

## 50 Lives 50 Homes

### Sector

Led by the community sector and includes some key government services.

### Overview of the project or program

50 Lives 50 Homes is a collective impact project to sustainably house and support the most vulnerable rough sleepers using a Housing First approach. The project has been operating for the past 3 years, involving almost 50 services from 30 organisations during this time.

It provides a backbone team that works to bring together players across multiple sectors, resource the collaboration and prototype solutions to common barriers. The backbone collates data, negotiates with key players including housing providers and is a common port of call for participating services. Crucially, 50 Lives 50 Homes also includes an After-Hours team which adds a missing piece of service delivery to help resource caseworkers across the sector. As such it is both a resource to participants, but also a major draw card to participation.

### Project parties

It is an open collaboration which enables organisations and/or individual workers within services to participate to the extent which they are willing. It encourages and invites participation, rather than mandating it. As such, the membership and extent of participation can vary according to organisations needs and levels of involvement with the core client group. There are over 24 active parties with engagement of over 30 organisations.

### Key characteristics

**Trust and sharing of power** - building a culture which is around sharing credit and ownership of the project. A separate identify, brand and logo are critical to this – with a clear culture of staff in the backbone being identified as 50 Lives 50 Homes workers.

**Inclusive participation** - 50 Lives 50 Homes is built around a series of working groups for housing providers, workers with young people and workers with adults/families. These groups are open to any individual workers working with the core client group and focus on collaborative problems solving. They are not networking groups or information sessions, but collaborative discussions of individual cases.

**Shared understanding of the problem / consensus on a shared vision** - there has been a significant shift from services aiming to help homeless people to services coming together to end homelessness.

**Commitment to collective goals and actions** - 50 Lives 50 Homes has a simple set of KPIs which attracts services to participate. They are to 1) house people, 2) ensure they have adequate support and 3) connect them to community. The project has worked from the premise that it provides an environment for services to work together rather than a proscriptive framework for how they do their work.

**Formal advance planning or emergent planning** - having a formal framework for initial planning, including both program logic and establishing standard data collection tools which collects regular feedback and data from housing providers, workers and clients. Achieving this is assisted by the flexibility of funders who have established clear and simply outcomes (KPIs) and enabled the project to take an action learning approach.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

50 Lives 50 Homes uses the collective impact model. This is built around 5 key principles:

- common agenda – it is not achieved at a point in time but is maintained as part of an ongoing focus on maintaining and exploring the culture of the project.
- shared measurement – utilised three key strategies to collect data to measure the work of multiple organisations across several sectors: simple survey tools, linked data and shared mandated evidence-based triage tools.
- mutually reinforcing activities – using a prototyping approach built on a background of experience, observation and common intent advocate a prototyping response which enables projects to “fail fast, fail cheap, fail often and fail safe”. This produces higher levels of innovation at lower cost by embracing risk taking.
- Open and continuous communication – specialist consent forms which are updated annually for clients and processes which ensure 6 monthly reviews of mailing lists.
- Backbone coordinating organisation – is critical as it undertakes and drives many of the tasks outlined above and resources organisations enabling their participation. A common failing of collaborations is the reliance on stakeholders who have already demanding full-time roles to drive the collaboration as well as undertake the additional work it requires. The backbone provides an administrative resource as well as focusing and responding to the direction and ambition of key stakeholders.

## Barriers

50 Lives 50 Homes has formal structures with some working groups and steering groups, but it does not have formal Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with all participating agencies. The lack of formal MOUs has drawbacks such as difficulty defining who is and is not a member of the collaboration and challenges when scaling.

The project has now reached a stage where more formal, defined structures would assist in its growth. The critical challenge is to ensure that this definition does not result in loss of flexibility and responsiveness to individual needs.

## Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

One of the strongest elements of the project is its ability to provide solid data that helps tell the story of the issues it is trying to address and demonstrate clear outcomes. Key examples are:

- Tenancy surveys – These are completed by housing providers each quarter to identify how well tenancies are managing.
- Linked data – The evaluation by UWA’s Centre for Social Impact has collated linked data from 68 people who have been housed for 6 months and 44 people who have been housed for 12 months. These identified the following reductions in hospital usage pre and post-housing: 60-66% decline in ED presentations and 41-46% decline in inpatient admissions

50 Lives 50 Homes has been built around a coalition of the willing rather than structured MOUs. While this strategy developed organically rather than deliberately, it has been a strength that has allowed organisations to join the project through the initiative of grass roots, not just management level staff. Also, by sitting within a lead organisation that has a strong service delivery role in the sector, it’s work sits within a policy and procedure framework that is both accredited to sector standards and provides essential governance, OHS, clinical and service delivery frameworks and tools.

# 100 Families WA

## Sector

Academia and the community service sector

## Overview of the project or program

100 Families WA is a collaborative project working in close partnership and regular engagement with academia and the community service sector. It is a collective action research project with a vision to address the issue of entrenched disadvantage or hardship, as experienced by families. It aims to address questions including:

- What are the lived experiences of families experiencing entrenched disadvantage?
- Why is it so hard to break through entrenched disadvantage?

This problem is complex and beyond the scope of any one agency to impact upon significantly. This is the reason that the 10 partner organisations involved are working towards a broad set of objectives to achieve a common goal of reducing entrenched disadvantage in WA. There is also an ongoing commitment to engage and work alongside individuals who hold lived experiences of hardship to help guide project practice.

## Project parties

The project partners are the University of Western Australia (Centre for social impact, School of public policy and research consortium); WACOSS; Anglicare WA; Mercycare; RUAH; Centrecare; Jacaranda Uniting Care West and Wanslea. Partner representatives (1-3 people per organisation) sit on the project team, the decision making body of the project. Collaboration is equal and the diversity in its member individuals helps to provide a balanced spread with regard to resource and expertise. Additional groups sit alongside this main group but do not hold the same degree of participation and authority. This structure is reflected in the governance model.

## Key characteristics

Characteristics supporting relationships and outcomes include:

- **Ongoing relationship building** - based on agreed value system (respect, courtesy etc.)
- **Governance framework** which details expected protocols, project structure (ensuring power is evenly distributed), agreed value system
- **Regular meetings** with assigned chairs and co-chairs through voting mechanisms
- **Communication channels** including Communication/project management online platform. This is used to discuss and record key issues between meetings
- **Structured reflective practice** processes to review processes and practices across the project team and wider team
- **Dedicated project management position** to engage stakeholders at all levels around project practices
- **Employment of a Collaboration Health Assessment Tool (CHAT)** to assess, analyse and prompt discussion on key dimensions of our collaboration which require attention.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Group agreed on a statement of purpose, vision and common goals
- Passion to tackle the issue

- Sufficient trust amongst the group to engage in process
- Range of expertise from varying areas and backgrounds; academic, service delivery, lived experience (in advisory groups)
- CHAT tool identified weakness in collaboration and helped to facilitate a targeted conversation
- Well respected members of the group leading by example
- An agreement to leave ego and logo at the door (on going work in practice)
- Take turns to host meetings across the collaborative partner working sites
- Dedicated project management position to engage stakeholders at all levels around project practices
- Structured reflective practice processes to review processes and practices across the project team and wider team

### Barriers

- Differencing points of focus towards same goal e.g. academia verses service delivery holding different expertise and expectations of how to reach goal
- Expertise amongst group not always recognised/respected fully
- Personality/EGO clashes
- Continuity of group attendees (Some delegation)
- Workload sharing/volunteering - Some members doing more than others
- Unwillingness to share data
- Communication breakdowns outside of face-to-face meetings (typically when engaging in email communications)
- Concerns/suspicions over partner motivations

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Strong mechanisms in place to measure the health of the collaboration
- Having group members who are well respected by all other members help to set the tone of how the group acts/interacts
- Spend time discussing how the group wishes to run and under what values – can be outsourced to a non-member but needs to be well chosen
- The governance framework needs to be more than a document structure to determine decision making etc. It should be used to embody the group ways of working and therefore should be meaningful
- Valuing and respecting differing skills sets and points of view
- Collaborations take longer – you will need to adjust your expectations (and others i.e. funders) of how long processes and outcomes take - plan for this and be patient (with the process and with the group)
- Address issues (have a pre-agreed process for this). Don't let problems go unnoticed or manifest.
- Choose a chair that can manage the group's needs well.

# Child and Parent Centre Initiative

## Sector

Between government and community services sector

## Overview of the project or program

The Child and Parent Centres (CPCs) were identified as a model for improving access to a range of programs and services that could support families to provide a better start in life for their young children aged from pre-birth to eight years (with a focus on pre-birth to four years of age). The first CPCs were established in 2012, and this program is continuous, with operational funding set aside in the Department of Education's forward estimates.

The short-term aim is to increase co-location, coordination and integration of government and non-government programs and services for families and young children. Action is focused on longer term outcomes of:

- A reduction in the number of vulnerable children.
- Achieve targeted, appropriate services easily accessed by families and children.
- Increase the number of successful transitions and sustained engagement and success with schooling for 'at risk' children.

## Project parties

The agencies involved include:

- Department of Education as the lead agency, working with Child and Adolescent Health Service, WA Country Health Service, and the Department of Communities.
- 13 non-government organisations (NGOs) that operate the CPCs: Ngala Inc., Parkerville Children and Youth Care, Investing in Our Youth, Anglicare WA, Centrecare, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, Wunan Foundation, Wanslea Family Services, One Tree Community Services, The Smith Family, YMCA WA, Shire of Mundaring, and MercyCare.

A new Preferred Service Provider procurement process was completed in 2018, with the above 13 NGOs gaining a further five-year term to operate the CPCs. The parties to the collaboration varied depending on the phase of the CPC Initiative. At all stages, collaboration with and between each party work as equal partners.

## Key characteristics

Representative sub-groups for particular activities: Data, operations, and communications.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Overall design - the CPC model.
- Quality and commitment of all CPC staff.
- Centre operators with community development and collaborative approaches.
- Location of CPCs on school sites.
- Active participation of Local Advisory Committees.
- High levels of inter-agency cooperation.
- Strong support from the Early Childhood Branch – as the 'backbone' agency.

The co-design / co-production activities and processes are implemented for the majority of CPC operational activity. One of the key elements in the early phase is the CPC Operating Manual. It was jointly developed by government and NGO partners, is jointly reviewed every year, and sets down the fundamental elements of the CPC initiative and the operational procedures. By way of example, the shared vision jointly developed is to increase the capability of families to provide home environments that will enable children to thrive in all developmental domains, and achieve smooth transitions, sustained engagement and success with schooling.

In the development of the initial Service Agreements to operate the CPCs, collaboration was with the Department of Finance, department of Health, WACOSS, and key NGO and government stakeholders invited to forums to review draft Service Agreement documents. With building design and development, Building Management and Works was involved, independent architects, community members, the NGOs that would be operating the CPCs, and the Department of Health. There was joint input and collaboration on all design elements.

Shared values are equality, family focused, accessible, working together, quality and building knowledge.

### **Barriers**

Nil.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Opportunities for refinement and improvement include:

- Clearer description of key functions for service delivery e.g. CPC staff complement, roles and responsibilities and arrangements for other service providers.
- Opening hours - local family and service provider preferences.
- Each CPC to implement annual strategic planning.
- Review of the overarching Monitoring Framework.
- More resources to be invested into the Initiative, more centres to be built (a decision of government).

# Communications Infrastructure Program

## Sector

Government sector

## Overview of the project or program

The program aims to increasingly standardise law enforcement service delivery throughout the state, in remote and populated areas. The Communications Infrastructure Program (CIP) delivers a program of Voice Radio projects within Western Australia Police Force and has been upgrading ageing analogue networks to a P25 encrypted digital platform across Western Australia since 2004. These works have included the integration of the Department of Justice (DoJ) within certain sectors of the Police radio network. Additionally, CIP is completing a regional upgrade of the WA Police Radio network under two Royalties for Regions (RfR) funded projects that deploy “shared” Trunked and in specific instances Conventional radio networks for use by the Western Australian Police Force and the Department of Justice (Prisons) in Regional WA:

- the Community Safety Network - Regional Radio Network (CSN-RRN) Project (Jan 2012 to Dec 2019), a long term project; and
- the Commonwealth Legislated Radio Frequency Change (CLRFC) Project (Feb 2018 to Dec 2019), a two year project.

The upgraded networks and equipment will:

- Greatly improve the quality and reliability of communications for both WA Police force and the Department of Justice in regional WA.
- Bring secure, encrypted digital communication services to the regions.
- Enable conventional digital radio network compliance to the Australian Communications and Media Authority’s (ACMA) Harmonised Government Spectrum (HGS) requirements as legislated.

## Project parties

Principal Stakeholders:

- WA Police Force – Project Owners and lead agency
- Department of Justice – Prisons (DoJ) – Inter-agency shared network
- Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development (DPIRD) – RfR funding management and oversight
- Motorola Solutions Australia - Primary vendor

## Key characteristics

**Trust and sharing of power:** developing together a clearly defined Project Governance/Terms of Reference; steering Committee and Project Board representation; establishing an open and honest communication and sharing of information platform from the start.

**Inclusive participation:** Joint Business Case Development to ensure requirements capture meet each agencies business requirements; Joint procurement activities, tender development and tender evaluation panel representation; Joint participation- network design workshops and Implementation planning; Participation in Radio Core Upgrade

releases, fail-over tests etc; joint participation in weekly progress meetings with principal vendor.

**Shared understanding of the problem:** Cooperative problem and issue management; Joint participation in regular (weekly) progress meetings with principal vendor.

**Consensus on a shared vision:** Ensuring each agencies business requirements are signed off at user level and executive prior to engaging in Business Case development; Clear understanding of each agencies business requirements (detailed level) at design workshops prior to finalising solution design.

**Commitment to collective goals and actions:** Achieving buy in on ownership of project responsibilities, tasks, activities and methods for completing these.

**Formal advance planning or emergent planning:** joint endorsement of business cases, design documents, Change Variations etc

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Alignment with the State Government's strategy at that time focusing on a "Whole of Government" public sector reform in the area of telecommunications
- Supporting project deliverables through utilising specialisation/strengths available within each agency. Some examples are:
  - availability of Police technical specialists to support DoJ technical issues, radio code plug development, updates and changes
  - use of prisons labour force for land clearing required for tower construction
  - access to regional prison real estate for construction of communication towers.
- Facilitating communication and knowledge sharing.

### Barriers

*Technical constraints versus Business expectations* - to have a standard model across all prisons. Through leveraging trust relationships, cooperative spirit, negotiating skills (interest based) and using strong personal presence, agreement was reached for a conventional solution as the primary, with a trunked failover as backup.

*Budget Constraints vs Business expectations* - Thick prison walls lined with metal grids are not conducive to digital voice radio penetration. DoJ business expectations were to have a transmission tower built close to each prison campus, to ensure adequate coverage penetration. Because of budget constraints, this was not always feasible. CIP had to again negotiate carefully with DoJ and together investigate alternative technical solutions to ensure sufficient coverage within prison buildings was achieved. Trust relationships, cooperative spirit and strong personal presence achieved an amicable outcome, restoring the collaborative relationship.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Open and honest relationship – sharing of issues.
- Maintaining a level of trust.
- Regular interaction and communication catch ups.
- Listening and problem assessment.
- Some flexibility.



# Disability Health Network

## Sector

Government and community.

## Overview of the project or program

The Disability Health Network (DHN) is an innovative approach towards achieving better health outcomes for people with disability that operates using a model of influence, where people with disability, their family and carers are at the centre of all activities, including:

- an Executive Advisory Group (EAG), which determines priorities, reviews outcomes, shares information and fosters collaborative networks; and
- Working Groups that progress agreed work plans, consultations to inform policy development and presentations to share, connect and improve.

The aim of these collaborations is to improve health outcomes for people with disability by reducing or removing the barriers to accessing health care that meets their needs.

## Project parties

The founding departments were the Department of Health and the Disability Services Commission (now WA Health and Department of Communities – Disability Services).

The work of DHN is guided by an EAG with representatives from Aboriginal health, aged care, disability service provider-residential care, Carers WA, consumers, Dental Health Services, Department of Communities – Disability Services, mental health, primary care, nursing, allied health, paediatrics, medicine and each of the Health Service Providers. Invited guests include the National Disability Insurance Agency and the Ministerial Advisory Council for Disability.

Various Working Groups have been established to undertake key projects and these involve disability service organisations, community organisations, educational institutions, and interested entities.

## Key characteristics

**Inclusive participation** – All are welcome to become members of the DHN.

**Shared understanding of the problem** – The significant health disparities experienced by people with disability are a compelling argument. Increasingly we are using patient stories and feedback to drive the changes we are seeking to make within health.

**Consensus on shared vision, goals and actions** – The WA Disability Health Framework 2015-2025 (the Framework) clearly outlines a vision, the goals/outcomes we are seeking to achieve, the priority areas to target and the system influencers.

**Formal advance planning or emergent planning** – Each year the EAG undertakes a formal review of the year's activities and achievements, and plans for the year ahead.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

**Policy and political environment and rationale** – The international, national and state obligations to provide health care that meets the needs of people with disability are a significant enabler, as are major policy developments such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the Sustainable Health Review (SHR).

