A total of **1341** safe-sex packs were distributed through the outreach service (including **283** at reception), with each pack including 20 condoms and one tube of lubricant. A total of **26,820** condoms and **1341** tubes of Lube were distributed

A total of **13,136** items of injecting equipment were also distributed during the course of the year to June 30 2017. This included individual 18, 21, 22 and 23 gauge needles, syringes distributed separately from the 5 and 10 packs (5 and 10 needles, syringes and water)

#### **Total Combined Outreach Statistics for the 2015-2016 Financial Year**

Number of outreach occasions of service provided to street based sexworkers	1567
Number of injecting equipment distributed	13,136
Number of safe sex equipment distributed	26,820

During 2016-2017 outreach statistics clearly show how vital a need this is for the transgender and gender diverse communities

## **4.8 Over 55s Support Service**

The aim of the Gender Centre's Over 55s Support Service was to offer support to clients who were over the age of 55. Support from this project included frontline crisis and case management, linking clients with other specialised aged care services that were working with transgender and gender diverse people which enabled clients to feel safe and secure in accessing these services, as well as providing psycho-social support and opportunities for engagement. This enhanced the quality of life in relation to independence and self-determination, the project also promoted the needs of transgender and gender-questioning people to aged care service providers. The project provided skills development and training to other aged care service providers, especially generalist services so they could deliver good practice models of service delivery to this unique and diverse community.

**Unfortunately this project as at 30 June 2017 has come to an end and will no longer continue, it doesn't mean that our community is no longer ageing it means that we were not able to secure any additional funding for this vital project to continue from The Commonwealth Government so after 4 years we say good bye to the dedicated team involved with this project providing front line services to our ageing community.**

**Laurel Walter and Laura Wright our dedicated staff members who were involved in the running of this project will be missed by the Gender Centre and by the many many clients and service providers throughout the 4 years that you helped, buried and worked with as the over 55 workers.**

#### **The over 55 support project:**

- worked with and on behalf of older trans people;
- worked with trans people of any age who are dealing with matters related to negotiating aged care services
- worked with other services providing support to trans people over 55 years old; and
- and was an advocacy service supporting people navigating aged and ageing issues

## **Over 55 Support Service Achievements 2016-2017**

Key achievements of the over 55 support program during the 2016-2017 financial year have included:

- *Effective liaison and promotion to have mainstream media present and generate a positive story, highlighting the journey of an ageing transgender person including the joys and the challenges that show the uniqueness of this population*
- *Establishing new links to aged care services in outer western Sydney to support more transgender people*
- *Supporting multiple transgender persons to enter appropriate aged care accommodation programs in a manner that allows them to feel safe, supported and comfortable within their new living situations;*
- *Supporting and facilitating the over 55 support groups over the past 12 months*
- *Provided intensive ongoing support to two very isolated elderly clients*
- *Provided support and education to other aged care facilities*
- *Provided support to agencies in obtaining their rainbow ticks*

## **Over 55 Support Service last Statistics 2016-2017**

Number of connections with mainstream aging services	340
Number of episodes of individual and specialised case management meetings including hospital, home, and nursing home visits	411
Number of over 55 groups held	11
Number of referrals to main stream services	141
Number of referrals to specialised services	91
Average Number of clients seen per month	18
Number of requests for assistance from family members of transgender ageing persons	44

*The over 55 support worker participated in a number projects and consultations including FACS roundtable discussion on LGBTI ageing, Leichhardt LGBTI action group Marrickville aged services interagency meetings, Uniting Care Australia interagency meetings CAG group,*

## **4.9 Resource Development**

### **Library**

*The library continues to purchase new books that are of interest to the community. The library collection will continue to be selected in order to maintain a balance between fiction and non-fiction lay writing such as autobiographies, and professional books relating to gender studies.*

*We have also received a number of books donated by members of the community and we thank those people concerned for contributing to our resources.*

### **Information Kits**

*Information kits play an important role in providing information or raising awareness of the issues facing transgender people.*

*While a number of kits are available, there is an encouragingly high demand for kits from employers, students and professionals. This demand signals an improving response from*



non-transgender individuals in a range of capacities to recognising and acknowledging the needs and rights of transgender people.

Again overwhelmingly, people seeking information, including those representing employers, are doing so with a clear commitment to being inclusive of transgender people and this signifies a clear shift in attitude from those exhibited in the recent past.

### **During the course of 2016-2017 there were:**

1981	Feminising Hormone Fact sheets downloaded
1397	Documents of identity
1346	Masculinising Hormone Information
528	Exploring Gender
443	Hysterectomy Oophorectomy
391	Facial feminisation
333	Breast Augmentations

Plus a further 2,477 fact sheets were downloaded

### **Polare Magazine**

Polare magazine is a primary source through which clients have access to community information as well as comprehensive health information with regular contributions provided by health professionals. The response to the magazine in the past year has been extremely positive and reflective of its importance in reaching many clients who would otherwise be isolated.

