



REBUILDING

2024
ANNUAL REPORT

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands from which we operate and pay respect to their elders past and present.

We are proud to be moving our RAP from 'Reflect' to 'Innovate'.

Lifeline Darling Downs and South West Queensland Ltd (LDDSWQL) is committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Our vision is to achieve genuine change for a unified future by working together and acknowledging our history.

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Who we are & what we do

Lifeline is a not-for-profit charity based in the Darling Downs and South West Qld.

Our Vision

We engage and empower individuals to build resilient communities

Our Values

- Connection
- Inclusion
- Relationships
- Social Justice
- Compassion





Strategic Pillars

Our staff and volunteer success within communities is shaped by three strategic priorities:



**Strong
Organisational
Culture**



**Financial
Sustainability**



**Targeted
Impactful
Services**

About Us



49
YEARS
of dedicated
service in the
community



25
locations
over 500,000
square
kilometres



15
SHOPS
across our
coverage area



3956
people
receiving
care and
support

300
volunteers



Over the past
12 months our
volunteers donated
an estimated
230,000 hours of
vital work to support
our community and
organisation.



Chair's Report

With **Adrienne Leonard**

As we reflect on the past year, it is with immense gratitude and pride that I present to you the Chair's Report for Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland Ltd for 2024.

This year has been one of significant achievements, growth, and challenges, and it is a privilege to share our progress with you.

Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland Ltd has continued its vital work in providing essential support services to our community. Our core Vision remains steadfast: to engage and empower individuals to build resilient communities across the Darling Downs & South West Queensland region. Our dedication to this Vision has been unwavering, and the impact of our work is more evident than ever.

In 2024, Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland Ltd has seen a remarkable increase in the demand for our services, reflecting the growing need for crisis intervention support in our community. Our team of trained staff and volunteers continue to meet this demand, ensuring that we provide timely and compassionate support to those in distress.

Our financial focus this year was one of fiscal discipline and strategic financial planning. By achieving this, we are now well-positioned for future growth and stability, enabling us to continue to provide high-quality support and services.

While we celebrate our successes, we also acknowledge the challenges we have faced. The demand for support services continues to grow, and maintaining the quality of our core services while managing resources effectively remains a critical focus. We are committed to addressing these challenges through ongoing strategic planning, collaboration with other organisations, and continuous improvement of our services.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities to further enhance our impact. We are exploring new initiatives and partnerships that will allow us to reach even more individuals and communities in need.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated volunteers, staff, board members, and supporters. Your unwavering commitment and passion are the driving forces behind our success. To our staff and volunteers, whose

“While we celebrate our successes, we also acknowledge the challenges we have faced. The demand for support services continues to grow, and maintaining the quality of our core services while managing resources effectively remains a critical focus. We are committed to addressing these challenges through ongoing strategic planning, collaboration with other organisations, and continuous improvement of our services.”

tireless efforts make our crisis support services possible, and to our donors and partners, whose generosity ensures that we can continue our vital work, we are deeply grateful.

As we move into the next year, Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland Ltd remains committed to our ongoing Vision of providing support and fostering mental health and wellbeing across our region. We look forward to continuing this important work and to making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication.

Adrienne Leonard
Acting Chair



CEO's Report

With Rachelle Patterson

We have experienced so much as an organisation over the past 12 months and I want to credit the volunteers, staff and Board for all they have accomplished. I have themed this year's report Rebuilding as it has been threaded through every decision we have made and every action we have taken. I stepped into this role at one of the most challenging times of the organisation's history, yet I am proud to report that it was so rewarding to reflect on the collective impact in our community across the Darling Downs and South West Queensland.

Over the course of the year, we have managed not only to significantly shift our financial position back to one of surplus, but we have been able to meet the demands of our community when they have needed us more than ever. This has been no small feat and is a testament to the broad capabilities of the staff and volunteers working across our footprint. I would also like to highlight that our staff and volunteers are mirrors of the community and undoubtedly have also been impacted by the housing issues and financial distress, yet still they continue to provide service in the community.

The past 12 months have seen changes to the services needed by our community and a responsiveness from us to ensure what we provide is flexible and relevant. We are seeing new and emerging cohorts of service users including an increased number of middle-aged women; people who are employed yet cannot afford the cost of living; and migrants who are resettling. This has meant that our services, both emergency relief and counselling have become more important than ever. This year we provided 1013 food parcels and occasions of material assistance. We received 3956 requests for our counselling and support

services compared to 3937 in 2023. The homelessness rates in our region are unprecedented as are the number of people who are first-time service users.