**Cultural change and collaborative capacity** – The continued development of the concept of patient centred care is very relevant to people with disability, their family and carers and has

been one of the ways we have been able to 'mainstream' the idea that this cohort of patients should be treated with the same model of care.

**Shared leadership and flexible governance focused on achieving outcomes** - The Co Leads of the DHN have a strong understanding and influence within their own sector. The EAG has recognised the need to be flexible in the way we achieve our outcomes given the many legislative and policy reforms that have occurred since inception.

**Co-design or co-production activities** – People with disability, their family and carers are involved in all aspects of DHN business, including the EAG, Working Groups, resource development, presentations and consultations.

**Managing and leveraging relationships** – Champions of change are a key enabler of inclusive health care, and many of the people involved in DHN use their extensive personal and professional relationships to promote the vision of inclusive health care.

### Barriers

**Governance and structure** – The new governance arrangements within health and the uncertainty around the governance of disability within government present significant challenges for DHN, impacting on the DHN's ability to engage with health services. The most significant challenge has been the uncertainty arising from changes in executive leadership at both agencies, but especially the Department of Communities where the founding agency no longer exists.

**People and culture** – DHN has experienced key people in leadership roles being barriers to the efforts of DHN for various reasons. In these instances, DHN has explored alternative ways to continue to exert influence. This has sometimes slowed progress, but has had the advantage of tapping into new networks.

**Risk taking** – There have been few opportunities to exercise risk taking, given the hierarchical nature of the large health bureaucracy and now, a complex organisational structure in disability also. As mentioned previously, changes in executive leadership have created uncertainty.

**Trust sharing of power** – Health has suggested responsibility moves back to disability many times, and disability has wanted health to take more ownership of the issue. We have tackled this by clearly stating the resources from disability are available to support the work being undertaken in health to improve access to health care needs for people with disability. It's not so much about trust and sharing of power as understanding the role each agency has to play in this collaboration.

**Cultivating readiness for collaboration** – Readiness for collaboration and capacity to contribute resources to the work plan has been variable over the six years of DHN's life. This has required DHN to think differently about how we might influence, and the strong suite of resources developed during the early years of DHN provides a solid platform from which to do this. We need to always be on the lookout for changes that provide an entry point for our work.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

The Framework has given DHN a platform from which to launch our many change initiatives, clear messaging and practical tools to support our work. We have also had a core group of people as champions of change. This combination of longevity and historical perspective, coupled with regular injections of new ideas, enthusiasm and networks has contributed to the success of the collaboration. We have also been willing to recognise significant change (eg. SHR and NDIS) as an opportunity rather than a challenge.

# Economic Empowerment Project

## Sector

Government, community services and Curtin University

## Overview of the project or program

The Economic Empowerment Project commenced as a partnership between Curtin University and the Women's Council for Family and Domestic Violence based on evidence-based research on economic abuse as a form of family violence. It built on previous collaboration to look at working with women's refuges on early identification of economic abuse to embed resources into case practice and empower women leaving family violence to obtain financial safety and security.

The aim of the initial pilot project was to provide a 'train the trainer' to refuge workers on 'financial first aid' and for those workers to then deliver programs to women experiencing economic abuse through the refuge, safe and home and other outreach projects. Three women's family violence services were involved in the initial pilot:

- Lucy Saw –refuge services and outreach programs (in Rockingham and Fremantle)
- Starick House –and providing refuges and outreach services (Eastern Suburbs)
- Woori Mia – An Aboriginal specific refuge.

Curtin University undertook an evaluation of the program. It demonstrated that the program was successful and made some recommended changes. Lotterywest provided funding to rollout the project to other services. The project is now being implemented and will include the development of an appropriate curriculum for this target group.

## Project parties

The parties involved were participants in the pilot project and bring relevant experience to the project reference group, and the establishment and roll out of the program. They include: **Women's Council for Family and Domestic Violence; Financial Counsellors Association of WA** (the project lead). They developed the submission to Lotterywest and will be employing the team; **Women's Legal Service** (provided legal expertise on issues such as debt and credit law); **Financial Toolbox** – (project reference group). They are a not for profit group led by accountants who have developed a website, 'Your toolkit' for women in domestic violence.

**Curtin University** – undertook a literature review in economic abuse and invited specialist from the USA to visit WA. They evaluated the pilot project and wrote the final report; and will evaluate the rolled out program. They contributed \$30,000 toward the roll out program.

**Dept of Communities** – provided the initial grant of \$30,000 for pilot phase and may contribute further funds to the roll out, this is yet to be confirmed.

## Key characteristics

This project was based on very **good pre-existing relationships** between the major project partners. All of the initial partners had either worked together previously or they were key personnel who had developed **trust and respect**. They held a **shared vision** of supporting women escaping Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) to make sure their financial interests were protected. The project relied on an **evidence base of research**.

Issues that were worked through included intellectual property (IP), identification of the best training program, who would manage the pilot and then to fully funded service, setting of boundaries between the key stakeholders.

### **Key enablers to successful collaboration**

Agreed that the current national and state attention to FDV was a key contributor to the success so far in the project. Also, the groups shared passion and commitment to the task. We all identified the need for services for women experiencing economic abuse and wanted to progress a project that would empower and enable women to take control of their own financial safety and security.

In developing the submission to Lotterywest there was lots of collaboration, in the and the final submission was agreed to by the whole team. The team also undertook a Project Logic late last year to really have a sense of shared purpose and outcomes for the project.

FCAWA taking the lead was also a process of consensus, which was unanimous. Largely because FCAWA had the technical expertise in financial hardship and economic abuse and also had capacity to develop and lead the project.

### **Barriers**

Funding was a key barrier. The initial pilot only had a small amount of funding so this restricted what we could achieve.

Another barrier was the getting people together in a timely manner – everyone was contributing out of good will and were all busy people. This is always challenging, and we worked through this by trusting that the core team available at any given meeting would make good decisions for the project.

The governance and structure is still being developed but again there is good will in the team for collaboration. We have now recruited all the team members and are in the process of fully establishing the project.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Resources developed were reviewed by all stakeholders to ensure they were technically, legally and sensitively responsive to this client group. One of the key learnings in the pilot was the level of the information being provided was a little too high for the client group.

The lead agency really understands its role as facilitator, and not the decision maker, in the project and works from a collaborative consensus decision making model. It is clearly understood that this is a consortia model and all players have an important role to play in its development.

# Esperance Community Arts

## Sector

Not for profit community sector

## Overview of the project or program

Escare Incorporated is a medium sized not for profit community organisation established in 1982 and has developed strong connections and partnerships in the Esperance Community with Esperance Community Arts (ECA) and Seawater Families group. Most recently collaborations have had beneficial outcomes for developing cultural identity through community arts. Participants from all ages and backgrounds have come together to work on meaningful Community Arts projects that have helped to raise the profile of local Aboriginal artists and to celebrate and showcase Nyungar language and culture.

As a partner we share resources such as collaborative partnership agreements that ensure project management is professional and undertaken on limited budgets. A crucial element of these projects has been the employment of Aboriginal artists and arts facilitators wherever possible throughout all the projects. The presence of key Aboriginal community members on the advisory group is also significant to ensure strong community ownership of the programs.

Projects have provided opportunities for Aboriginal people to become skilled as Community (arts) workers and volunteer opportunities; with visible increase in self esteem and aspirations. Aboriginal groups, especially grass roots Sea water families and elders have expressed a sense of trust in the process with advisory groups and or discussions happening continually.

## Project parties

Escare is funded by the WA Department for Communities and Esperance Community Arts via Country Arts WA, Lotterywest and the Shire of Esperance. These projects have been supported by Lotterywest, Community Arts Network WA, Culture & the Arts WA and the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program. Lotterywest were integral in the first trail project of the Aboriginal Arts Coordinator project where Escare was the host employer and ECA mentored the worker.

Seawater Families, Escare and ECA have shared processes and relationships of trust and respect for several years and have provided the foundation for the successful outcomes of our partnership projects. This has included elders that Escare have worked with over the past 20 years in our capacity as Family & Community Service. ECA has led the Arts based funding applications. Escare has offered expertise in documents, in-kind support (management, administration, transport, materials) trusting relationships and Seawater families and elders offering intergenerational guidance and trust.

## Key characteristics

Our partnership project reflects the **strong working relationships** developed over several years between Esperance Community Arts, Escare Incorporated and local Indigenous communities. **Intergenerational** yarning and collaboration is key. **Staying neutral** to family business by ECA and Escare is key.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Taking direction from leaders in the Aboriginal community; elders and emerging elders.
- The process can be the outcome. Useful processes provide the scaffolding to future projects that may have unexpected outcomes.
- Be open to what will occur along the way, be flexible and respond to emergent needs, based on shared values and what is a priority. Taking risk, i.e. moved funds from one element to secure Melbourne based artist for the mural project.
- Working across areas i.e. from NAIDOC week activities, to Aboriginal children's day, Community Holiday programs, parenting groups, Nurragunnawali plan for Escare Outside School Hours Care and crèche increase cross fertilisation and innovation. It also leads to the development of capacity (i.e. employing Aboriginal educators for the crèche) and trust in working with local Nyungar community in meaningful and varied ways.

### Barriers

In partnership we are stronger together. During this time we have all faced funding issue, with Escare under the machinery of government changes, not knowing until recently if we had funding beyond June 2019 and ECA having to fight for funding from the local shire who have displayed adversarial actions (if needed this can be elaborated upon). Seawater families group are unfunded.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Shared values, respect, and reconciliation.
- Listening all the time.
- Supporting each other by yarning over issues; especially when faced with road blocks by those who hold power in the community (that is not us).
- Work around, go over roadblocks, think outside the square.
- Conviction that what we are doing is important and valued by many; even if not by some of "the powers that be" locally.
- Using local networks and asking for help; you never know who wants to be part of the project.
- Sharing resources; including documents.
- Sharing learnings about data collection/evaluation.
- Process the key and the "Speed of trust".
- Non-competitive environment of working together, no one is boss, have leaders.

# Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

Interagency Family and Domestic Violence Response Teams (FDVRT) were implemented in 2013 and are ongoing. The FDVRT is generally a co-located model, with a team located in each police district throughout metropolitan and regional WA (17 teams). Family violence reports submitted by police (FVIR 1-9) are shared electronically with the FDVRT to enable a joint risk assessment/triage meeting to consider the most appropriate response options for the individual and/or family. The aim is to improve the safety of child and adult victims of family and domestic violence through a collaborative approach that focuses on timely and early intervention following a police call out to a family violence incident.

Face to face triage is preferred however, other methods of collaboration are utilised where necessary (particularly in regional WA and where cross boundary issues impact co-location.)

## Project parties

Parties are based on a partnership between the Department of Communities, Western Australia Police Force and specialist family and domestic violence services. The FDVRT core group include:

- teams of dedicated police officers working as a secondary support response known as Family Violence Teams (FVT);
- a senior child protection worker – Department of Communities (Child Protection and Family Support); and
- Coordinated Response Service (CRS) representative from the non- government sector contracted via the Department of Communities. CRS are affiliated to a local refuge and/or an organisation able to provide outreach services. Currently these organisations include: Lucy Saw Centre, Mission Australia, Patricia Giles Centre, Ruah Community Services, Koolkuna, Waratah, Women's Health and Family Services.

## Key characteristics

- **Joint risk assessments** using a common framework informed by police, child protection and specialist family and domestic violence workers;
- **Identification of opportunities to intervene early** with families experiencing family and domestic violence;
- **Timely responses** following a police call out;
- **Responses targeted to client need**, identified risk and unique case circumstances;
- **Supported and streamlined client pathways** through the service system;
- **Coordinated responses** between partner agencies;
- **Multi-agency safety planning** on a needs basis involving agencies and organisations that have a role in responding to family and domestic violence or otherwise address issues impacting on family violence; and
- FDVRT make **referrals** to Communicare Safe at Home for male perpetrator response.

### **Key enablers to successful collaboration**

- Team building from co-location model including representation from the non-government sector across the state.
- Interface (electronic sharing of data (FVIR) from IMS (WA Police Force) to a triage portal (ASSIST Department of Communities) commenced December 2013 to enable timely information sharing.
- In 2017 amendments to *Children and Community Services Act 2004* provided improved information sharing without the requirement for client consent where information is risk relevant.
- Endorsement and alignment to CRARMF by standardisation of IMS FVIR 1-9.
- Creation of Guidelines for FDVRT (roles and responsibilities), as a shared direction across government and non-government partner agencies.
- Guidelines for MACM similarly available for all family violence service providers.
- Expansion of resources into metropolitan Family Violence Teams August 2018 – providing increased capacity for information sharing and contact and engagement with victims and perpetrators.
- Mandatory training for Police FVT since July 2018 including CRARMF to ensure all police positioned in FV role are fully aware.

### **Barriers**

- Lack of alignment between geographical boundaries of operations in respect of different government agencies.
- Non Police resourcing may not be adequate between differing parts of the state in respect of case volume of family violence incidents. Non Police relief resourcing is provided inconsistently even in circumstances where a member is scheduled to be absent.
- Non-government CRS are not consistent in terms of full time representation to participate in FDVRT business. Appears problem is compounded by tender outcomes.
- WA Police Force is the only member of the FVDRT operating daily and on public holidays contributing to risk and service delivery delays.
- Whilst an information sharing process exists, it remains that Police systems and Department of Community systems are still separate. There is no combined system accessible and populated by all team members.
- No contemporary training in the CRARMF is provided across all sectors leading to a lack of adherence to standard practice and is contrary to the objectives of the collaborative process.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Joint training opportunities could be established to promote an effective collaborative process.

There appears to be a focus on highlighting negative outcomes rather than creating an awareness of and learning from successful practices at responder and practitioner level.



# Financial Counselling Network

## Sector

Community service sector

## Overview of the project or program

The Financial Counselling Network (FCN) formed out of a collaborative response to the loss of funding for metropolitan based financial counselling services in 2015, with the partial reinstatement of funding being awarded to the FCN in late 2015. The original member organisations are AnglicareWA, Blue Sky Community Group, City of Cockburn, Gosnells Community Legal Centre, Midlas, Mission Australia, Southcare, The Spiers Centre and UnitingCare West,

In 2018, the FCN received additional funding which resulted in an expansion of service delivery locations to 25, supported by an additional 5 member organisations being the Red Cross, Sussex Street Community Law Services, Forrestfield Information and Referral Service, FinUCAre and Communicare. This newly formed group committed to provide a comprehensive range of integrated and person centred services to reduce the drivers and impacts of financial hardship in the WA community. It has since added the HUGS Service Centre (HSC) in 2018, which assesses applications for the Hardship Utility Grants Scheme (HUGS). The Service also provides support on better managing energy and water usage. From Federal funding, it is developing a Financial Wellbeing Service, focussing in reducing the drivers of financial hardship.

## Project parties

Anglicare WA and Uniting Care West are the lead organisations (contract holders), with an additional 12 organisations forming the Partnership. All organisations have an equal voice in driving the strategic agenda and participating in strategic decisions. Each organisation employs financial counsellors directly to deliver services guided by the requirements of the Service Agreement and the agreed strategic agenda. Each member organisation receives the same amount of money for each service delivery location and has the same agreed service deliverables.

## Key characteristics

The structure, governance and management of the Network are integral elements. Nine principles form the basis of the partners' relationship being participation, equity, transparency, independence, outcome focus, innovation, responsive, accountable and persistence. These principles have contributed to the development of an effective and collaborative Management Group. All member organisations are funded equally and are equal participants in decision making regardless of size.

The holders of the State Agreements, UnitingCare West and AnglicareWA, have put in place a Joint Services Agreement which supports governance, design and delivery of financial counselling in the metropolitan area and Financial Counselling Service Agreements are in place with each member organisation. There is a centralised support function across the service network and is the principle point of contact between the FCN and the Department of Communities. The Management Group, consisting of a senior representative from each member organisation, meets bi-monthly. The FCN is supported by a community of practice focussing on sharing of good practice and the identification of systemic issues.

The Steering Committee (AnglicareWA, UnitingCare West and Principal Officer) meet fortnightly to consider emerging issues, monitor compliance, identify and mitigate risk, ensure communication between partner organisations and provide oversight of the service system.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

The loss of funding provided a unique opportunity, where all Partners had formed strong relationships through the creation of the initial vision and all started from the same unfunded position. The shared vision and objective were critical. Significant effort was invested to reform and rethink this when the collaboration grew in 2018 to include new member organisations.

The Department of Communities worked closely with Partners to develop a co-designed data reporting template that was effective in identifying key outcomes and outputs. This relationship enabled a collaborative approach to the identification of locations of greatest need when additional funds became available. The Partnership was built on values that enabled the member organisations to have the difficult conversations necessary to move forward. Sometimes this has meant that member organisations have had to support decisions that they might not have made alone, an illustration of the strength of the collaboration. Centralised management and support have been critical for the ongoing success of the collaboration as well as the implementation of the FCN's strategic plan. Further supported through the findings of an independent evaluation in 2017.