### **During the course of 2016-2017 there were:**

3,827	magazines printed during 2016-2017
1697	downloaded from our website
1440	magazines posted to subscribers through our mailing list;
400	magazines distributed through the centre
290	magazines emailed to subscribers on our email mailing list;

### **Website**

The website has become arguably the most comprehensive website of any transgender organisation in the world and is the key area for distributing information via kits and information sheets, news of upcoming events, support for clients and loved ones, latest news and services provided by the Gender Centre.

It continues to be an extremely valuable resource which is available to the wider transgender and gender diverse communities, their allies, other service providers, the media, the medical profession, students and the wider community.

The website provides other service providers with information about the services provided by the Gender Centre and is therefore useful for networking purposes and to assist other service providers should they have contact with a transgender client of their own.

The website also offers access to previous editions of Polare with key articles from the first edition through to our current edition available.

The site serves as an essential way to promote events and workshops to clients who access the Centre.

## **During the course of 2016-2017**

Unique visitors	203,376
Number of visits	259,201
Pages	701,346
Hits	8,551,203

As well as the website, the Gender Centre operates a Twitter account, Facebook account, and the Transgender Anti-Violence website clients are now able to access this site to obtain instant updates of what's happening on a daily basis at the Gender Centre.

## **Facebook, Twitter and Transgender Anti-Violence websites**

- Gender Centre Facebook page increased from 1507 to 1563
- Transgender Anti-Violence Project Facebook page increased from 650 to 677
- Queer Agenda Facebook page increased from 165 to 206
- F t M Connect Facebook page increased from 1236 to 1626 likes

## **5 Community Support Services**

The Client Support program plays a crucial role in providing assistance to clients whose needs are less intensive than those provided through counselling or who require more direct assistance in situations that warrant mediation and/or advocacy.

During the 2016-2017 financial years, clients were assisted through a range of individual needs including; accommodation assistance with the Department of Housing and other agencies, Centrelink assistance, assistance dealing with courts and the legal system, employment assistance, advice on transition, referral advice and advocacy.

The Gender Centre provided a wide range of support groups, workshops and events throughout the 2016-2017 financial year.

These services were provided through the Centre's Client Support Program and aimed to provide clients with access to meaningful support and information.

### **These events included:**

- Parents of transgender children metro group held at the centre
- Parents of transgender children Wollongong group
- Parents of transgender children Dubbo group
- Parents of transgender children Nowra group
- Parents of transgender children Blue Mountains group
- Transgender youth group
- F To M Connect group
- Women's group
- Young Women's group
- Over 55 group
- Queer Agenda group
- International Transgender Day of Visibility
- Transgender Day of Remembrance
- Information talks with guest speakers; and
- Walk-ins

In total there were 1770 occasions of individual service provision delivered to clients through a range of events and support groups.

## **Mardi Gras 2017**

Young transgender people, their parents, allies and friends proudly march in the 2017 Mardi Gras parade behind the Gender Centre's banner. The families and young people rallied together and met at the Commonwealth Bank nearby to prepare for the event. The Bank staff kindly provided a safe venue for the meeting point and it was greatly appreciated by all of the marchers. It was a colourful and enthusiastic group who marched, led by the two super hero trans defenders, Savannah Jackson and Ted Cook in their super hero outfits. All of the marchers identified that this was the most liberating and exciting experience they had been involved in where they felt respected, welcomed and acknowledged.

People on the side lines spoke with parents and allies in a show of support; one young person was comforted by a parent along the march, who had said they came to watch the parade after being made homeless by their family after coming out as transgender. They were hugged and supported by the parents on the march, and were smiling and said they felt better for knowing that families do care about transgender youth



**Parents walking in the 2017 Mardi Gras Parade.**

## **The Gender Centre and families**

Every year we report in the increase in demand for services for young transgender children and their families and this year is no different.

This past 12 months has seen this demand increase more dramatically than ever before.

The demand has shifted from just general questions and basic information to advocacy, peer support initiatives, pathways for referrals for psychological and counselling support.

In order to respond to the increase in demand from young people and their parents the Gender Centre has worked collaboratively with Headspace and Dubbo Sexual Health to deliver two new parents support groups in regional NSW.

One of these groups meets monthly in Wollongong and is driven by the parents from within the local area. Two parents in particular have put up their hands to co – facilitate this monthly meeting.