To further respond to this emerging need, we are now delivering crisis counselling services which ensure that if you walk in our front door in distress, we are there to meet you wherever you are at. This service is being delivered from Toowoomba, Dalby, Tara and Roma and includes a dedicated position to primarily focus on providing culturally safe and responsive services to First Nations service users.

Locally and nationally, we have seen the dialogue about domestic violence as a major focus in the media. There have never been more conversations about this topic and the devastating impact it has on our communities, families and individuals. The positive to come from this is that we have received significant additional funding so that we can provide the best evidence-based supports to people who are impacted by this abuse. As the sole funded specialist domestic and family violence provider in South West Queensland, we have worked hard to ensure that our service response is appropriate for what is mostly women and children requiring support. However, we also provide extensive support and skills facilitation to men who are open to changing their behaviours and interaction with their families and partner.

Our Gambling Help program has probably seen the biggest shift of any of our programs over the past 12 months. Traditionally, it has been difficult to engage with people who have problem gambling issues. The past year has seen a significant increase in the number of people seeking support to reduce their problem gambling behaviours including asking for assistance to self-exclude from venues

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providing gambling opportunities. Another change we have seen is the number of migrant community members who have collectively recognised that gambling is problematic to them individually as well as to their families and the community. It has been wonderful for the team to be able to engage with these diverse groups who are wanting to make positive changes for the good of their family and community.

Whilst the many varied factors impact our communities, our retail stores have continued to play an important role, not only in selling affordable goods, but often being a safe place to connect. Our many volunteers and staff provide not only a sales role, but often act as accidental counsellors for their many customers. Many of our retail stores have undergone significant facelifts to ensure that the aesthetics of our stores are more contemporary and in keeping with what the retail consumer is looking for when visiting one of our shops. The feedback we received from customers is that the stores are more inviting and it is easier to find the bargains they are looking for.

This year has also seen the implementation and upgrading of many of our systems to ensure we can be as efficient as possible when providing services to clients and our staff. What sits behind this is an enormous amount of work and dedication by our corporate services team who keep everything running so the frontline staff and volunteers

can keep providing services and goods for the community.

Some of our achievements this year were due to the generosity of donors, large and small who we acknowledge wish to maintain their privacy, however deserve a few words given their contributions have helped so many.

To our volunteers, including our Board Directors, I say thank-you and acknowledge that without you there is no Lifeline. Many of our volunteers have been with us for decades and on behalf of the community and staff, I wish to express my deep gratitude for all that you do.

Next year will be our 50th anniversary, which will include celebrations and acknowledgements of the services we have provided to the community in the form of support and connections through our programs and retail stores. But for now, our focus will remain on ensuring fiscal responsibility and extracting maximum efficiency from the funds we receive and generate. This will be an ongoing challenge for us and the sector as community need increases.



Rachelle Patterson
Chief Executive Officer



Treasurer's Report

With David McVeigh

The 2023/2024 Financial Year Treasurer's Report for Lifeline Darling Downs and South West Queensland Limited (LDDSWQL) is presented below.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Total income earned in the 2023/2024 financial year was \$14.8 million **down** 19.7% from \$18.4 million in 2022/2023, noting the closure of Tranquillity Care Services (TCS) in January 2023. Continuing operations revenue increased 2.4% (\$14.4 million in 2022/2023). Noted factors contributing to the \$0.4 million increase in continuing operations income include the following:

- Gross profit from our retail division was reduced, impacted by the closure of our Perth St and Stanthorpe stores in during the 2023/2024 financial year.
- Grant revenue increased, in part due to additional emergency relief funding received associated with bushfire recovery.
- Rental income and profit on sale of assets reduced as the remaining TCS properties were sold off during the year.

Total expenditure of \$14.3 million was **down** 25.9% on last year's \$19.4 million.

The contributing factors to the \$4.9 million decreased expenditure include the following:

- Employee related costs (including salaries, wages, on costs and superannuation) was **down** \$4.3 million, noting TCS related redundancies in January to March 2023.

- Client support services reduced by \$0.3 million associated with a reduction in client numbers upon the closure of the TCS.
- Targeted cost saving initiatives across the board, notable a rationalising of computer expenses and telephone related expenditure (\$0.2 million).