### Barriers

The evaluation in 2017 highlighted segmentation of support for the collaboration by the financial counselling group, with the identification of around a quarter of the group that were unsupportive. The values underpinning the collaboration, with equal voice and equal value regardless of size, has further strengthened the initiative and has supported diversity in discussions and strategic decisions.

Collection, consolidation and benchmarking of data were more difficult areas to successfully integrate across member organisations. Consolidation of service data and benchmarking across service locations was a significant shift for financial counsellors. It has directed focus and integrated accountability into the model.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Importance of centralised resource with enough authority to drive the collaboration.
- Agreed and shared data collection underpins the achievements – collect what is important as it drives behaviours.
- A move away from competitive tendering supports the sharing of good practice, enables a more effective community of practice and assists in the identification of systemic issues (the FCN has recently led a submission lobbying for the inclusion of hardship guidelines and practices in local government authorities.)
- Change takes time, it took between 2-3 years for the financial counselling group to become used to the oversight and accountability that being part of the FCN entailed.
- Importance of shared vision and regular strategic meetings of Partner organisations.
- Value of an external evaluation to refocus and improve structure, systems and processes.

# Family Relationships Centre

## Sector

Community service sector.

## Overview of the project or program

The Family Relationship Centre program helps by providing information about family relationships at all stages – forming new relationships, overcoming relationship difficulties or dealing with separation. Family Relationship Centre staff help people going through separation focus on their children's needs and help decide what to do next. Family Relationship Centres specialise in providing joint Family Dispute Resolution mediation sessions to help both parties to agree on parenting arrangements.

Relationships Australia Western Australia (RAWA) approached Multicultural Services Centre of Western Australia (MSCWA) and agreed to harness the synergies and strengths of both agencies to develop an inclusive service delivery approach and the development of a funding submission and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). They were successful and commenced the Perth Family Relationships centre program in the Hay Street Mall. The original grant from the Attorney Generals Department has been renewed twice. The outcome of two organisations working together is:

- A beneficial, supportive and culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate family law mediation for culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) clients as the emphasis is on the use of bilingual/bicultural mediators and not just interpreters; and
- Development of parenting plans and other mediated agreements which are culturally appropriate.

## Project parties

The parties to the collaboration are Relationships Australia WA with 60 years of relationship counselling experience and 17 years providing family law mediation and the MSCWA operating since 1980.

RAWA is the Lead agency and the sharing of human resources was based on the proportion of people of CaLD background in the catchment area. MSCWA staff work under the professional supervision of the RAWA Manager and this has worked seamlessly since the project commenced some 9 years ago.

RAWA is responsible for the administration of the program, grant acquittal etc. whilst MSCWA provides and cultural and linguistic resources in making the services culturally and linguistically appropriate.

## Key characteristics

CaLD clients have the choice to be serviced from the main FRC situated in the City Centre or from the MSCWA offices in North Perth, Morley or Cannington. The MoU was revisited after the grant application was successful and no changes were made. It was reviewed 8 years later and RAWA made significant concessions to enable MSCWA to continue to partner in a sustainable way. The review and concessions were initiated by RAWA demonstrating the strength of the collaboration. The experience of the multicultural sector has been mostly the opposite kind where the mainstream has ignored the spirit and the content of what was agreed to before the funds were granted. The openness of both CEOs

in expressing their views and concerns, the mutual trust and sharing of power which were readily agreed to, ensured the achievement of the other characteristics without much effort.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

The main enablers were:

- Mutual trust at the CEO and Senior Managerial levels within both agencies.
- MSCWA staff working under the professional supervision of RAWA Managerial staff and staff of both agencies getting along well and learning from each other.
- MoU rather than a legal contract binding both parties.
- Commitment of both agencies to make a mainstream service culturally and linguistically accessible to CaLD communities.
- Regular dialogues between managerial staff of both agencies.

RAWA and MSCWA have incorporated guiding principles in the planning and implementation of this project by investing in human capital of bilingual and bi cultural nature and by making their expertise available, they tackled social exclusion from the perspectives of individuals and communities who now have access to culturally and linguistically appropriate mediation services. Their agenda follows two guiding principles:

- it must tackle the social exclusion of individuals and communities; and
- it must invest in the human capital of all our people, especially the most disadvantaged.

### Barriers

There were no barriers relating to governance and structure, systems and processes, managing and leveraging relationships, and people and culture. This was largely because of the enablers and keeping the governance and structure simple i.e. Having a MoU and not a contract and MSCWA staff working under the professional supervision of RAWA Managers.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

Other key lessons are the importance of extending support to other projects and activities of the two agencies; exploring other opportunities to collaborate; sharing the success of the partnership at a national social inclusion conference, participating in social occasions i.e. Xmas party etc.

# Fixated Threat Assessment Centre

## Sector

Government

## Overview of the project or program

The FTAC concept focuses on fixated and/or grievance fuelled individuals within the community who are assessed as presenting a medium or high risk to Public Office Holders and/or State Security. The majority of fixated individuals have been shown to suffer with mental illness and have often disengaged from mental health treatment. The FTAC concept is a collaboration between the Western Australia Police Force (WAPF) and the Mental Health Commission (MHC). MHC committed resources which are embedded within WAPF's State Security Investigation Group (SSIG). Together, they jointly manage fixated community members, undertaking risk assessments, developing investigative strategies (if/when criminal court outcomes, may be required) and access mental health resources as a way/means to mitigate community risk.

FTAC is a national Counter Terrorism (CT) initiative, with a broad stakeholder group. By way of background (genesis/timing) in October 2017, First Ministers at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the recommendation of the Australian New Zealand Counter Terrorism Committee (ANZCTC) and agreed to deliver a nationally consistent framework as detailed in four phase deliverables. The four phases being:

- 1) *Assessment*: the foundation of a national approach, comprising assessment tools and processes for identification and triaging –completed;
- 2) *Management*: including a pre and post-assessment referral framework for identification, support and treatment, completed in October 2017;
- 3) *Supporting mechanisms*: including formal partnerships between law enforcement, mental health and countering violent extremism coordinators in each jurisdiction, for completion by mid-2018; and
- 4) *Evaluation*: an evaluation and review of the national approach, including continued validation of assessment tools, for completion by mid-2019.

## Project parties

FTAC is considered a long-term collaborative strategy between partner agencies and is a national initiative. Daily collaboration (FTAC/SSIG) occurs on a local level. Key partners include:

- Department of Home Affairs (DHA) – Oversight of FTAC concept on behalf of the Commonwealth. DHA are provided with briefings on occasion but not involved in any state based strategic decision making or day-to-day operational strategies/deployments.
- MHC –provided 0.5 FTE Forensic Psychiatrist (FP). MHC are provided with quarterly status reports which outline output and capability gaps.
- WAPF - Interact daily with FTAC staff. They are formalised at a morning meeting between the agencies to deployment and action strategies aligned to FTAC's intent are devised and later executed. This sometimes includes FTAC and SSIG deploying into the field together to resolve an issue. WAPF are also provided with quarterly status reports summarising output and identify capability gaps.

### Key characteristics

FTAC/SSIG interaction is a **structured process**. The Daily Intelligence Briefing (DIB) process which is a starting point for FTAC/SSIG interaction/discussion is chaired by a senior police officer. The FTAC representative is also a senior, experienced FP.

FTAC/SSIG process shares the majority of core competencies/capabilities and characteristics of collaboration (ARACY 2013).

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

FTAC/SSIG relationship is built around mitigating risk. Questions often posed in Counter Terrorism debriefs are:

- What did you know?
- What did you do about it?

If the answer to these questions is you (an agency) possessed knowledge but did not share with other agencies who are equally aligned to being involved in risk mitigation an opportunity arises for criticism to be steered in the direction of the respective agency. Sharing information between agencies helps spread the load around risk. Coupled with each agency bringing a high level of expertise that the other does not possess, also contributes to potentially providing a more efficient and holistic response to problem solving.

FTAC/SSIG have already seen advantage in sharing information, trusting the judgement of partner agencies and being open to flexible initiatives which are all key contributors to the current effective agency collaboration. Formalised systems are in place to coordinate collaboration, discussion and decision making.

### Barriers

- The program has been operating since November, 2018. Because of the participants in the process FP and senior police, the collaboration process has been relatively seamless in implementation and effective by way of daily interaction.
- Professional respect is a significant driver for success. Respect for the professional authority provided by the FP is well considered by SSIG members. Conversely the FP listens and is respectful in her interactions with police. Because both parties are focusing on risk mitigation, albeit addressing different components of the issue.
- The concept encourages a cohesive collegiate approach to problem solving.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

FTAC has been able to take advantage of lessons learnt in other states and territories. Opportunity is provided to practitioners to travel and interact formally/informally with East Coast colleagues to share experiences and academic learnings. A key element to success is co-habitation between SSIG and FTAC. It improves communication and develops effective working relationships. The intent of the project is to expand the FTAC team to 3 full-time FTE. MHC/WAPF are hopeful the expanded model will further improve capacity/collaboration between the agencies who are intrinsically linked to providing an improved level of community safety.

# Great Southern Reconnect Partnership

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The Great Southern Reconnect Partnership Program (RPP) is a case coordination service providing multiple supports for complex family and individual youth needs. The RPP is a project of the Great Southern Youth Outcomes Forum (GSYOF) designed to 'fill gaps' in services where multiple and collaborative support is required.

The aim of the RPP is to provide youth and families with a central point to address complex needs and issues, where mandatory service provision is non-existent. The RPP has a service coordinator who oversees a group of six case coordination facilitators from 6 different organisations – Department of Education, CPFS, Albany Youth Support Association [AYSA], headspace Albany, Relationships Australia, Wanslea family Services and Anglicare. Facilitators are trained and meet to triage referred cases delivered through diverse agencies across the Great Southern. Cases are allocated on several bases such as existing involvement, proximity, workload or expertise. RPP support is maintained as part of normal agency service provision.

Support agencies across the region are furnished with RPP details and referral methods and all are able to refer as needed, with family/youth consent. Following referral acceptance, the allocated facilitator meets with the family/youth to begin procedures for collaborative case management.

The RPP has met needs obvious within the region and is not dependent upon specialised funding.

## Project parties

The GSYOF is a collaborative assembly of 19 Government and non-Government youth support agencies and exists to address region service gaps, repeal duplication and engender collaboration across sectors. Membership and involvement is voluntary and not cost-dependent.

The RPP is designed and endorsed by the GSYOF and is reported to by the RPP Coordinator.

The RPP members each commit to a maximum of 3 case coordination allocations at any given time and have access to other facilitators for peer support, mentoring and training. Reporting and coordination of the service is maintained through the AYSA.

## Key characteristics

The RPP is designed to engender cross-agency/sector collaboration and the concept was developed across five separate organisations with ongoing refinement and modifications coming from within the member organisations. This has ensured equal voice and knowledge amongst all stakeholders, achieving consensus, shared 'power', inclusivity, ongoing liaison and a collective commitment to service excellence. The design of the concept involved multiple providers and refinement occurs with the same premise. The key

aspect of 'existing service delivery' binds agencies to the service as it is "core business achieved more effectively".

### **Key enablers to successful collaboration**

See above re co-design from an agency perspective and in cross-sectorial manner. There is no 'leadership' on a separate level but several key drivers. The RPP is not dependent upon a single person or agency and can exist irrespective of political environments. The absence of targeted funding also ensures longevity.

### **Barriers**

The RPP as above emerged from a collaborative Forum (GSYOF) and with no budget in mind so some barriers were removed from the outset. The model is very simple and this has enabled a smooth passage to process, arrival and agreement. Ongoing management and recognition of all stakeholders prevails and ensures that all stakeholders remain primate in the model.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Nil.



# Hepatitis My Health Our Health Program

## Sector

Government and community service sectors but also included the private sector

## Overview of the project or program

The My Health Our Health Program (MHOH) is a program of the Multicultural Services Centre of Western Australia (MSCWA) for culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities in Western Australia. It informs, educates, and supports reduction in transmission of, and morbidity and mortality caused by sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and blood-borne viruses (BBVs), and to minimise the personal and social impact of these infections. MHOH set up after hours services in venues that are more convenient and affordable to access; and supported by staff who speak their language and understand their cultural considerations. The extensive awareness raising/community education work that MHOH undertook led to participants seeking information about and access to testing. They hadn't been aware that cost free testing was available to them.

## Project parties

Collaboration parties are the Royal Perth Hospital, Clinipath, GPs and the MSCWA MHOH program.

## Key characteristics

A **shared vision** was critical for the success and for parties concerned needed to have a shared understanding of the problem. **Free and frank discussions** between the stakeholders, initially also involving Hepatitis WA, played a major role in this regard. **Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities of each party** was documented and agreed to and by sticking to them trust between them was never an issue.

All parties were prepared to go the extra mile because individually and collectively they were **committed** to addressing a significant health issue from a systems perspective and alleviating the morbidity and preventing the mortality of at risk individuals who had Hepatitis and were unaware of it let alone seeking/being treated for it.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Commitment of all parties to address a significant gap in testing for Hepatitis and doing so in a manner that addressed all barriers.
- Detailed discussions that led to the co-design of the testing activity in terms of location, timing, information provision, counselling, provision of language support.
- Mutual trust between all parties.
- The coordination capacity and commitment of MHOH Director.
- Excellent team work within and between the relevant parties.
- Lack of a legal contract binding the parties.
- Regular dialogues between the agencies.
- Respectful relationships which valued the contributions of all .e. People involved were Doctors, Consultants, nurses, allied health professionals and bilingual workers.
- Sharing of credit as this activity could not have been initiated let alone implemented so successfully if any of the parties had sought to do it themselves.

### **Barriers**

Possible duplication Hepatitis WA, discussions reassured that all testing would occur after hours and would not be duplicated in any way.

Barriers such as access to an afterhours service was addressed by Clinipath and GPs willing to provide their services at that time, the barrier of convenient location was addressed by the service being provided from a MSCWA office and the language and cultural barriers were addressed by MHOH staff and GPs being bi cultural and multilingual and by the use of other MSCWA bilingual staff.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Where there is trust and goodwill all challenges/problems are insurmountable. Do the best you can to accommodate other parties even if it requires additional efforts on your part and it may not strictly be within your remit.

# Imagined Futures

## Sector

The government and community sectors, as well as local residents, businesses and philanthropic organisations.

## Overview of the project or program

Imagined Futures, established in 2013, was formerly known as the South West Metropolitan Partnership Forum ('SWMPF'). Imagined Futures (IF) was built on the foundation of the Regional Managers Forum / District Leadership Group for the Fremantle CPFS District, but with a significantly expanded membership. It had a collective impact approach with a focus on facilitating a collaborative approach to identifying social issues; designing collaborative approaches to service delivery; and joint delivery of programs in key focus areas.

IF had three domains of action at commencement: Capacity building, developing coordinated wrap-around services for individuals with complex needs; Joined-up service delivery through a place-based multiagency partnership with the local community in Davis Park Beaconsfield; and responding to a priority social issues in our region, vulnerable, at-risk young people ('IF Youth Initiative'). The capacity building projects met their initial objectives and, due to resourcing constraints, have been wound up. The Davis Park project and Youth Initiative are ongoing projects.

## Project parties

The IF Leadership Group includes a broad cohort of stakeholders including government, community and business representation. The IF Steering Committee supports the backbone staff of IF, and assists the IF Leadership Group in shaping its agenda.

Each of the joint service delivery projects is led by a Working Group which is a subgroup of the collaboration. The Department of Communities CPFS Fremantle chairs the Davis Park Working Group. The Palmerston Association, a not-for-profit, chairs the Youth Initiative Working Group. Working Groups have clear terms of reference and authority to get on with the work.

An unusual feature of this governance structure is the size of the Leadership Group. We have found that it has been effective in ensuring a wide range of perspectives have voice and input, and it has allowed trust to develop.

## Key characteristics

The **backbone secretariat** has variously facilitated, led, supported and driven the collaboration, depending on the season in which IF found itself.

**Power sharing** is a key aspect of the collaboration. This has involved larger organisations and funders being willing to cede some of the power they would ordinarily have, as well as smaller organisations giving up some degree of the autonomy they would ordinarily have to participate in the collective impact approach.

It is important to note that a core principle of the collaboration has been that **resourcing of collaborative work** must first be sourced from existing collective resources.

A further significant outcome of the work of Imagined Futures has been to build significant **impetus for collaboration in our region** which extends beyond the work of the group. A

number of collaborative projects have been undertaken between member organisations, as a result of the **relationships, information flows and trust that have been developed** within IF.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

- A critical aspect of the success of IF as a collaboration has been the backbone secretariat. This has been funded work, covering a part-time Executive Director, the costs of coordination, and some financial support for program delivery. The shift from being a Regional Managers Forum which was limited to communication and high-level information sharing, to a proactive collaboration, with joined-up planning and service delivery on the ground, was closely tied to the availability of these dedicated resources.
- Capacity building was an important area of initial focus for the group and contributed to a shared sense of vision and purpose.
- Since 2013, member organisations have applied for a number of funding opportunities as a collective, either through a nominated member agency or the backbone organisation. Program design and tenders have been developed collectively among all stakeholder groups, including community members. Service delivery has been overseen collaboratively by the group, through the Working Group structure.
- Having brokerage funds to fill gaps in our work which could not be overcome through better use of our existing collective resources, or through other avenues.