The need in the south of NSW became evident quickly and this group was extended so that a quarterly meeting was held in Nowra to allow families from further South to access face to face support

The second group meets on a less frequent basis, but is no less valuable, this is the parents support group that meets in Dubbo. In delivering support to families this past year the Centre has seen over **128** families which is an increase of **18** families from last year.

The GWS position also allowed for the establishment of a parents meeting to occur in the Blue Mountains. This group did not have a regular schedule but 3 meetings did take place in the financial year.

### **Transtopia Youth Group**



This year we have seen the number of young people attending our Transtopia youth group increase, and it has stayed fairly consistent, with attendance generally in the early to mid 20's. This year the group has been predominately trans boys, but we have also had an increase in young trans women attend, with a few identifying as non-binary.

Each month Transtopia grows and grows with new comers; the group usually grows with 2-4 new kids each month, who have either heard about the group from friends who have attended or from their parents who attend our parent support groups.

### **Transgender Day of Remembrance 2016**

For a number of years the Gender Centre, in partnership with the NSW Police Force, the City of Sydney and the Inner City Legal Centre observed the Transgender Day of Remembrance on two dates, one being on the actual day of remembrance (20 November) and the other being the closest Friday to that date, and held in Parliament House. In 2016 the decision was made to have only one observance, on 20 November, in Harmony Park, Surry Hills. This provided a welcoming venue close to the NSW Police Centre and within walking distance of Taylor Square.



These two locations were important as the Police Force wished to dedicate a plaque to the “transgender, gender-diverse and other vulnerable communities who have experienced

discrimination, abuse and violence” and assert the support of the Police Force for those who suffer discrimination, and because there was to be a street march from Harmony Park to Taylor Square where a candle-light vigil would be held. The march and the vigil were organised by Trans Sydney Pride. The only drawback to the open-air venue was the possibility of bad weather, but the City of Sydney provided marquees and the Police Centre also offered shelter if needed. The day turned out in fact to be warm and sunny and the marquees were used more for shade than for shelter.

The proceeding opened at 3.00 pm with a speech from the Human Rights Commissioner, Edward Santow, and this was followed by Superintendent Tony Crandell, who spoke briefly and then dedicated the plaque pledging support for transgender and other marginalised people.

The film *The Trans List* was screened using special daylight-screening equipment and during the screening the helpers supplied by the Police Force provided a barbeque. There were some protestors in the park, who thought that the function should not be so closely associated with the Police, but their protests were accepted respectfully and most of the protestors joined the function and participated in the various activities.

One of these was a session for Living Library Books, in which people could talk face-to-face for half an hour with individuals who had made themselves available to provide information relevant to transgender and gender diversity.

These included a psychiatrist, an academic trans-artist, a counsellor, an MTF, the MTF’s wife, the mother of a transgender child and a transgender policewoman. Approximately 200 people attended the Day of Remembrance and most of these took part in the walk from Harmony Park to Taylor Square as evening fell, and more joined in to light their candles and take part in the vigil.

The principal organiser of the march and vigil, Katherine Wolfgramme said there were 300 people taking part in Taylor Square.

It was a very full Day of Remembrance and the Gender Centre would like to thank all those who participated, through planning, providing resources or attending.



## Fair Day 2017

Again the Gender Centre was at fair day, our stall was staffed by Board Members, Staff, Parents, and Volunteers, it was a great day,

This year the Gender Centre won the Best Community Staff from Mardi Gras



## 5.1 Transgender Anti-Violence Project

**stand tall  
against  
violence**



The Transgender Anti -Violence project addresses all forms of violence that impact on the transgender gender diverse and gender questioning community including (but not limited to) domestic violence, sexual violence, anti-transgender harassment and hate crimes, the project no longer has a dedicated staff member driving the project due to the City of Sydney funding running out, the project is still ongoing but in a different form.

The service still provides on line and telephone supports by which people can report and obtain support from all staff following experiences of crime and discrimination, the project also delivers training to service providers and NSW Police.

## 5.2 Service Evaluation

All staff at the Gender Centre have continued with the aims of providing optimal service for our clients, and in developing a strong and positive relationship with other agencies and our funding bodies.

The success in achieving the service's objectives has been monitored throughout the year by a range of processes including:

- Residential data collection and analysis with particular reference to occupancy rates;
- Strengthening focus on case-management practices;
- Analysis of reasons for discharge
- Monitoring data relating to attendance at in-house groups, resident meetings, number of clients contacted and referrals through outreach;
- Monitoring of circulation levels of print publications and resources;
- Collateral feedback from other agencies and service providers;
- Data collection relating to referral patterns;
- Level of demand for participation in key national, state and local mechanisms, strategies and activities;
- Increased awareness and focus on W.H.& S. issues;
- Feedback from clients regarding complaints, compliments and suggestions; and
- Ongoing commitment to engaging in quality improvement across all programs.