The comprehensive income for the year was a \$0.4 million profit (2023 - \$964,840 loss).

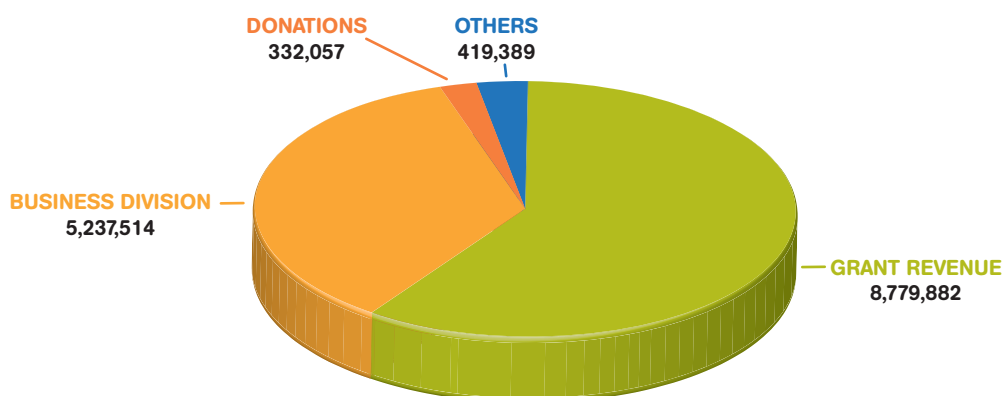
Building on the progress made over 2023/24, the Directors and Executive Management Team are committed to continuing to prioritise the organisation's financial sustainability.

Going forward employment costs will continue to represent over 70% of total expenditure and are subject to Enterprise Bargaining Agreement Provisions. Corporate overheads remain an area of focus and cost savings continue to be identified and implemented as contracts end and other options are considered.

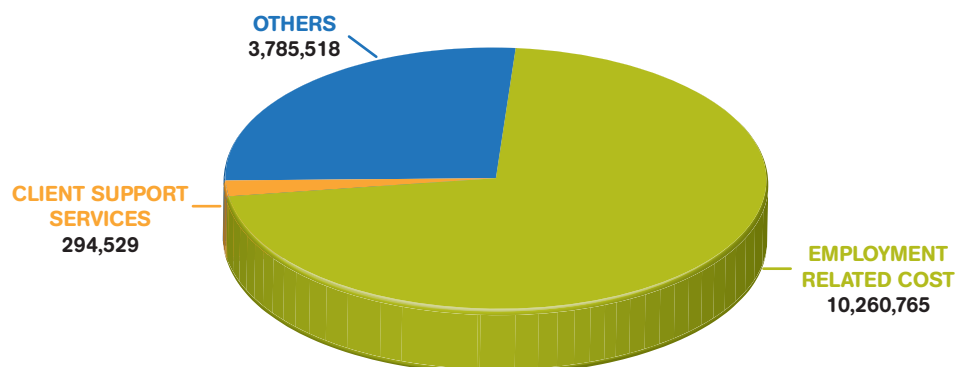
The organisation remains open to any new service delivery opportunities within our footprint in the Human Services service offering. While the retail business is continuing to explore different options and alternatives to maximise its financial contribution.

The organisation engaged a payroll audit during July and August 2024 and will be implementing the auditor's recommendations over the course of the 2024/2025 financial year.

CONTINUING REVENUE 2024



EXPENDITURE 2024



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION	THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
Current Assets	4,275,281	3,570,420
Less Liabilities	(2,850,780)	(2,538,778)
Net Current Assets	1,424,501	1,031,642
Fixed Assets	8,660,559	8,929,183
Less Bank Loan	(564,522)	(868,319)
Net Fixed Assets	8,096,037	8,060,864
Total Net Equity	9,520,538	9,092,506