### Barriers

The key barriers to collaboration in the experience of IF are as follows:

- **“Authority”**: it is critical that participants in the collaboration are at a sufficient level in their organisations, or have sufficient delegation, to make decisions and effectively support the work of the collaboration. This means there needs to be agreement between member organisations as to outcomes and resources. The outcomes must be clearly measurable to ensure accountability.
- **“Commitment”**: Similarly, member organisations must be clear about the benefits of collaboration in terms of helping them effectively meet their own missions, and thereby fully commit to the collaboration.
- **“Resources”**: IF would not have been able to achieve the outcomes it has without backbone resources which coordinate effort, keep focus, and bring existing resources together.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

**Building trust is critical.** This is achieved through transparency, honesty, clarity of understanding and focus on common goals, and good governance structures which are inclusive.

**Resources are required,** but the lesson from IF is that with the right approach, the additional resources required are in relative terms not considerable compared with those existing resources which can be leveraged with significantly better impact and effectiveness.

Working in a localised, **place based** way, provides the opportunity for more effective and targeted interventions, better efficiency, and, through placing control in the hands of those closer to the issues and solutions, far more effective and better coordinated outcomes.

# Mental Health Co-response

## Sector

Government sector.

## Overview of the project or program

Mental Health Co-Response (MHCR) is a Western Australia Police Force (WAPOL) initiative in partnership with the Mental Health Commission (MHC) and WA Department of Health (DoH). MHCR commenced in January 2016 and ran as a trial for two years until 2018. The trial was independently evaluated by Edith Cowan University - The Sellenger Centre for Research in Law, Justice and Social Change. In March 2019 MHCR was expanded and is now part of 'normal' business.

This joined-up working is within the government sector and aims to provide a collaborative and appropriate response to vulnerable persons in the community including those with mental health issues who come into contact with police. Police and mental health practitioners are co-located and co-responding to calls to police for assistance with mental health and welfare related incidents.

## Project parties

WAPOL leads, manages and co-ordinates MHCR. WAPOL provides all the policing resources i.e dedicated Co-Response police officers, funding, vehicles, other assets and physical work locations. MHC provides the funding to purchase all the mental health practitioner services from DoH. DoH provides the mental health practitioners to staff MHCR. The elements of MHCR are Police Operations Centre, East Mobile Team – Midland, North Mobile Team – Warwick, South/East Mobile Team – Cannington, South Mobile Team – Cockburn, Perth Watch House and Co-ordination Unit.

## Key characteristics

MHCR program developed the above characteristics in a number of ways:

- **Shared common vision.** WAPOL and MHC originally developed MHCR with clear goals and aims.
- **Senior executive support.** Both current and former WAPOL and MHC Commissioners wanted to change the way police respond to mental health incidents and improve outcomes for all persons involved.
- **Common organisational values.** WAPOL, MHC and DoH are all people centred organisations who want to improve service delivery to some of the most vulnerable persons in our community.
- **Evidence base to support MHCR.** Extensive research was conducted on other Co-Response programs operating worldwide. This formed the basis of the MHCR program and clearly demonstrated why it should be implemented in WA.
- **Stakeholder engagement and planning.** WAPOL, MHC and DoH were engaged and all part of the formal planning process to implement MHCR.
- **Demand and impact of each organisations.** With the increase of mental health within the community, WAPOL, MHC and DoH were having to manage an increasing demand of their resources to a common issue.
- **Commitment to program.** WAPOL, MHC and DoH were all dedicated to MHCR, committing resources and staff.

- **Previous experience working together.** Police and mental health practitioners have been working together and dealing with people in crisis for decades, prior to MHCR.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Common organisational values between WAPOL, MHC and DoH.
- Political support for program from government.
- Changing community attitude to mental health.
- Advocacy from mental health NGO's, consumers and carers.
- Shared operational leadership of MHCR by WAPOL and DoH.
- Trial environment allowed changes and improvements to be made to improve service delivery i.e increasing area of coverage, type of tasks attended.
- Governance structure created to implement unique MHCR structures, separate to WAPOL and DoH current practices, policies and procedures.
- Involvement and consultation with mental health consumers and carers.
- Independent evaluation of program.
- Operational governance overseen by WAPOL, MHC, and DoH.
- Performance measurement and evaluation was provided on a regular basis to all partners. Continually demonstrating the value of MHCR.

### Barriers

Actions have been taken to overcome barriers and include:

- New and unique governance structures were created with involvement from WAPOL, MHC and DoH specifically for MHCR.
- Induction training was provided to mental health practitioners, assisting them to work in a police environment.
- Data capture systems developed ensured all organisations reporting requirements were met.
- Operational managers group created with equal representation from WAPOL, DoH and MHC. This group monitored the program, dealt with any disputes and made joint decisions on the program.
- Establishment of a central co-ordination unit with permanent representatives from WAPOL and MHC.
- Monthly face to face visits to all operational elements of Co-Response to engage with frontline staff.
- Regular updates on progress of MHCR provided to all organisations and participants.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

By not 'over reaching' at the start of this program, the different organisations that do not operate in the same environment learned to work together and trust each other. Once this trust was built, changes and expansion of program were made. These improvements were made without resistance and support of all partners.

# Reverend George Davies

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

Reverend George Davies is a Former Synod Youth Worker and subsequently a consultant for Community Youth Services with the Uniting Church in WA. Rev Davies' experience with collaborative projects goes back 50 years. Rev Davies has included various projects or programs he was involved with that include both top down and bottom up processes.

## Project parties

Various.

## Projects

### “The Square”, Strathfield Sydney

In 1968 a musician, Karl, in the St. Chads Anglican Church in Strathfield, Sydney, speculated that a hamburger shop being relinquished by his mother could become a folk and blues music venue. The shop was located in the centre of Strathfield Square, at the time the geographical centre of Sydney and a key connection point for trains and buses.

The Strathfield Council accepted a variation in the zoning criteria and in June the venue made a start. As a guitar-playing muso in nearby theological training I became aware through the muso grapevine the venue was looking for musicians. I became a regular performer and was amazed at the diversity of personnel who turned up and contributed. Sunday night was folk and gospel folk music with groups turning up after church services. Friday night was rock and a jug group featured on Saturday nights.

This was collaboration on the ground with a wide diversity of participant sources. A rich sense of community developed from diverse parts of the metropolitan area. Then in October that year a letter was received from Strathfield Council that the venue must close forthwith because of “suspicion of drugs”. In the attitudes of the time, young people, dim lights, guitar music, must mean drugs. In fact we would have been the cleanest venue in town given Karl's gentle but close awareness of activity.

The barrier, the destruction of community collaboration, emanated from ignorance and distance of those in power. A year later the Strathfield Council felt guilt that they were not doing enough for young people and instigated a table tennis venue. This was an idea from ‘top down’ and was light years from reaching the creative and community value of The Square.

### “The Pot”, Albury NSW

In 1970, as a Probationary Methodist Minister, I was posted to North Albury, NSW. On the general principle of detached work, to which I had been introduced in 1964, I engaged in conversation and relationships ‘down town’ and met a very creative local who promptly drew together his friends to discuss establishing a folk/blues music venue.

My role in this endeavor, consistent with detached work, was to form relationships, identify gaps, float an idea and proceed if, and only if, such an idea gained status with a network

where collective ownership, creative thinking and action emerged. The outcome in this case was a vibrant 'folk joint' near the centre of town out of which not only music but a variety of other community initiatives emerged.

From my Strathfield experience in The Square, I was conscious that a failure of local government endorsement could be a barrier. A couple of us approached the Mayor of Albury, a strong figure, and explained our awareness of potential for conservative community attitudes of 'young people, dim lights, guitars, must be an orgy' and such like. The mayor was appreciative of our visit and readily assured us of his endorsement.

The value of mayoral awareness and endorsement was demonstrated a couple of weeks after opening when a fight occurred on the opposite side of the street from our Saturday night venue. I expected the attending police to accuse us of contributing to miscreant persons on the street. The police response as I walked up to the situation was unhesitating: "You look after the inside and we'll look after the outside". Collaboration in action.

The potential barrier to the collaboration of mayor, police and community was in the person of my Superintendent Methodist Minister who believed that guitars were of the devil and that the coffee shop experiment in America had failed. He forbade his congregation to attend the venue. He said he allowed me to engage in The Pot only because Saturday was my night off! Because of his influence in town there was initially a considerable degree of public ambivalence. After a short time the venue became a place to be seen and scored frequent photos in the local newspaper!

### **"The Dungeon", Condobolin NSW**

In 1971 I was transferred to the Condobolin Methodist Circuit, in the geographical centre of NSW. After a year of forming relationship with young and young adult locals, I floated the idea of a music venue. The concept was readily endorsed by the 'on the ground' network. Collaboration involved young people of the Methodist church, other locals of town and an inter-faith group of young people from the 'neighbouring' town of Parkes. We established a venue, named 'The Dungeon', as part of a Community Centre which had taken over an old hotel. Collaboration included being invited by adults of the Community Centre Committee to participate in the venue. The name 'The Dungeon' originated from an initial offer to utilise a below ground former bakery site, an offer later withdrawn.

Initial barriers included the Picture Theatre owner who disliked the nearby 'competition' and the senior Police sergeant who attempted to close the venue on the basis that it would "attract undesirables from other towns". The opposition of police became an unlikely asset in that local Koori Aboriginal young and not-so-young people, who had long been experiencing pressure from local police, expressed a strong affinity with other patrons. Overhearing my initial debate with the police sergeant, their reaction was, as quoted to me later: "The sergeant gives us a hard time. The sergeant gives George a hard time – we're with George!" The stereotype problem people of town became our security. Collaboration!

### **Nambucca Valley, NSW**

A significant feature of collaboration in the community is the linking of sub-cultures. This was the case in Condobolin with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal persons in an integrated project. Similar dynamics follow. The collaboration in this case was between the 'alternative community' or 'hippies', the 'straight' scene of church young people and an unlikely pastor of the Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.



In 1975 I was posted by the Methodist Church to Macksville, NSW in the Nambucca River district. The decline of the dairy industry in the region had resulted in cheap land being available. A number of 'alternative community', or 'hippies', began arriving to develop a new life as an alternative to the boredom of suburbs in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. This community grew from a handful to about 150 during the two years I was there.

There was tension in the three towns of the district, Macksville, Nambucca Heads and Bowraville, from the local residents who found it difficult to relate to the different sub-culture and feared the growth of marijuana use in the region. This anxiety extended to church people including those of the Methodist Church.

As a consequence of detached work down town relationships my home became a drop-in coffee mecca for many hippie hill-dwellers when in town. Young people of the church also frequented my home, the parsonage, as a meeting place. These church young people had use a farm up the valley, owned by the pastor of the Reorganised Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as a venue for camps. When they took me to the farm my immediate instinct was to suggest: "Wow, this place could be a venue for a festival".

As with previous settings, the floating of an idea in a context of relationships resulted in its affirmation, adoption and an explosion of creativity from a diversity of persons. 'Hippies' and 'straights' were enthusiastic to collaborate. Decades later, of course, some would proclaim such a process as a new idea called 'co-design'.

The outcome of collective creativity was the mounting of two October music festivals, in 1975 and 1976, called Willow Bend Festival, given that willow trees lined the creek that ran through the property. With about 400 attending, these were a rich interaction of 'hippies' with other young people from far and wide.

The barrier to continuation was partly that I transferred to WA in 1977. The acute barrier was that in response to community anxieties the police, following a raid on alternative communities in the Lismore region in 1976, conducted a further raid on the alternative community in the Nambucca region. The dwellings they had built on their properties were demolished followed by arrests and intimidation which severely disrupted their lifestyle. This injustice was intensified by in that the hippies were in fact living the Anzac lifestyle in rapport with remaining farmers of the area – growing their own food, building their own dwellings, making their own clothes and creating community through their own creativity.

The tragic nature of this non-collaboration from wider society was driven home for me with the news that a potter, loved by the farming locals, had committed suicide shortly after the raids.

### **Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA)**

I arrived in WA, in 1977, to take up the position of Synod Youth Worker with the newly forming Uniting Church in Australia, WA Synod. Soon afterwards I joined the committee of what was then the WA Council of Voluntary Youth Organisations, chaired by Peter Kenyon. This was a collaboration of Church youth groups, Red Cross youth, YMCA, Federation of Rural Youth, Young Australia League and some others.

Discussion ensued after a time that the aim, "To improve the quality of life for young people in WA", necessitated either a more modest aim, given our membership structures, or a radical expansion of the membership base. Collaboration can be consistent with debate and the outcome was the formation of YACWA. The new collaborative constitution enabled

the inclusion of not-for-profit organisations forming to address homelessness and other issues as well as recognition of regions and young people in their own right. That culture of collaboration in a 'peak' body has characterised YACWA over time in diverse and creative ways.

An initial barrier arose in the early days when YACWA held a public forum to address the controversial Police Act 54B, policy strongly supported by Premier Sir Charles Court. As a Board member of YACWA, I found senior police in my office shortly afterwards querying with indignation the nature of "this YACWA entity". I found myself reminding them, in that somewhat pejorative atmosphere, that they were called 'public servants' rather than 'public masters'. The police seemed nonplussed and quietly withdrew. YACWA had followed due process to exist and to conduct a forum. It had not occurred to us to specifically liaise with police. The existence of media coverage to our addressing of the 54B issue was an early indicator of the significance of media often in the nature, viability and conduct of collaborations.

### Youth Accommodation Coalition (YACCOM)

In the 1980s a number of not-for-profit agencies developed to address youth homelessness. We collaborated to form the Youth Accommodation Coalition, with secretariat funding from State Government.

This collaboration was productive in mutual sharing support around issues and service delivery. A Department representative was present at meetings. On one occasion, when a change of staff brought a new Department representative to the table, I happened to overhear some conversation between the nearby government representatives. The outgoing representative said to the incoming representative: "Now it's your turn to manage this group". I was surprised to hear this comment. It seemed of course to suggest that we non-government persons were less than equal collaborative partners and in fact a group where a degree of monitoring and control was necessary, as in the use of the term "manage". This contributed to a growing reality that, perhaps in some embedded political necessity, government to non-government collaboration can be limited by deficiency in transparency.

### Perth Inner City Youth Service (PICYS)

In 1978, Maureen Munro, youth officer for the Anglican Diocese of Perth, and I were collaborating in discussion of issues and ideas when Maureen suggested that we draw the Churches of the city together to discuss young people in the city. I readily agreed with this initiative. In the process of Maureen's discussions with church personnel awareness interest became wider than the churches to participate in the consultation being proposed.

In October 1978 a consultation was attended by twenty one agencies, including the city churches, YMCA, YWCA, Scripture Union, Young Australia League, Perth Rotary, a State Government officer and others. It was honestly shared that we currently knew little about young people in the city. A YMCA disco had closed a couple of years earlier. It was agreed that we do some research on the question and it was my role, from my experience over previous years, to suggest the strategy of detached work. There was ready consensus.

Over the next two years we engaged volunteers from a variety of sources, viz. church and other youth group volunteers and social work students, to spend time in town to meet and converse with young people in various city locations. After two years, including two seminars with overseas speakers, the agencies reviewed the research. It was agreed that

an ongoing detached youth work service was needed in the city and that it should be conducted with a broad value base, i.e. collaboratively. In 1980 nineteen agencies formed the Perth Inner City Youth Service. This collective principle is also described on the agency website:

*“Perth Inner City Youth Service (PICYS) has a history that is hallmarked by collaborative efforts between groups and individuals, the creation and implementation of ideas, the participation of young people, and the contribution made by people and organisations volunteering their time, to care for young people. This rich history of the interaction of people and ideas, and the development of relationships, can be seen embodied in the PICYS service as it exists today.”*

Barriers to the collaboration were to emerge later.

In the late eighties the need for some agencies to consolidate their own identity began to overtake their interest in appropriate collaboration. Later, competitive tendering and individualisation become cultural realities before the recycling of partnership, cooperation and collaboration.

In 1987 three member bodies of the PICYS collective moved that PICYS be disbanded, that the YMCA take over The Cave, the Jesus People take over the streetwork and that Anglicare take over the accommodation, the Household Network. A major consultation of all concerned, including relevant government personnel, was held. The gathering voted to maintain the collective delivery of the relevant services. It was agreed that the specialist nature of the services merited the broad values base enabled by the collective with associated maintenance of the trust of young people involved. The three challenging agencies withdrew from the collective. Since then a further range of agencies and individuals have joined the collective thus continuing a strong collaborative service delivery.