Governance

Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Current Board of Directors

Chair



Adrienne Leonard

Directors



Nadja Jones



Anne Meagher



David McVeigh
Treasurer



Glenda Humes



Joy Mingay



Annette Bromdal

Joined in August 2024



Lynda Crowley-Cyr



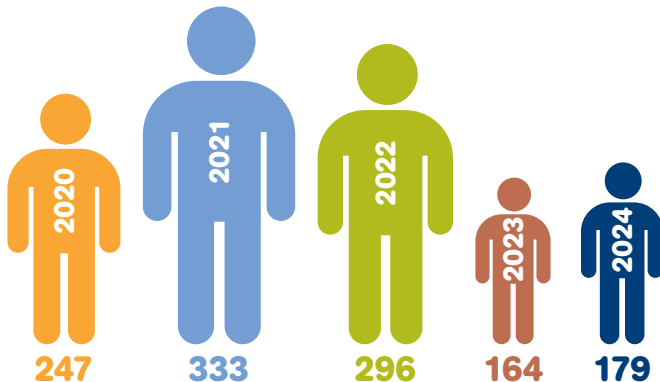
Sarah-Jane MacDonald

Year at a Glance

Staffing & Engagement

Number of Employees

364,377



**TOTAL
SERVICE
HOURS**

*The higher employee number of 2020-2022 reflects TCS employee numbers.

2024 Staffing



**73%
Female**



**27%
Male**

Our Services

HUMAN SERVICES

HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION

WHO WE ARE: We provide person-centred, client-led services funded by a mix of:

- Commonwealth
- State
- PHN
- Other (Lifeline, rHealth)

In 2023-2024 we supported:



**3956 people across
30 services**

**60,430 hours
of support including**



8 Circle of
Security
Programs\
to parents



**5x20
week**
Creative Coping
programs



300 hours
of Be the Change Programs
for people using violence

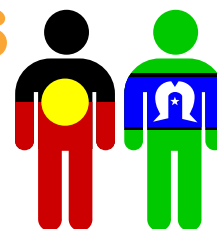
180 hours

of Court Support
for people impacted
by Domestic and
Family Violence



365 hours

of After School activities
for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
young people



WHERE WE ARE:

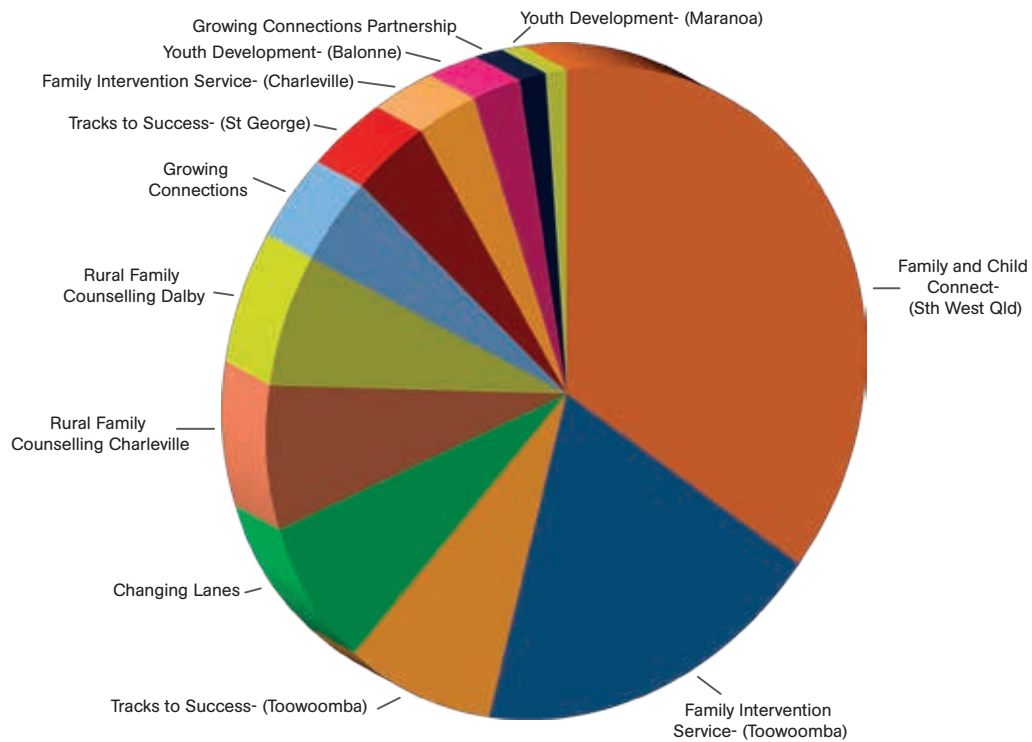
Roma, St George, Charleville, Cunnamulla,
Dalby, Warwick and Toowoomba.
Delivering 30 services across the Darling Downs
and South West Queensland



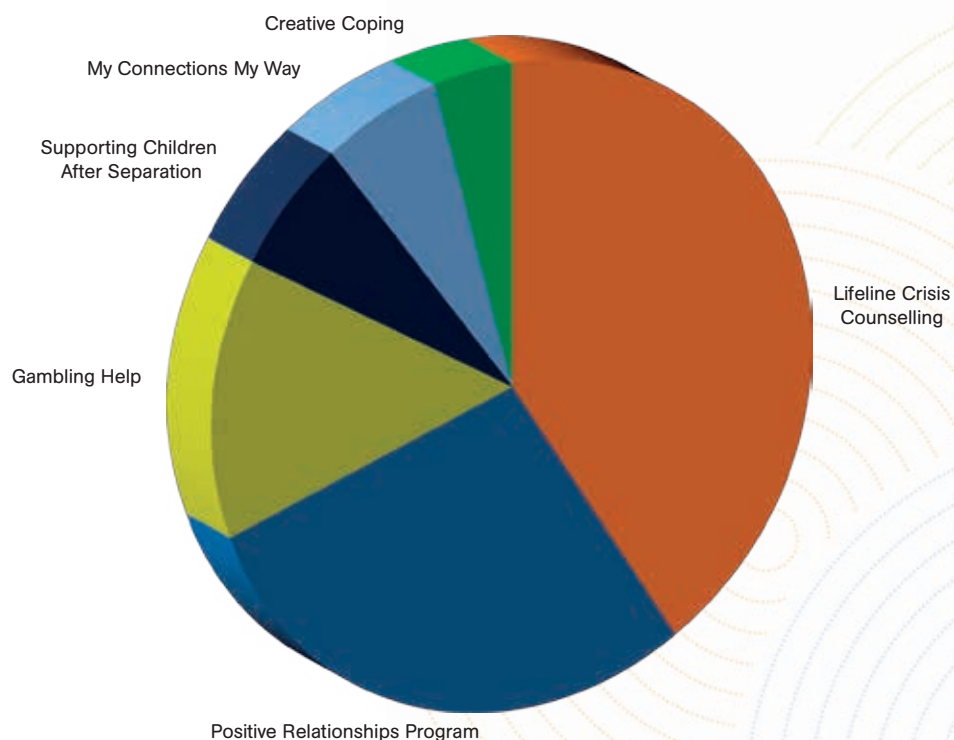
GAMBLING HELP QR CODE:

Bet you didn't know
we're here to help

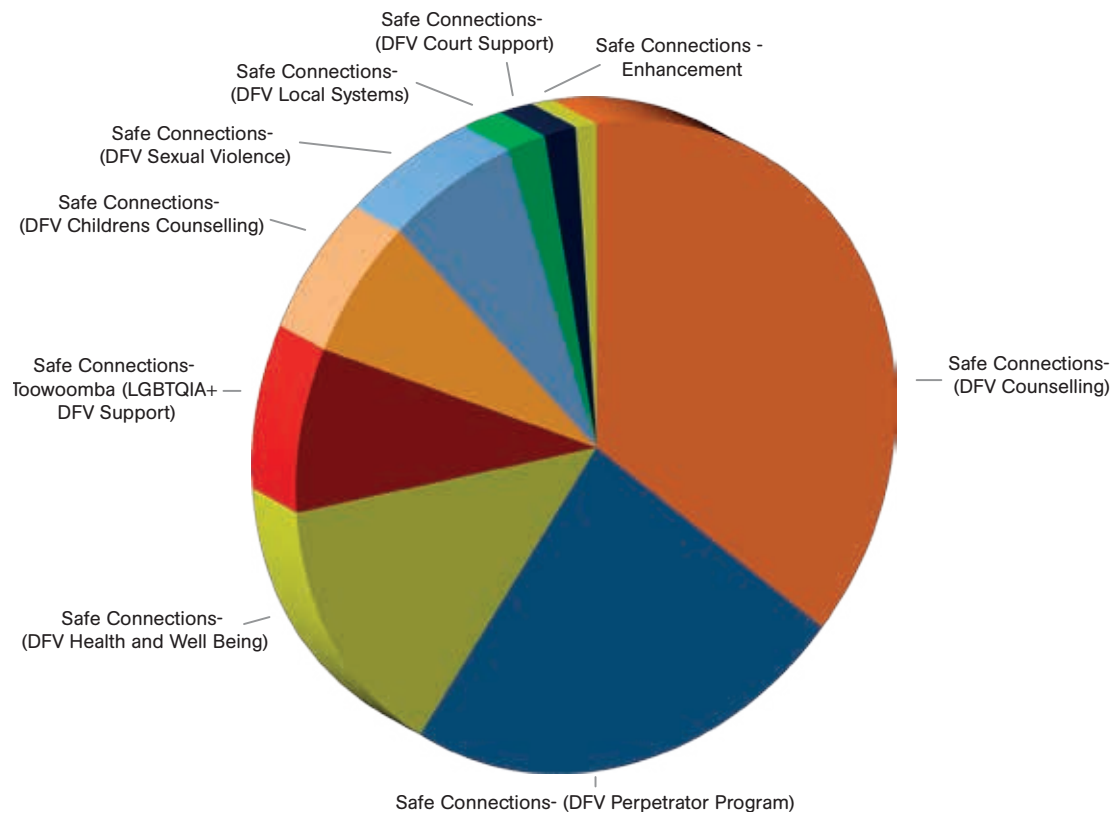
954 Children and Families supported across Rural Family Counselling (Charleville and Dalby), Family and Child Connect, Changing Lanes, Tracks to Success, Youth Development (Maranoa and Balonne), Growing Connections, Family Intervention Services (Toowoomba and Charleville).