### **The Cave Drop-in Centre**

At the first AGM of PICYS in March 1981 a proposal was tabled to the meeting which had arisen out of the two years of research. Young people had indicated the need for a venue as a place to rendezvous when coming from different suburbs and as an option to spend creative time. A collaboration was offered where a city hairdresser suggested the utilization of adjacent vacant rooms, the UWA landlord agreed, Perth Trinity Uniting Church would fund the rent, young adults of a Scarborough UC project would amalgamate energies and Anglican personnel would be a special resource. This was adopted by PICYS and over two years evolved into a space for indigenous young people. It experienced significant success and growth and received funding through the then Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

The barrier was that after seven highly successful years the DAA announced, in 1987, without consultation or evaluation, that the funding would be discontinued in favour of a focus on employment, the Bob Hawke mantra of the time. The barrier was intensified by this failure to understand urban sociology, indigenous cultural issues and the critical need of readiness for employment through personal growth.

Barriers continued. The State Government of the day funded research into “The Cave Concept”. A committee chaired by Professor Ted Wilkes sponsored three months consultation with Aboriginal participants in The Cave, their family networks and Aboriginal agencies. The endorsement of the Cave concept was overwhelming but funding did not eventuate. A senior advisor informed me later that Minister Ernie Bridge had ample discretionary funding available. It would appear that political and community attitudes

leading, two years later, to major city CCTV camera installation and the formation of the CitySafe Committee, indicated a desire to remove non-retail using young people from the city. Some years later former Assistant Commissioner Bob Kucera spoke up at a city breakfast saying “young people are still in the city and it’s time we got creative about it”. The barriers defined, I suggest, constitute a lose-lose scenario for both young people and the city environment.

### Palmerston Drug Association

In 1978 Perth held a major drug conference at Monash University with Dr. Alan Cohen, a Presidential Advisor from America. The Conference included Social Work, Pharmacy Guild, College of General Practitioners, Universities, Churches and others. I was a planning committee member and part of a working group which sifted through the issues over the subsequent 18 months. At the close of this period a seminar led by Denis Ladbrook of Curtin University presented the central resolution of the working group, which was the need in Perth for a broad-based residential Therapeutic Community.

A collaborative group was formed, initially entitled the Drug Research and Rehabilitation Association, to progress this goal. The group included Pastor George Smith of the Churches of Christ Welfare, a Catholic nun, a doctor, Rev. David Lewis and a lawyer Jack Swift from Claremont Uniting Church, and myself. Claremont Uniting made available a house in Palmerston Street, Perth which was no longer needed by Perth Wesley. A young man, Bill Hekmeyer, who had been a resident in the Phoenix TC in Holland became a part time worker. With financial assistance of the Dept. of Health a suitable property in Wellard was identified and became the Palmerston Therapeutic Community.

An initial barrier was an approach to the Health Minister by Odyssey in Victoria to establish a WA branch of Odyssey. Collaboration with two graduates of Odyssey reinforced our confidence to maintain a WA identity for the project. A further barrier was the initial objection of Wellard neighbours and others at a lively public meeting in the Kwinana Shire and the consequent rejection by the Shire of zoning permission. We appealed to the State Government and, to us quite remarkably, the local Liberal Member who was also the relevant Minister upheld our appeal. Six months after establishment the local mayor was proud to show the project to interstate visitors and a strong collaborative relationship with local government has endured since. Palmerston Association has grown substantially since with significant collaborative skills in Board and Staff members. The collaboration of residents at the farm has been a special key to its success.

### Cunderdin Youth Service

For nine years up to 1978 three young adults of the Cunderdin Methodist Church provided a Friday night music venue for local young people. At the end of this they felt it important to give feedback to the district citizens about their experience. They reported that over time the venue had increasingly become a place for parents to drop off younger members of the family whilst they engaged in adult activities of town. It indicated that there was a need for a more broadly resourced venue or drop-in centre for young people of the district.

I was invited as a youth consultant to address a public meeting and offered for consideration the model of detached work which could operate in conjunction with a social centre. The result was the establishment of the Cunderdin Youth Service with the backing of churches, wider community and the Shire. State Government made available a building near the centre of town and a full-time detached worker was engaged.

The youth worker identified a number of sub-cultures of young people for whom informal relationship and a flexible venue proved to be great assets. Broad sub-cultures were Cunderdin Ag School students, district farming family young people and town-dwelling young people. The collaboration which established the service also enhanced interaction and collaboration between the groups of young people who would otherwise have remained more insular.

### **Hedland Community Youth Service**

Around 1980, in conjunction with another UC consultant, I visited Hedland Uniting Church. Captain Geoff Monks was a senior member of the UC and also the Port Harbour Captain, managing shipping activities of the Port.

Geoff indicated that the district was conscious of significant issues with young people, particularly in the South Hedland area and that he had arranged an informal discussion with the Mayor, CEO and some councillors. The Shire persons indicated that they had appointed a social worker and asked if I had any suggestion of how to augment that resource. My response was that it would be an effective partnership, or collaboration, for the social worker, with knowledge of resources and processes in local government, to have a street-based partner in the milieu of young people, in other words, a detached worker.

The councillors considered the idea and three months later I was invited back to address a public meeting to discuss the concept. This was a well-attended meeting, with a collaboration of councillors, police, church personnel and other citizens. A lively and stimulating discussion benefited from the diversity present, with a Salvation Army pastor and a police sergeant competing with stories of their own volatile teenage years and the benefit of a non-judgmental, informal resource person being available to them.

Shortly afterwards the Hedland Community Youth Service was formed, with the detached work role being supplemented by accommodation workers. Collaboration had been a feature from conceptualization to implementation and development. The service later evolved into the Hedland Youth Involvement Council.

### **Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS)**

In the 1980s the Curtin branch of the Commonwealth funded CYSS was based in Railway Parade, West Leederville. My wife Peg, coordinator of PICYS Household Network, and I, UC Youth Consultant, were both on the Management Committee of the CYSS. Our local networks included LGBTQI young people who felt safe connecting with the local CYSS due to the environment and ambience emanating from the choice of two gay persons to the CYSS staff. The collaboration of PICYS and related networks with gay young people and staff resulted in an effective operation for a number of high risk young people.

A key barrier was the complaint made public, and to state parliament, by the Curtin electorate of the Liberal Party that "Government money is going to homosexuals". Premier Burke handballed the issue by responding that it received Federal funding. A Federal bureaucrat instructed the Management Committee to remove gay young people from the list in the Constitution of those at risk in the work place or the training place. The Management Committee responded that only a public meeting could alter the Constitution.

A well-advertised and well attended public meeting, chaired by Hon Carmen Lawrence, Local Member at the time, voted strongly to retain the Constitution unchanged. Three weeks later the Curtin CYSS was defunded. This oppositional political collaboration

destroyed the relational collaboration which in later years would be recognised as of very high value to some of the most vulnerable of young people.

### **Brian Burdekin, homelessness inquiries**

In 1988 Brian Burdekin, Commissioner of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, initiated a national enquiry into homelessness. YACCOMM members in WA made substantial submissions. A year later he visited WA and tabled his report to YACCOMM. A government housing representative at the meeting challenged the findings, outlining fourteen flaws in the report. A high level of affirmation from media and community to the report was received, in response to which the government indicated it affirmed the findings and allocated \$1million to address the issue.

In 1990 Brian Burdekin returned to WA and held a forum in Raine Square. He was accompanied at the table by Sir Ronald Wilson, President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. On this occasion the focus was not on homelessness per se, but on the response of government to his first report. A range of agencies, YACCOMM and its members, presented at this enquiry. There was clear consensus from presenters that the government response had been inadequate. The allocation of the \$1million was not transparent, with perception that it was absorbed by government in northern WA. Even the Salvation Army, usually reticent in political comment, was forthright in concern at inaction.

The reaction of government was swift. Funding to YACCOMM was cut from \$60,000 to \$15,000. Shortly afterwards YACWA and PICYS Streetwork were defunded. It was some time before YACWA regained funding. Collaboration had been severely impacted by political anxiety, intermittently a clear barrier to collaboration.

### **Scarborough Beachfront**

In 1977 I became aware of the 'Scarborough Drags' activity at Scarborough Beach. The activity was not in fact 'drag racing', but rather the spinning of rear wheels in a patch of oil, i.e. 'burnouts', in the lower carpark. A vehicle would aim to produce a cloud of smoke and then fishtail a short distance along the carpark. I was informed by the Stirling Council CEO that the activity had been operating for about 15 years with the knowledge of Council. Police would monitor the weekend activity and apprehend the occasional young person acting in a disorderly manner.

The activity was a creation of young and young adult persons in a sociological collaboration. The burnouts were largely conducted by young people in the motor trade, 'rev heads', who had the means to repair tyres and other parts if required. The audience was heavily infused with the surfing population and local pub patrons after closing time. Spectators lined the fence of the upper carpark with the safety of a large concrete wall. The 'drags' were safer than Claremont Speedway where only a picket fence insulated the public from car wheel or other parts if there were a crash. The noise level of the drags was far less disturbance than the speedway noise to residents of Claremont.

I was informed of a 14 year old girl with disintegrated family using heroin and frequenting the beach area. Given the stereotype of church congregations conducting their 'mission' activity individually, it was significant as a collaboration that ten young adults from six different congregations with myself rented a flat at the beachfront, initially for the month of January 1978, on a detached work model.

The outcome was a collaboration between our group and other young people of the

beachfront, a three-year drop-in centre, with a growing network of diverse contacts which would result over the next years in collaboration to develop The Cave in the city, nine years of Easter Camping on the property of Shane Gould and husband at Margaret River, Fallout Shelter music venue in West Leederville, Squirrel Nutkin work cooperative, substantial shared housing evolving into the Household Network of PICYS, Curtin CYSS links and ultimately the Earthwise Community.

An initial barrier was the conservative nature of church hierarchy. Our little team which was called Scarborough Beach Contact Community, in collaboration with young people we had met, produced a media release which challenged the media image of “youth riots” at the beachfront. Our release included that police were at time part of the problem, given that we had observed some unnecessary and alienating actions by some police. I was forbidden by my church superior, in response to complaints, to recruit any further persons to our Scarborough team.

The major barrier to the weekend activities, highly valued socially by hundreds of young people and young adults, was the commercial planning of refined housing at the northern end of the beach. The Scarborough Beach Hotel was demolished and Observation City followed at a later date. Part of the marketing strategy was to disperse the crowds of young people gathering at weekends. Direct evidence of this was when I received a phone call from the then local member of Parliament, later Health Minister. He announced curtly on the phone: “You are attracting young people to the area, Davies, and we are trying to remove young people from that area”, and hung up.

I quoted this conversation and context to Brian Burdekin, HREOC Commissioner, at a mental health seminar some years later in Perth. He responded forcefully that: “No one has the right to determine who shall or shall not use public space”.

Young people in the early days commented to me: “At ordinary times, people come to Scarborough in small groups – a carload, school friends and so on. They largely stay with their small group. On drag nights, everybody talks to everybody”. An experience of community. Feedback to me from respectable business adults was that this setting had been of value in their adolescence and early adulthood. A Social Media group in recent days has provided space for scores of persons to reflect on how important in their development the community nature of the beachfront in the time of the drags had been. The barriers could be summed up as a distant and judgmental adult population enhanced by simplistic media coverage, both with poor understanding or attention to sociology, police acting on behalf of commercial interest and adult Christians with a poor grasp of how to love one another.

### CitySafe Committee

The CitySafe Committee was formed in 1989 in Perth coinciding with the introduction of a wide network of CCTV cameras. It was a collaboration of city retailers, City of Perth, inner-city residents, police, State Government Welfare and some youth agencies.

I joined the committee some years later and participated for 12 years. The focus of the committee on ‘antisocial behaviour’ seemed to evolve into a perception that young people in groups, who did not appear to be shopping, fell into this category. On one occasion, for example, the police officer report included the statement: “There is a group of young Africans congregating at the north end of the Perth Station, and it is not a good look”.

My response when opportunity presented was: “Young people from Africa come often from situations of trauma, sometimes with family members killed and at times by police. Their parents in Australia are disconnected from village and extended family and struggle to raise teenagers in our setting. The young people want to be part of Australia, not only linked to their own culture, but are called wogs and wops at school. These are huge issues needing attention but we are worried how it looks to the tourist!” The meeting showed no interest in my comments.

A key barrier to effective targeting of safe cities in this collaboration was the failure over the life of the committee to reinterpret stereotypes about ‘behaviour’ and groups, failure to look to causes beneath ‘antisocial’ and failure to generally address the sociology of urban life in terms of disconnection, loss of effective extended family, individuation, isolation and alienation. The Superintendent of City Police at one point, Chris Dawson, later to become Police Commissioner in WA, commented on one occasion regarding young people: “I think we are just displacing the issue from A to B”.

### **Police-Youth Liaison Committee (PYLC)**

I was a member for a number of years of the Police-Youth Liaison Committee, under the chairpersonship of Inspector Harry Riseborough and later Assistant Commissioner Bob Kucera. This was a collaboration of police and youth agencies to address issues relating to youth at risk likely to be in contact with police.

In the late eighties the PICYS Streetwork Team produced a report addressing street prostitution with particular focus on the activities around Russell Square in Northbridge. At a PYLC meeting the Chair, Harry Riseborough, drew my attention to correspondence between the Police Department and State Welfare. The State Department had written to the police disputing the findings of the PICYS Streetwork Report. They argued that there was not a problem. The police replied to the Welfare Department that there was in fact a problem of street prostitution in the area, adding: “but what would these non-government people know about it?!”

A clear barrier to progress of the PYLC collaboration was that, though relationships and respect were healthy at the senior level, the operational police retained a deprecating and low respect attitude to the non-government sector. Through relationship not viable for police on the other side of a uniform, the streetwork staff of PICYS had a very close awareness of the situation and circumstances which for young people involved were about financial survival rather than erotic stimulation or wealth.

### **Juvenile Justice Network (JJN)**

During the nineties I co-convened, with Youth Legal Service, a significant network of agencies and individuals collaborating to address an extensive range of matters pertaining to youth justice.

The collaboration included church personnel, youth agencies, tertiary personnel and others. We addressed government policies, agency activity and social attitudes, utilising newsletter, public forum and ministerial interview strategies.

The main barrier experienced was the termination of my youth consultancy role with the Uniting Church youth and a diminution in time and resources.



## Partnership Forum

I submitted an issues paper at a Pre-Briefing for the Community Sector in 2011 when the Partnership Forum, which emanated from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, was being launched. There was emphasis on a more equal partnership between government and community. The greater level of collaboration was mutually affirmed, though overdue in the community mind.

At a subsequent session at the Bank West premises in the city I found myself speaking on behalf of the youth affairs field in the following terms:

“Those of us working amongst young people are recognised as working with hands and feet across a broad sector of issues.(Nods around the auditorium). But there is a part of our bodies above the neck that is also engaged. We observe, we listen, we gain trust and insights, we perceive the effectiveness and otherwise of social policies, we work out better ways to proceed. We have brains which deserve to be recognised along with our labour.”

The Chair of the forum came across the room at the close to tell me that my comments were important to receive and were noted by Premier and Cabinet staff.

That was gratifying but email invites to further functions receded. I assume it has evolved into the Supporting Communities Forum.

## Earthwise Community

Early in my UC Synod Youth Worker consultancy we established a base for youth work in the former Subiaco Presbyterian Church building and manse, which had become redundant with the formation of the Uniting Church, a collaboration of Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches.

Following the 1978 Scarborough project the broad and growing networks of young and young adult persons were fertile territory for collaborative creativity. Over time, the premises at Bagot Road, Subiaco, saw a proliferation of on-site activities. These included an op-shop, a community garden, a music venue and a Thursday community lunch and food centre. In 1996 it was agreed that growth of participants would be enhanced if they were enabled to manage their own affairs rather than being under the control of my committee, which had become UC Community Youth Services.

The different areas collaborated to become an incorporated not-for-profit voluntary body termed Earthwise Community Association. The group moved from the category of church projects or charity to become a community. The management committee draws persons from each of the voluntary activity areas. There is strong interaction of personnel and overlap in areas of involvement.

In 1999 when my tenure as UC consultant terminated, Earthwise Community entered an arrangement with the Uniting Church Synod to lease the property at Bagot Road, rent free in return for servicing the outgoings of maintenance for the church building and grounds. Income is achieved from the op-shop and hiring of space to community groups.

Varieties of collaboration initiated 40 years ago have produced this current collaboration now 20 years old. It is a rich interaction of persons of diverse culture, beliefs and age. It provides significant connection to persons otherwise isolated, a supportive environment to persons with disability or mental health issues and creative opportunity to a wide range of

persons with talent in gardening, cooking, musicianship, social interaction and more. The mix of contact with each other and with nature in the gardening surroundings is highly appreciated. The garden has national recognition with Gardening Australia staff and internationally is visited annually by Singaporean university students. There are intermittent open gardening workshops

Barriers overcome have been an attempt in the 80s by local government to challenge the zoning of the land, which is a Crown Grant in Trust, with a possible threat of Crown resumption of the land. The public debate was resolved with the outcome of an ongoing very positive relationship with Subiaco Council.

A church barrier emerged at renewal of the first five year lease period from the General Secretary at the time who believed that an independent association was “not really part of the church family”. A theological debate ensued and the lease was renewed by the Synod. The barrier at the next lease renewal mark was personnel of the church who proposed the property be a major wedding venue. A Synod debate overruled this suggestion. The recent lease barrier has been a new property consultant of the church with challenges arising, in Earthwise view, from inadequate background. A debate ensuing caused an escalation of anxiety amongst Earthwise personnel.