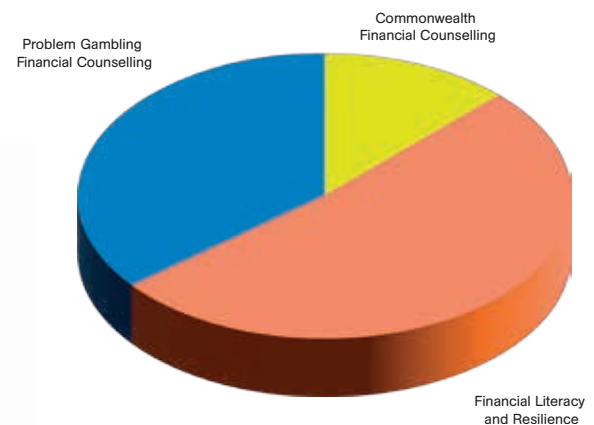
1086 individuals received Social and Emotional Wellbeing support through Gambling Help, My Connections, My Way, Creative Coping, Supporting Children Post Separation, Positive Relationships Program, Lifeline Crisis Counselling



593 People received LGBTQA+ Support, Sexual Violence support, Be the Change Program, Court Support, DFV Health and Wellbeing, Children's Counselling, Community Engagement, Domestic & Family Violence (DFV) Counselling



319 Financial Counselling sessions
Commonwealth Financial Counselling,
Problem Gambling Financial Counselling,
Financial Literacy and Resilience



Emergency Relief

885 Food parcels

\$4,701 Furniture

\$383.80 Prescriptions

Unmet needs for 1398 people



STORY

Max, 23, has a long history of mental health concerns.

Throughout their life, Max has struggled with low self-esteem, difficulty establishing and maintaining friendships, depression and anxiety. Max also found that they were using ways of coping that often made their situation worse or created new problems.

Due to their mental health, Max has been unable to maintain employment or study. Their main source of income was Job Seeker through Centrelink. Due to this, Max has had to prioritise living costs over accessing adequate private mental health services. Max has accessed other community organisations who support people living with mental health challenges but found that none fit them quite right, and often left them dejected and worrying if they'd ever find support that was right for them.

One night, Max sought support from a friend. This friend found the Creative Coping program through a web search, and supported Max to complete a referral to the team. Upon meeting Max, Creative Coping staff were able to assess that Max has been experiencing high levels of depression, stress and anxiety. The staff were able to work with Max to develop a plan to keep themselves safe, while participating in the Creative Coping skills sessions. Staff were also able to encourage and support Max to access a community organisation psychologist for 10 sessions under a Mental Health Care Plan to support them to integrate the group learnings.

Over the course of the group, Max has been able to learn skills to improve their emotional regulation, become more mindful in their life, build and maintain relationships and tolerate their distress in healthy ways. Max has also found pride in being able to share their learnings with friends outside the group and within the group and feel less alone. Max's levels of depression, stress and anxiety have lessened significantly over the course of the sessions.

Max's new goal is to study at TAFE, to begin the pathway to becoming a peer support worker in Mental Health to help people going through similar circumstances.

“Over the course of the group, Max has been able to learn skills to improve their emotional regulation, become more mindful in their life, build and maintain relationships and tolerate their distress in healthy ways.”