In recent times the major churches have espoused a concept (which they think is a new concept) called “Fresh Expressions” where persons of the church go into the wider community, establish relationships and develop creativity in those settings. Earthwise as a collaboration evolved over 40 years, on this basis, is now in a strong position to consolidate continuation of collaboration with the Uniting Church Synod in so far as this concept survives in the culture.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

In my experience over time of various collaborations, the greatest deficiencies have been where the commercial interests of business or the social anxiety of the wider public have constituted barriers. There is great need to promote sociological awareness such as in the work of Hugh Mackay, Richard Eckersley and others. Eckersley, after extensive overseas travel, wrote on return:

“My initial celebration of the material richness and comfort of the Western way of life soon gave way to a growing apprehension about its emotional harshness, social ‘distances’ and spiritual desiccation.” (From Well & Good, p. 43)

Collaboration, including co-design, to be effective, needs as far as possible to include, or at least recognise, the holistic factors of political and societal understanding. If my material is seen to be too political that would in fact be one of the barriers which need to be thought through more seriously to take account of public attitudes and political leadership or failure thereof. It would be wonderful, in my view, if politicians could become more sociologically literate and then, as Plato indicates, be leaders who are educators. This of course in critical area would require bipartisanship – and this would be of course the profound collaboration.

# My Home Project

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The Multicultural Services Centre of Western Australia (MSCWA) responded to Graylands Hospital's request to provide suitable accommodation for two residents who had been in Graylands hospital for 20 and 2 years respectively and could have moved out much sooner had suitable alternative accommodation been available to them in the community and had a service provider with relevant capacity agreed to take them. This project commenced as a partnership between the Graylands Hospital and MSCWA and involved a number of agencies willing to provide a range of services to the participants. The hospital was responsible for referring long term patients who they felt were suitable for living in the community with relevant support, but no service provider was able to accommodate them. MSCWA's role was to place them in properties that they had leased and provide services.

## Project parties

The parties to the collaboration are the Graylands Hospital and the MSCWA.

## Key characteristics

Many of the key characteristics of successful collaboration were self-evident in the partnership, trust being the pre-eminent one. Whilst MSCWA has been a community housing services provider for decades it had previously not provided housing to people with mental health conditions.

It was very cognisant of the risks involved especially when taking on housing support for very long term residents of the hospital. The hospital was mindful of this and obviously paid great attention in selecting the patients for this accommodation. The hospital also put in place arrangements to ensure that should the patients require to return to the hospital in the case of episodic instances this would be fast tracked. These steps gave MSCWA the confidence to proceed with expanding the program from two to six residents.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- **Mutual trust** between the Medical Officer at Graylands Hospital who was responsible for initiating this project with MSCWA and the latter's CEO.
- The detailed **pre referral discussions**.
- Excellent **team work** within and between both agencies.
- Staff of both agencies and their **willingness to learn from each other**.
- **Lack of a legal contract** binding both parties.
- **Regular dialogues** between staff of both agencies.
- **Commitment** of both agencies to address a significant unmet need of long term patients of Graylands not being able to move out despite being assessed as suitable for supported accommodation in the community.

## Barriers

A principal barrier to the expansion of the program was in relation to Governance and structure i.e. the majority of the patients were of Anglo Australian background and MSCWA was established to meet the diverse needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) communities as per its constitution.

The early success of the project led to the board of management of MSCWA recommending changes to its constitution which was accepted by the members, to enable it to provide services for non CaLD clients.

Another barrier has been the sustainability of the program. MSCWA genuinely believed that whilst it started the program with no government funding, such funding would become available when the project was able to demonstrate its incredible cost effectiveness. However, this is yet to eventuate. So MSCWA has continued with the program in a scaled down manner.

## Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

If there is trust and goodwill there are no insurmountable problems.

# Prevention Plan

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The Prevention Plan was developed in partnership with a range of key stakeholders, including academic experts, senior representatives from a range of government departments, key non-government agencies and consumers, carers and families of those with a lived experience of mental health and alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems. It focuses primarily on activities relating to mental health promotion and the primary prevention of mental illness and AOD related harm. It includes contextual background information, strategies categorised into domains across the life course from pre-conception to older adulthood, reference to priority populations, and a summary of initiatives to support implementation. The Prevention Plan has three goals:

- increase optimal mental health and wellbeing;
- reduce the incidence of mental illness, suicide and suicide attempts; and
- prevent and reduce drug use and harmful alcohol use.

Suggested actions within the Prevention Plan are guided by the following eight principles:

1. Mental health promotion and the primary prevention of mental illness and alcohol and other drug use/harm are the principal focus.
2. Programs and initiatives across the life course.
3. Whole-of-population, localised, and targeted programs.
4. Evidence-based (or evidence-informed).
5. Multiple strategies at local, state and national levels.
6. Innovation supported by robust evaluation.
7. Partnerships, collaboration and co-design.
8. Valuing diversity, equity, cultural inclusivity and human rights.

## Project parties

In April 2017, an Expert Advisory Group was established to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to the Mental Health Commission (MHC) in the development the Prevention Plan. Members included representatives from the MHC, Department of Health (Chronic Disease Prevention and Aboriginal Health directorates), Department of Education, Heathway, Telethon Kids Institute and Curtin University (a total of 12 members).

## Key characteristics

**Advisory Group** - The Prevention Plan Expert Advisory Group was formed to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to the MHC in the development of Prevention Plan. The involvement and input provided by this group was especially important to complement the current levels of internal MHC knowledge regarding best practice and evidence for mental health promotion and mental illness prevention initiatives.

**Involving experts** in both the AOD and mental health fields ensured there was a shared understanding of the problem, but also provided knowledge and advice regarding the evidence available and best practice methods to promote mental health and to prevent both mental health and AOD related issues.

**Public consultation** - From 8 January 2018 to 2 February 2018, a period of public community consultation to inform the development of the Prevention Plan. During this time, a total of 50 online submissions, and 30 email submissions were received from a range of individuals and agencies/organisations. The Prevention Plan forum for consumers, families and carers, as well as the public consultation process allowed for inclusive participation and increased the amount of shared power between the MHC and consumers, families and carers.

### **Key enablers to successful collaboration**

Readiness for cultural change was important for successful collaboration throughout the development of the Prevention Plan given that it attempts to address both mental health and AOD prevention and promotion together. Readiness for cultural change amongst both the Expert Advisory Group and the participants of the consumer, family and carer forum was important to ensure both mental health and AOD was represented throughout the document appropriately and in complement to each other. Collaborative capacity of the Expert Advisory Group to come together from different fields, professions and background was also essential for the successful development of the Prevention Plan. In addition, a forum specifically for consumers, families and carers took place to seek input from this group.

### **Barriers**

Ensuring there was clear information and communication regarding the roles, responsibilities and intent of the Expert Advisory Group meant that barriers regarding governance, structure and process could be somewhat mitigated. In forming the Prevention Plan Expert Advisory Group an invitation was sent out the proposed members with a draft Terms of Reference for their consideration and input. Information was also provided regarding the purpose, expectations and deliverables of the group.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

The value of clear upfront communication of the expectations regarding outputs and governance is important and ensures that all stakeholders involved are on the same page and know where they fit within the project and the role they have to play.

# Recovery Colleges

## Sector

Government and community service sectors

## Overview of the project or program

The establishment of Recovery Colleges in Western Australia forms part of a priority in the Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Services Plan 2015-2025 (Plan). It will operate using a hub and satellite design which will be progressively implemented state-wide over a three year period. It is for people with lived experience, carers, family members, those who work in the health, mental health, AOD and other human services sectors, and interested community members to come together to develop skills, and share knowledge and experiences in relation to health and wellbeing.

The project development included an open expression of interest process to appoint an Expert Panel (the Panel) of ten individuals from different backgrounds, including carers, consumers and health service workers. Through a co-design process the Panel, in conjunction with the Mental Health Commission (MHC), developed a draft model of service. The timeframe to develop the draft model of Service was 6 months (April 2018 to September 2018). About 674 key stakeholders were engaged throughout the process, included consumers, carers, non-government organisations, health workers and the wider community.

## Project parties

Collaboration parties are MHC and the Panel of ten individuals from different backgrounds, including carers, consumers and health service workers was appointed. The Panel and project directions were informed through open consultation processes. 15 community groups and organisations were successful in receiving grants and facilitated their own stakeholder or community consultation workshops.

## Key characteristics

The establishment of the Panel and the work carried out in conjunction with the MHC created a level of trust amongst the panel members and with the MHC, particularly as this provided an opportunity for carers, consumers, clinicians and non-government workers to be open about their opinions.

The meetings were co-chaired by two Panel members with input from the MHC, providing a true sharing of power. The meetings provided Panel members the opportunity to have inclusive participation. This was further demonstrated through the community workshops held throughout Western Australia, providing community members the opportunity to provide feedback on the aim and principles of the Recovery Colleges, prior to being finalised. The Panel members and the MHC shared the same understanding and shared vision that there needs to be increased community-based support. This is particularly important given the establishment of a Recovery College is supported by the Plan and aligns to its community support services stream.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

**The policy and political environment and rationale:** The Government's Mental Health Policy at the 2017 Election included a commitment to establish a Recovery College, in

Wanneroo and another near Royal Perth Hospital. As part of this commitment the Expenditure Review Committee confirmed funding of \$200,000 in 2017-18 to the MHC for the development of a Model of Service and business case for Recovery Colleges in Western Australia.

**Co-design or co-production:** The aim and principles of the draft model of service were co-designed and co-produced by the Panel; these were then provided to the community for comment. The comments were then considered and incorporated to ensure a true co-design model.

**Cultural change and collaborative capacity:** The courses offered at the Recovery Colleges will be co-designed and co-delivered by at least one person with a lived experience, and one with work/professional expertise. The opportunity for clinicians to participate in and assist in the co-design and the co-delivery of the Recovery College courses will not only help break down the stigma that is often found in traditional clinical practices, but also provides the opportunity to positively influence the attitudes and behaviours of those working in the mental health and AOD sectors.

### Barriers

Clear guidance and governance in respect to criteria for membership, expectations, role descriptions for both project support and executive support and the operational processes may have been a barrier. Having an endorsed and detailed terms of reference provided members with a concise and informative document to support the work of the Panel in reaching its objective and promote collaboration.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

The MHC provided a communique after each meeting which was uploaded to the MHC website. This ensured that there was updated information provided to all stakeholders at all times. Minutes and follow of up actions were also provided to the Panel members.



# Remote School Attendance Strategy

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The Remote School Attendance Strategy (RSAS) is a Commonwealth initiative under the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) aimed at improving the attendance rates of Aboriginal students, and supporting Aboriginal people to move from income support to paid employment. RSAS is designed to improve school attendance levels in specific remote communities by engaging local Remote School Engagement teams to work cooperatively with families, community members and schools to put in place strategies to support school attendance; ensuring children go to school every possible day.

The WA Department of Education (DoE) was contracted to coordinate the program across the 10 WA public school locations in which the program was delivered. In 8 of these locations, RSAS was delivered by a PM&C contracted third party organisation. DoE was the contracted RSAS provider in the other 2 locations - Fitzroy Valley District High School and Ngaanyatjarra Lands School from January 2016 to December 2018.

DoE employed school-based coordinators in both locations. As DoE was not considered to be in a position to directly employ the other RSAS workers, labour hire agreements were used to engage local Aboriginal people as School Engagement Supervisors and School Engagement Officers. Funding of \$3.4 million was provided to DoE to implement the project agreements. The RSAS steering committee determined that as at 31 December 2017, DoE/school would no longer be the RSAS provider in both the Ngaanyatjarra Lands School and Fitzroy Valley OHS. This case study will outline the challenges that impacted on the delivery of the RSAS project in three of the campuses of Ngaanyatjarra Lands School.

## Project parties

Parties are the Commonwealth Government, through the PM&C, DoE, Ngaanyatjarra Lands School and the Ngaanyatjarra Lands Aboriginal Council.

## Key characteristics

The RSAS agreement was established between PM&C and DoE, with PM&C providing program funding, establishing the reporting and acquittal structure, and project liaison to deal with any issues as they arise. DoE was considered the service provider and managed the project at the State level. Due to the stipulated employment requirements and the requirements of Government policy, it was necessary to enter into a labour hire arrangement with the Ngaanyatjarra Lands Aboriginal Council to provide staff at the school. The program was run at Ngaanyatjarra Lands School, which was required to liaise direct with DoE (to account for spending, employment targets, and program outcomes) and Ngaanyatjarra Lands Aboriginal Council (to ensure they had sufficient staff to run RSAS).

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

The absence of a co-designed project that was context specific and culturally appropriate prior to commencement impacted on the success of the RSAS project in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands. To overcome this a more flexible place based approach was required during the

project. This resulted in broad agreement being reached between DoE of and PM&C on a way forward for RSAS implementation. Modification to the RSAS approach was achieved through collaboration between DoE, the local governance group and PM&C.

The RSAS program provided benefits to the community and the school and delivered on several the project outcomes, including:

- 1. Community partnerships and participation:** At the local level, RSAS promoted inclusive participation between the school and RSAS employees. Given the constraints of the employees capacity, where appropriate the employees were valued contributors to the communities in which they worked. This is best demonstrated through their inclusion in school professional learning, events and activities designed to increase the community's identification and engagement with their local campus.
- 2. Student wellbeing:** At the local level, strengthened communication between the school staff, RSAS staff, community members and students resulted in increased understanding and knowledge of student wellbeing, the family and community dynamics and the impact of that on the student's attendance and behaviour.

### Barriers

The key barrier to successful collaboration for RSAS in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands was people and culture. The lack of understanding of the context of the Ngaanyatjarra Lands and the challenges this presented, in particular those of employment impacted significantly on the success and resulted in a number of key performance indicators not being met.

The challenges impacting on the RSAS project include:

- 1. Reporting Processes:** To ensure timelines were met and quality reports were submitted, clearly articulated reporting timelines, payment schedules and training for staff in report writing would have mitigated the challenges that were experienced.
- 2. Shared understanding of the project:** The level of collaboration between the Commonwealth and the State, to develop an understanding of key items that may impact on the implementation in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, could have been strengthened. There was a need to further develop an understanding of the needs of all parties, with a particular focus on the Ngaanyatjarra Lands prior to developing the strategic plan. Further opportunities for all parties to negotiate the strategies and aspects of the strategic plan would have strengthened this. Developing shared ownership of the strategy would have impacted positively on the project.
- 3. Understanding of the context:** All parties having a common understanding of the social and cultural factors in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands would have impacted positively and resolved many of the challenges prior to the project commencing, especially in the area of employment.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

In a location such as the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, it is essential that any programs are bespoke and developed in consultation with the local community. It is critical that they are based on the principles of co-design, to promote ownership, and to ensure that the product is a best-fit for the environment.

# Search and Rescue

## Sector

Government and community service sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The case study is the Western Australia Search and Rescue Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) established in October 2009 and which meets twice yearly. The Western Australia Police Force has responsibility as the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for persons lost or in distress on land or sea within specific criteria. The Western Australia Police Force/HMA relies on key search and rescue (SAR) stakeholders to effectively uphold its responsibility, many of whom would perform a key role in an emergency. It is a consultative forum for the key stakeholders to ensure an effective, efficient and integrated SAR system in WA. The emphasis is on response capabilities, development/review of plans and procedures, organisation and management of resources and public education and training. The Advisory Group is not a policy making body but advises and assists the Western Australia Police Force/HMA, to ensure an efficient and effective State SAR response capability.

## Project parties

The Advisory Group comprises representatives of all organisations in WA with an active and significant role in SAR. There are 17 partners from across state and national government agencies, community sector and volunteer services.

## Key characteristics/Key enablers to successful collaboration

- **Inclusive meetings** where everyone may contribute and seen as a benchmark.
- **Reporting on ongoing improvements and developments** (best practice) for matters relating to SAR, and investigating, developing and reviewing SAR strategies to ensure compatibility of procedures across jurisdictions.
- **Further stakeholder engagement** with regard to legislative review and assurance.
- Optional **referral of matters of concern** to the National SAR Council and/or the SEMC's Response Capability Subcommittee through common members.
- **Identifying major issues** for incidents within WA and examining **appropriate response arrangements**, including optimum response standards.
- Maintaining **a network for key SAR agencies** to ensure a seamless coordination of SAR incidents. Consideration of case studies of recent SAR incidents and exercises for shared learnings.

## Barriers

The Chair of the Advisory Group may refer any relevant strategic issues that arise to the SEMC or any relevant Subcommittee (e.g. the Response Capability Subcommittee), via the WA Police Force representative on that Committee/Subcommittee. Where the Advisory Group identifies a situation which may have a national implication, this will be brought to the attention of the NatSAR Council via the WA Group member.

**Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Effort is put into making the meeting relevant and interesting, ensuring recent case studies are presented, new technologies demonstrated, guest speakers attending and a voice provide for all attendees.

# State Graffiti Taskforce

## Sector

Government and community services sector

## Overview of the project or program

The State Graffiti Taskforce (the Taskforce) is a Ministers appointed committee, convened to develop the State's direction in graffiti management. It has been a key contributor to the Tough on Graffiti Strategy 2011-2017 which was endorsed by the Minister for Police. The Taskforce are currently developing a new Graffiti Vandalism strategy to be implemented in June 2019. An evaluation shows strong partnerships between senior level stakeholders and with Local Government, and that those partnerships have significantly contributed to effective implementation of activities to reduce the occurrence of graffiti in WA.

## Project parties

There are 18 State Graffiti Taskforce members and quarterly meetings are chaired by the Western Australia Police Force. The WA Police Force Graffiti Team (Graffiti Team) have implemented the graffiti strategy and instigate collaboration with other agencies on issues as they arise. Taskforce members and implement operational strategies to address the strategy.

## Key characteristics

It is expected that the attendees are high level in their agency and have the ability to change policy. The key success in the collaboration of agencies has been having a driving agency to implement strategies and bring agencies together. Being a Ministerial Taskforce there are certain expectations to participate and commit. The Taskforce have been encouraged to develop a whole of state strategy to reduce graffiti vandalism. This shared vision has kept them accountable to the strategy and encouraged participation in some way.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- a political drive/election commitment;
- Community concern/feelings of being unsafe;
- Ministerial support;
- Proactive supporting team;
- Whole of government commitment;
- State Graffiti Taskforce; and
- All activities have been co-branded this way e.g. websites, hard copy and soft copy resources.

## Barriers

- Some Agencies having minimal input;
- Success and support of some agencies have been personality driven.

These issues tend to have been counterbalanced to some extent by a strong Chairing agency and a proactive supporting team. Stakeholder engagement has been a priority for the team and strong successes have occurred where personalities have been particularly willing and driven in their agencies. Recently a review has been done to gain contemporary

agencies on board and review memberships to gain support from all agencies on the Taskforce. Already this change has seen further commitment in Agencies where this has not occurred for some time. Into the future we hope to gain further collaboration in these areas.

**Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Nil.

# State-wide Food Relief Framework

## Sector

Government and community sectors

## Overview of the project or program

The State-wide Food Relief Framework project is a collaborative endeavour that aims to review and make recommendations about better ways of delivering relief to those who experience food insecurity. The impetus for this Project came from the sector, after it was recognised that services are not always delivered in a coordinated way and improvements can be made. The framework seeks to identify the policy leavers that create food insecurity and advocate for responses that alleviate the conditions of poverty and food insecurity by collaborating across the NFP, commercial and government sectors. Data measurement and reporting systems has long been a gap within the charity food system. Currently there are multiple initiatives being explored which will result in the capturing, storing and sharing of data for outcome measurement purposes.

## Project parties

Members now include a multidisciplinary working group supported by the WA Council of Social Service (WACOSS) which has representation from funded NFP and volunteer charity food providers and distributors, department of health, funders from both Department of Social Services and Lotterywest and the Office of Minister McGurk.

- WACOSS provides the policy capacity, backbone support and inter agency and sector relationships that enable collaboration.
- Charity food providers bring on the ground sector knowledge and distribution.
- Charity food distributors bring their expertise and experience of charity food logistics as well as an understanding of the commercial sector.
- Funders bring a fundamental understanding of current and future funding landscapes and outcomes expectations.

## Key characteristics

There is a key facilitator that brings people and stakeholders together to identify opportunities of mutual benefit with:

- a **shared vision** of mutual benefit
- **shared values** that drive collaborators mission
- an **openness to learn** and be challenged on possibly long held views
- a willingness to be **generous** with skills, resources and time
- **opportunities to develop** professional relationships between collaborators
- **clear processes** regarding governance and project documents.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

When collaboration doesn't work, its often because it hasn't been resourced appropriately. People only know what they know and not what they don't. This is why a facilitator who is resourced to support the collaboration is essential. This role is to help identify opportunities of mutual benefit, make linkages between stakeholders, bring them together and facilitate a conversation.

Relationship building across collaborators is also fundamental, when people have time to build professional respect, they are less likely to feel threatened and more likely to share time and resources.

### Barriers

- Differencing points of focus towards same goal e.g. academia verses service delivery holding different expertise and expectations of how to reach goal.
- Expertise amongst group not always recognised/respected fully.
- Personality/EGO clashes.
- Continuity of group attendees (Some delegation).
- Workload sharing/volunteering - Some members doing more than others.
- Unwillingness to share data.
- Communication breakdowns outside of face-to-face meetings (typically when engaging in email communications).
- Concerns/suspicious over partner motivations.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Independent chair to facilitate meetings.
- Interdisciplinary working group.
- The governance framework needs to be more than a document structure to determine decision making etc. It should be used to embody the group ways of working and therefore should be meaningful.
- Valuing and respecting differing skills sets and points of view.
- Collaborations take longer – you will need to adjust your expectations (and others i.e. funders) of how long processes and outcomes take - plan for this and be patient (with the process and with the group).
- Address issues (have a pre-agreed process for this). Don't let problems go unnoticed or manifest.



# Target 120

## Sector

Government sector.

## Overview of the project or program

Target 120 is a program working with young offenders and their families to provide a series of early intervention strategies to help them avoid a life connected to the justice system. Once identified, young offenders and their families are paired up with service workers to provide access to better services to help tackle substance abuse, a lack of housing, domestic violence, mental health issues and poor attendance at school.

The aim of the program is to better equip young offenders and their families to make alternative decisions to potentially avoid the offending cycle and the justice system. The goal or outcome of the program is to build safe, strong, secure and inclusive communities to empower young offenders and their families to lead fulfilling lives.

The program commenced in October 2018 with a short term goal/outcome to identify suitable candidates for the program through a selection tool provided by the Department of Communities. This initial process is still ongoing negating any opportunity to identify any intermediate or long term achievements.

## Project parties

The program is a multi-agency initiative led by the Department of Communities (Youth Justice Services, Strategy and Transformation, Housing, Disabilities, Child Protection Family Services) in collaboration with the WA Police Force and the Department of Education. This group is referred to as the Armadale District Leadership Group (DLG) and is tasked with mobilising collective resources and removing barriers between all involved parties to maximise the benefits and outcomes of the program.

The DLG comprises of all senior managers within the Armadale District who through positional leadership have developed the ability to influence outside the group to achieve desired outcomes. The DLG is chaired by the District Director, Communities – CPFS and meetings between all key stakeholders occur monthly. The meeting cycle allows the group to set an overall vision for the program, allocate resources through linking and leveraging relationships and assigning tasks to the appropriate agency and people on an actions register contained within the agenda. Each collaborating agency then allocates tasks through their respective line managers and report back to the DLG on outcomes as required.

## Key characteristics

Participating representatives from each agency **hold positional authority/leadership** within their own agency and as such have significant power within their own sphere of responsibilities. Through a **shared understanding** of the youth offending problems in the Armadale District the existence of a shared commitment to divert youth from the justice system already existed within the DLG.

Prior to the commencement of the program the group had already formed a solid basis within which to **build trust** around decision making process with the commitment to achieve results. Each representative has a strong personal presence which allows for a **robust, yet**

**professional, communication environment** resulting in a cohesive and results driven program. Communication within the group is key to achieving the collective goals of the program. The current environment allows for strategic thinking and decision making to occur. The representatives share problems, debate issues and find resolutions to ensure the program is planned and conducted in a way to best achieve results.

### **Key enablers to successful collaboration**

The primary enablers contributing to the successful collaboration of this program is shared leadership and flexible governance. The DLG has implemented and developed clear lines of communication with an overarching ethos of equal authority and input whether views are alternative to the group or not. This developed the confidence to trust each other and the direction of the program. This process and these activities have prepared the DLG to deliver the program as a successful initiative in diverting youth from crime.

During the initiation/implementation phase of the program one of the challenges was a communication gap between the Department of Communities senior executive and the DLG which translated into a slow implementation phase. Primarily the policy for the program was developed based on political will and vision of senior executive. However, the structures, roles and responsibilities required for the operational phase were missing. This translated into a lack of direction and focus by those tasked with the day to day operations and activities of the program. The flexibility within the DLG allowed the program to start implementation while the group took responsibility for seeking clarity from the Department of Communities senior executive group. This was achieved through collaborative communication skills resulting in identification of clear parameters and implementation.

### **Barriers**

The DLG dealt with barriers within the governance, structure and process areas by leveraging on the well-formed and trusted relationships within the group and the senior executive within the Department of Communities.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

The key lesson learned to this stage of the program is to ensure there are clear and articulated processes and structures in place which identify key roles and responsibilities inclusive of the desired outcomes.

When barriers are identified collaboration within the group is essential to identify the best methods and options to move forward. This can only be achieved through a conciliatory communication style with the group accepting all collective decisions and approaching all issues from a united position.

## WA Alliance to End Homelessness

### Sector

Community service sectors and government academic, and private sectors.

### Overview of the project or program

The WA Alliance to End Homelessness (WAAEH) is a broad, cross-sector collaboration involving community, government, academic, and private sectors. The 'Facilitating Group' of WAAEH comprises community sector and academic representatives.

With input from hundreds of Western Australians, the Western Australian Strategy to End Homelessness (the Strategy) was developed and launched on 13 April 2018. This foundational work is still taking place, with an increased level of activity and progression of parts of the Strategy expected in the next 'phase' of funding and activity from July 2019 onwards.

Since inception, the WAAEH has engaged over 500 cross-sector stakeholders through events, meetings, and other activities. As a community-led Alliance, it allows for, and encourages, collaboration between all sectors, industries, and individuals who are working to end homelessness in WA.

### Project parties

The WAAEH began in 2016 when founding partners St Bart's, Ruah, St Vincent de Paul, Centre for Social Impact UWA, Anglicare WA, and Foundation Housing came together to work towards 'ending homelessness, not just managing it' and formed the Facilitating Group of WAAEH. The Facilitating Group is the key governance group of WAAEH, represented by the CEOs or senior staff of these organisations and includes: UnitingCare West, Shelter WA and Wungening Aboriginal Corporation. John Berger is the independent chair. The group has expanded to over 30 supporting partners and is continually growing. Members include community sector organisations and peak bodies, state government agencies, local governments and refuges.

### Key characteristics

**Trust and sharing of power:** As WAAEH operated without any external funding for almost 2 years, it relied on co-investment from the founding partner organisations and this could only happen with deep trust between the partners and belief in the vision. New, innovative methods for decision-making, and the sharing of responsibilities and power have been adopted mainly through the coaching from particular people with expertise in these areas.

**Shared understanding of the problem:** access to substantial recent and relevant research on homelessness, particularly studies conducted by the Centre for Social Impact UWA and from similar alliances around the world.

**Commitment to collective goals and actions:** Focusing on a couple of key approaches at any one time helps to align different stakeholders around goals and actions, for example WAAEH advocates and aligns parties around the concept of Housing First.

**Formal advance planning or emergent planning:** ability to be flexible and adaptable is built-in to the process by having annual updates to this Strategy that can respond to changes in the environment and lessons learned along the way.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

The significant trust built between the WAAEH partners has been successfully established through the organic and emergent nature of how the collaboration came about, as well as a lot of hard work over a significant period of time. Other enablers are:

- **Policy and political environment:** recent changes in state government helped to enable collaboration, e.g. the Supporting Communities Forum Homelessness Working Group
- **Cultural change, collaborative capacity and readiness:** emergence and gradual development of approaches such as co-design, collective impact, social labs, and other areas of social innovation and impact across WA in recent years.
- **Trust and risk taking:** Building personal relationships as well as those at an organisational level has been essential to having trust as an enabling factor; vision and importance of achieving this has helped different parties take risks along the way.
- **Shared leadership and flexible governance focused on achieving outcomes:** through experimentation and over 2 years developing a formal governance framework.

### Barriers

The WAAEH are cognizant of the need for systems and processes in order to drive collaboration; particularly with the complexities of its legal structure, or lack thereof. This barrier was overcome by establishing the Governance Framework, including systems and structures for the backbone organisation. Other strategies to overcome barriers are managing and leveraging relationships and having a focus on people and culture by instilling a culture of building capacity and cross sharing of skill sets across agencies.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

- Collaboration on a large scale and in the context of such a complex social issue takes significant time to build and progress, and therefore needs patience and perseverance;
- Collaborating and innovating in the context of a complex issue and system requires flexibility and adaptability;
- Having people with lived experience participate meaningfully and safely in a large-scale collaboration is challenging but essential and setting up mechanisms for this to happen successfully takes careful consideration and resources;
- Personal relationship building is important at organisational levels in order to establish the trust and other conditions required for successful collaboration;
- Formal knowledge (e.g. academic research) as well as informal knowledge (e.g. developed through co-design and co-production) is required to understand the problem and develop solutions that will actually address the problem effectively;
- People and organisations need capacity and capability building in order to know how to collaborate and innovate well; and
- Regular opportunities for people to engage and collaborate with an open invitation are essential for creating a safe space for collaboration for both the usual and 'unusual suspects' related to the intended area of impact.

# WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Accommodation and Support Strategy 2018-2025

## Sector

Government, community services sector and community people

## Overview of the project or program

The project relates to the development of a draft Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Accommodation and Support Strategy 2018-2025 (Accommodation and Support Strategy). The project has involved collaboration and consultation with both government and the community services sector. The Mental Health Commission (MHC) has developed a draft Accommodation and Support Strategy as identified in its planning to be released in mid 2019 following Cabinet approval. The aim is to guide stakeholders in the development of appropriate accommodation and support for people with mental health and AOD issues.

Consultation occurred with state Government agencies, non-government organisations, peak bodies, consumer consultants and carer. Processes included individual and group meetings, targeted workshops, written submissions, and the establishment of an Advisory Committee. An 8 week public consultation concluded in October 2018, this incorporated 2 public information sessions and an advertisement in the Western Australian newspaper. Following endorsement of the Accommodation and Support Strategy, the MHC will develop its own implementation plan based on its own responsibilities and identified areas for action.

## Project parties

The consultation/collaboration processes included:

- individual meetings with targeted stakeholders;
- a consumer, family and carer workshop (25 attendees);
- a group meeting with stakeholders involved in the delivery of the Independent Living Program (20 attendees) ;
- establishment of an Accommodation and Support Strategy Advisory Committee incorporating
- The consultation/collaboration processes has included:
  - individual meetings with targeted stakeholders;
  - a consumer, family and carer workshop (25 attendees);
  - a group meeting with stakeholders involved in the delivery of the Independent Living Program (20 attendees) ;
- establishment of an Accommodation and Support Strategy Advisory Committee incorporating consumers and carer/family members; representatives from State Government Departments; community housing providers; and peak community mental health and AOD agencies.
- written submissions to the MHC;
- on-line survey (36 submission); - public information sessions (approximately 40 attendees); and
- an eight week Statewide public consultation (27 submissions received).

### Key characteristics

Co-developed following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, including consumers and carers. The MHC established an Accommodation and Support Strategy Advisory Committee that provided guidance regarding the finalisation of the vision, principles and key focus areas and helped shape the priority actions for public consultation. The Advisory Committee included consumers and carer/family members, representatives from State Government departments, community housing providers and as well as peak community mental health and AOD agencies. The Advisory Committee considered the key themes from the consultation processes and other preparatory work in making their recommendations.

The MHC convened an Accommodation and Support Strategy Consumer, Family and Carer Workshop. The workshop focused on identifying the key issues for consumers, families and carers to inform the development of the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy. The facilitators of the workshop included an external consultant with a lived experience of supporting a family member experiencing mental health issues, and MHC staff. Attendees participated in small group discussions to establish key themes and issues to inform the Accommodation and Support Strategy from a consumer, family and carer perspective. A summary of the workshop was provided to workshop participants for their review.

### Key enablers to successful collaboration

Whilst the MHC has been finalising the draft Accommodation and Support Strategy, Communities has commenced the development of a 10 Year Strategy on Homelessness. There are many synergies between the 2 Strategies. The MHC has commenced working collaboratively with Communities to identify opportunities for alignment of key actions. This process has required support at both an operational and executive level.

### Barriers

The overarching philosophy of the Accommodation and Support Strategy is that it requires the collective efforts of key stakeholders to implement. Whilst there are a number of stakeholders, the key agency the MHC is working with is Communities. Collaboration between the MHC and Communities has required discussion and support at an executive level.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

The development of the Accommodation and Support Strategy is ongoing and has yet to be finalised. Ongoing collaboration with the sector is essential for implementation.

# WA Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Engagement Framework

## Sector:

Government and community service sectors

## Overview of the project or program

The project result was a robust, co-designed document called Working Together: Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Engagement Framework (Engagement Framework) and included a practical Toolkit. It outlines best practice principles and practices in relation to consumer and carer involvement, co-production and co-design. The Engagement Framework and Toolkit aim to be practical and accessible for all people, including those receiving services, those providing services, and those developing policies and strategies in the mental health, AOD sectors. The completed Engagement Framework and Toolkit was well received and actively promoted by the Steering Committee. There has been recognition at a national level regarding the final document and the co-design process used.

## Project parties

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) was the lead agency and engaged over 28 different government and non-government stakeholders in the development of the Engagement Framework and Toolkit. The Steering Committee was co-chaired by a family member and included representation from people with a personal experience of mental health.

## Key characteristics

The project was led by MHC representatives who have a **personal lived experience** of mental health, alcohol or other drug issues. The challenge was to complete a state-wide framework involving numerous stakeholders in relatively short period of time. Three different workshops were held with stakeholders to identify key principles; to put the principles into action and the final workshop reviewed the principles, strategies and practices identified at the first two workshops, identified evaluation measures for each of the principles, strategies and practices, and strategies for successfully implementing the Toolkit.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

Actively involving consumers and their support persons, including families and carers, in decision making processes, built on the progress the MHC has made in recent years with involving consumers, families, carers and community members. This is part of core business and decision making processes. Other co-produced documents provided a sound basis for the development of the Engagement Framework and Toolkit. In forming the Steering Committee and facilitating the workshops, the MHC ensured that:

- people were remunerated in line with the MHC's Consumer, Family, Carer and Community Paid Partnership Policy;
- people with personal lived experience were elected as co-chairs of the Steering Committee;
- a person with personal lived experience co-facilitated the workshops;

- Steering Committee and workshop participants consisted of people with a broad range of experiences and perspectives; and
- Steering Committee members had the opportunity to provide feedback throughout the development of the Engagement Framework and Toolkit.

The levels of decision making (required Ministerial approval) and level of influence the Steering Committee had was clearly explained.

### **Barriers**

The timeline was relatively short, so the process to co-design was outlined by the MHC rather than having the Steering Committee deciding how that was going to happen. However, the Steering Committee decided on which other stakeholders were to be involved and requested additional members be invited to the Steering Committee. As some of the Steering Committee members had been involved in other MHC co-designed projects previously, trusting and respectful relationships had been developed that allowed the project to progress forward in a timely manner after initial concerns were addressed.

The MHC extended the timelines when it was realised that the Engagement Framework was not going to be completed in time due to comprehensive internal and external stakeholder feedback on the consultation draft.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

- Allow plenty of time for internal consultation and approval processes to take place.
- Keep stakeholders informed on a regular basis on the progress of the project.
- Allow feedback to be received throughout the life of the project in addition to the consultation periods.
- Be flexible with time frames where possible.
- Engage stakeholders as early as possible and allow them to be involved in decision making processes to the extent possible.
- Ensure respectful paid participation to consumers, families, carers and community members.
- Share knowledge and resources and ensure processes are inclusive and transparent.



# Youth at Risk

## Sector:

Between the government and community sectors

## Overview of the project or program

The Youth at Risk (YAR) Initiative was implemented as a response to children and young people who are located in circumstances where they are deemed to be at risk under Section 41 of the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. It provides a temporary safe environment for at risk young people and provide them with an opportunity to receive referral to appropriate services and support'. Additionally, young people are offered case management, counselling and support to address underlying issues such as disengagement from education, drug and alcohol use and homelessness. This outcome assists in identifying and addressing the underlying causes as to why the young people are unsupervised late at night, increasing their vulnerability to physical and moral risk.

## Project parties

The parties that work in collaboration for this initiative are Department for Child Protection and Family Support; the Western Australian Police Force; Nyoongar Outreach Services and Mission Australia who are the lead agency for the collaboration.

## Key characteristics

The parties have worked in partnership since 2003 to develop an approach to YAR within the Northbridge/CBD area. This partnership was initially formed as a response to the 'Young People in Northbridge Project' and continued with 'Operation Safe Place' in December 2011 and more recently with the YAR Initiative. All partners to the initiative share a vision of 'A future where young people in the inner city precinct are safe at night', and attend weekly operational and quarterly Steering Committee meetings to resolve any issues that may arise.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

The YAR initiative is based upon an equal collaboration of all partners emphasising cooperation and commitment to the following principles:

- A shared vision to achieve the best possible outcomes for young people at risk
- An understanding that we are working together with the aim of breaking the cycle of disadvantage for young people
- Mutual respect for each partner's autonomy and responsibilities, while recognising that true partnership may require change, innovation and flexibility
- Communication, consultation and engagement on decisions made by one partner that may impact upon the others
- Mutual celebrations of success and acknowledgement of the contributions of each partner
- Joint responsibility for the partnership, including agenda setting and participation on Steering Committee meetings, with Mission Australia acting as lead agency

## **Barriers**

Transparent and effective communication has been the key to the success of this collaboration. Regular meetings between all agencies involved has assisted in the coordination and overall success of the initiative.

## **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

Nil.

# 10 Youth Partnership Program

## Sector

Government and community sectors.

## Overview of the project or program

The Youth Partnership Project (YPP) is a strategic project focussed on developing a better model to reduce the number of young people entering the juvenile justice system. It was created in 2014 to address complex social issues being experienced by young people in the South East Corridor of Perth, while addressing segmentation and duplication amongst and between government and non-government services. It engages state and local government, the not-for-profit community sector and local community in working better together to improve outcomes for young people with complex needs through a collaborative place-based approach. This collaborative model not only supports services working together towards a common goal, but facilitates the sharing of information, resources and training.

## Project parties

The YPP has multiple levels in which partners can be involved, including:

- Executive Partners (overall project governance);
- Steering Committee (local operational oversight);
- Operational Partners (service delivery); and
- Associate Partners (additional community supporters)

The following are current partners involved at the executive level, some are also involved operationally. They include: Department of Communities, Department of Education, WA Police Force, Save the Children, City of Armadale, Hope Community Services, Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries, Department of Justice, YACWA, City of Belmont, City of Gosnells and Local Aboriginal Community Representatives.

## Key characteristics

A strong relationship between all stakeholders and a commitment to the common goal of the project and ensuring involvement of high-level stakeholder representatives contributed to the successful collaboration.

A comprehensive service mapping and data collection process was critical in identifying whether there were adequate resources to form a partnership and to identify which services were appropriate to partner with. It also assisted in a shared understanding of the problem identifying the key issues and lay the foundations for the co design process.

Early on, the YPP developed a shared vision and common goal and joint principles. It helped working better together to get the right support, to the right young people, at the rights time, so they can thrive in their communities.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

- Identifying champions of change.
- Building urgency for change.
- The shared leadership of the YPP, in terms on its governance.
- The importance of relationships and trust.

- YPP as dynamic and courageous being identified in YPP principles.
- Resourced backbone organisation.

The technical backbone team is the point of difference for the YPP. The key functions of the YPP team are:

- **Project Management** - Providing project leadership including funding and grant holding, managing staff, facilitating vertical and horizontal governance including secretariat support
- **Communication and Relationship Building** – internally across the partners and governance structure and externally
- **Design and evaluation** – Leading/facilitating the co-design and the development of the shared approach, and implementing a shared measurement framework
- **Reviewing, Learning & Adapting** – Ongoing realignment to changing policy and practical contexts, and a commitment to continuous improvement through reflective practice and monitoring and evaluation.

### Barriers

**Information Sharing:** The YPP addressed this through MOUs, creating provisions for information sharing.

**Access to Data:** Departments hesitant to provide access to the data and bureaucracy seemed to be a barrier and available data and reporting not always clearly showing the situation for a specific “place” or community.

**Funding for Long-Term Projects Working Across Traditional Boundaries:** A key barrier to successful collaboration is the constant tension between government priorities, funding and community service provision. A project such as the YPP requires significant time to establish the mode, engage stakeholders and young people; implement the project and monitor and evaluate outcomes – many of which may not be observable within 5 years.

**Changes in Representatives:** Another common challenge experienced by the project has been the loss of knowledge, trust and strong working relationships when people change roles in their organisations or leave.

### Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

In summary, the top 3 lessons about collaboration from the YPP have been:

- A dedicated, resourced backbone organisation enables shared leadership of collaborative initiatives and makes sure that progress towards shared objectives continues when partners are faced with other internal priorities; because at some point, good will to collaborate isn't enough to complete the tasks needed to achieve results.
- Focus on relationships with and between stakeholders. Building trust and open communication is essential to successful collaboration, and consistency is important to achieve this.
- Collaborations need to be flexible to adapt to changing local, political, theoretical, and best-practice contexts. This can be supported by place-based approaches, ongoing strategic alignment with partners, a commitment to ongoing learning and development, and remaining open to sharing ownership of both successes and failures.

In addition, the Youth Partnership Project is in the process of compiling our “YPP Model”, which will explain our approach to successful collaboration for early intervention in youth justice, and the lessons we've learned along the way.

# Empowering Communities Program

## Sector

Government and Community service sector

## Overview of the project or program

The Empowering Communities Program (ECP) is an updated program towards a transparent and outcomes focussed approach to procurement and contracting seeks to empower communities to be connected and inclusive places where people feel they belong, are valued and contribute. The Department of Communities undertook an extensive consultation and co-design process between July 2017 and June 2018, to inform the design of the new ECP and inform the request for tender. The consultation and co-design process engaged approximately 200 individuals, and included activities such as:

- 14 community workshops across the State involving current service providers
- individual structured interviews with over 70 currently funded organisations
- three workshops specifically for contract managers
- two workshops for peak bodies and local government organisations
- an online survey of current and potential service users
- engagement with representatives from other government agencies.

These activities sought to generate a shared understanding with the community service sector of the purpose and outcomes to be achieved by the new program.

## Project parties

The project team managing the project and a new project team was assigned to manage the project, with particular expertise in working collaboratively for a deeper, more appropriate and sustainable impact, given the level of investment.

## Key characteristics

The first 'phase' of the consultation process sought to **build trust** and reduce the hostility between the sector and Government. A key turning point was when the project team presented at the Linkwest conference and expressed a) genuine empathy and regret for the feelings caused by the previous approach to commissioning and b) a commitment to doing it better by working together. The **consultation and co-design workshops** sought to achieve the following:

- inclusive participation
- shared understanding of the problem
- consensus on a shared vision
- commitment to collective goals and actions.

The findings of the consultation process were collated into a lengthy report and were used to inform the final service design for the new program. This included publishing and seeking feedback on draft versions of the tender documents.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

Key enablers to successful engagement included:

- listening to stakeholders and sensing the environment and issues from different perspectives to better understand the nature and degree of problems, and how these are best addressed;
- Have shared understanding about the problem/opportunity the service seeks to address and what successful delivery looks like;
- being clear about the intent, scope and limitations of engagement prior to and throughout the commissioning process;
- clearly communicating the commissioning process before commencing and then staying the course (i.e. not changing the goal posts throughout the commissioning process);
- following through with actions, feeding back, checking in with stakeholders to make sure that their thoughts and ideas have been considered in where appropriate applied; and
- keeping the community and people and the centre of decision making.

The community consultation was facilitated by Peter Kenyon from the Bank of I.D.E.A.S. He is a community development specialist who is widely respected in Australia and Internationally. Importantly, he was independent from government.

### **Barriers**

The project team was initially met with significant negative reactions from the sector when the consultation process commenced. During the consultation process, the majority of stakeholders expressed a desire to work more collaboratively with each other and across their sector. However, the competitive tendering environment was perceived as a barrier to this. For example, many of them wanted to work together but were fearful of sharing their intellectual property as they would be competing for the same shrinking pot of funding. Also, the large discrepancy in funding levels between providers was perceived as a problem in sharing the funding across providers.

The relationship between the Department and the sector was challenged again when the contracts were awarded due to a perceived delay in announcing the tender outcome. Feedback was also received regarding the challenging logistics of submitting a collaborative bid through the Tenders WA web portal. Several parties wanted to submit collaborative bids but were unable to determine how to manage this. For example, it was unclear:

- How their offer should be submitted (e.g. one copy or multiple identical copies);
- If there had to be a primary contract holder, and who it should be; and
- How risks would be shared across the different organisations.

This feedback was submitted after the tender had closed, and these parties have been advised what to do next time.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

The lessons learned throughout the process of commissioning the ECP services will be used to directly shape governance of future project, commissioning practice (which includes engagement, co-design, procurement, contract management) and commissioning systems.

# Communities Swimming Pool Program

## Sector

Government and community service sectors

## Overview of the project or program

The Department of Communities (Communities)'s swimming pool program evolved out of a need to deal with the substandard environmental health conditions found in many of WA's remote Aboriginal Communities. This project commenced to address the high-levels of skin and middle ear infections reported in Western Australia's remote Aboriginal communities caused by dust problems. Through a sound partnership commitment and the collaborative efforts, the program has now transitioned to a 'holistic community hub' centred around the swimming pool and its associated facilities.

## Project parties

Communities is an affordable housing provider involved in land development, housing construction and property management. The Royal Life Saving Society WA Inc (Royal Life Saving) The Royal Life Saving Society WA Inc (Royal Life Saving) was awarded a commercial contract in 2000 to manage the pool facilities.

## Key characteristics

**Trust and sharing of power** was built early through ongoing and open communication.

**Inclusive participation** built on Royal Life Saving's relationship with local communities. They consulted with each community at the start of each swimming season to establish what programs and activities are required for the upcoming season and gain a community perspective. Further consultation occurs regularly participation, utilisation and operations.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

Communities has to be aware of cultural motivations that drive participation and create positive and constructive conversations. Royal Life Saving has also established direct links with a variety of stakeholders within community groups, including local police, community groups, World Vision, Save the Children Foundation, Department of Education and various Aboriginal corporations. Programs such as the Telethon-lap-a-thon, KJ Rangers barbeques, and World Vision playgroup and swim carnivals are a direct result of these linkages. Such events promote community integration, participation as well as the pool.

## Barriers

Nil.

## Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration

The identified benefits are evident including improved overall health and wellbeing, specifically in relation to ear, nose and skin. Programs like this one can result in a range of secondary benefits, expansion of partnerships and increased community participation and integrated activities via the central hub. This includes birthday parties, pool-fishing events and barbeques. School attendance rates have also improved through the introduction of the 'No School, No Pool' Policy and 'Swim for Fruit' health initiative. This has enhanced community cohesion and reported decrease in vandalism. These and other innovative programs have allowed for broader community participation and not just for children.

# Aboriginal Justice Program

## Sector

Government and community service sectors

## Overview of the project or program

Since 2011, the Aboriginal Justice Program (AJP) within the Department of Justice has developed a targeted and evidence based approach to addressing issues that contribute to Aboriginal people coming into contact with the justice system as a result of fines enforcement and motor drivers licence issues. Open Days provide a one-stop-shop setting for Aboriginal people in AJP priority locations to gain access to services that ordinarily would not be easily accessible. An aim is to reduce their risk of entering the justice system.

Open Days support community development by targeting services and providing access to resources for Aboriginal people. The coordinated approach is committed to empowering Aboriginal people and building their capacity. Services provided during Open Days include:

- Obtaining birth certificates, as a form of primary identification.
- Making payment arrangements to lift fines suspensions on motor driver's licences.
- Vehicle and driver licensing enquiries and transactions.
- Undertaking theory tests and practical driving assessments.
- Assisting with job readiness, through a combination of the above.
- Accessing other supporting agencies (e.g. financial and legal services).

## Project parties

The Department of Justice –continues to work in a collaborative approach. It includes representatives from: Department of Transport, Centrelink, Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Fines Enforcement Registry, Aboriginal Justice Program and Other services, based on location and need.

## Key characteristics

Open Days were developed in collaboration with key parties through discussions around the various aims of the program, and its objective to providing targeted access to services and resources for Aboriginal people. A significant challenge was achieving buy-in from one key agency, as their preferred approach was to develop their own competing project, rather than to collaborate with the Department of Justice. This took considerable time to resolve, but was achieved through relationship-building and negotiation.

## Key enablers to successful collaboration

The original program was developed by the Department of Justice in conjunction with the community sector and with limited resources. The final enabler for this program was Ministerial direction. At this stage, collaboration is undertaken via a Memorandum of Understanding. Successful collaboration was achieved through the use of flexible service delivery models created by key partners. Current Open Days are now delivered on good will, without a formal agreement in place. This arrangement is relationship-based but comes with a degree of risk relating to the potential withdrawal of services.



### **Barriers**

An initial barrier to the commencement of the program was seeking buy-in from other government agencies. This was rectified through continued communication and strategic planning.

Internal government processes also became barriers to the services available at Open Days. For example, the cost of purchasing a birth certificate was a barrier for some people trying to obtain primary identification. This fee could not be waived. However, the Department of Justice, the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, and the Department of Transport worked together to find an alternative solution. This meant that people could be provided with a letter of confirmation of birth, which could be provided free of charge, and that the Department of Transport would acknowledge this document as primary identification for the purposes of progressing an application to obtain a motor driver's licence. Some services and processes are less applicable to regional and remote locations. The Department of Justice continues to work to address this.

### **Lessons learnt to foster and maintain successful collaboration**

The success of the program has been achieved through identifying and addressing overlapping aims and service delivery between the various government agencies and the community sector, with respect to access to services and resources for Aboriginal people in regional and remote areas.

The Aboriginal Justice Program has found it important to share the successes of Open Days. It is also important to continue to communicate and to provide updates to key partners around changing areas/location requiring services, and the evidence underpinning this information.

Lessons have also been learned around the governance of a scheme involving collaboration, and whether regional management or central management is the best model