STORY

Amanda, 43, self-referred to the Gambling Help service.

Amanda indicated a history of trauma, self-harm, anorexia, anxiety, depression, and OCD. Amanda disclosed problems with excessive gambling on poker machines. The excessive gambling reportedly began following the end of a 14-year relationship typified by coercive control and domestic and family violence. Amanda disclosed a complex history, including early childhood trauma in addition to domestic and family violence, including experiencing financial exploitation from several former partners who all presented with multiple addictions. Amanda also disclosed thoughts of suicide and self-harm.

Amanda has consistently reported instances of negative criticism from her familial figures. LDDSWQ's Gambling Help counsellor is working with Amanda to address her chronic low self-esteem and to identify achievable goals around her complex trauma recovery.

As Amanda experiences frequent and intense emotions, dialectical behaviour therapy is being used to assist her to develop useful grounding techniques including meditative breath control. Safe relationships are being discussed by exploring boundaries that Amanda can use when in negotiation with immediate family and

friends. Current work is sourcing alternative means of social interactions, hobbies, and interests including diversifying and expanding her network of supports as protective factors in her recovery. This has included a mental health referral for support around Amanda's persistent suicidal ideation.

Amanda has a strong nurturing nature and works in aged care. She is being supported to gradually internalise and recognise this strength with the intention of encouraging her to turn some of her nurturing qualities inwards as part of self-care.

At present Amanda is reporting that she is not gambling, she is acknowledging her complex trauma presentations, as well as her recent suicidal ideation. She has ceased her habit of 'hoarding' medications and has worked with her Gambling Help counselor and her psychologist to develop a suicide safety plan.

Amanda has reported a level of optimism that she has not experienced in a significant time and has found new interests in bushwalking and a new group of friends that she says see her for herself and not as a manifestation of her trauma and personal history.

STORY

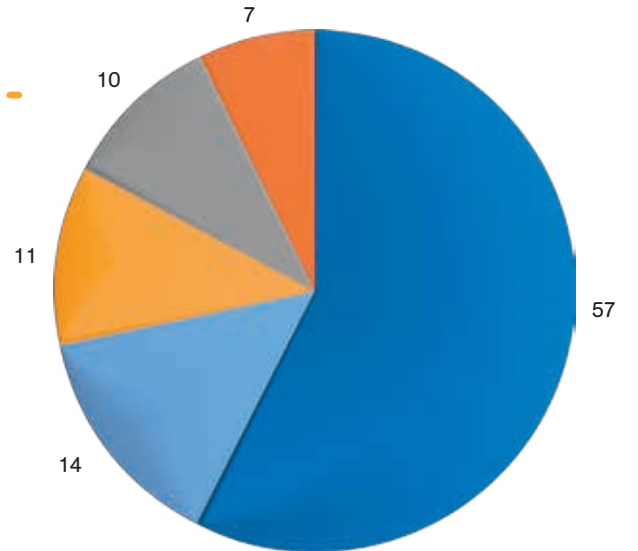
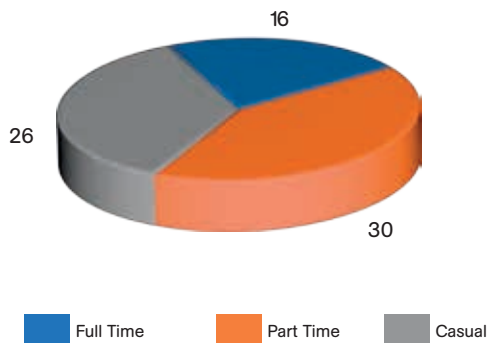
Sam, 28, arrived in a remote town to live with her partner, having moved away from her existing support base in a larger town. Sam had previously received in-patient care through both mental health and drug detox treatment programs following an extensively traumatic history of abusive relationships. Sam's most recent relationship became abusive eventually leading to her escaping, which resulted in her becoming homeless. Sam wanted to remain in the remote town however without friends, family or supports this was difficult. Once Sam engaged with us we were able to do some safety planning and education to be able to keep Sam safe. We were also able to connect Sam with support for her existing mental health and physical issues which included her re-engaging with the appropriate medical professionals and community-based services.

Over time, we were able to support Sam to obtain secure housing and to be able to maintain regular health and support appointments. Sam is now doing much better, having learnt skills around keeping safe and being able to recognise the signs that contribute to her not being well, including understanding healthy relationships vs domestic and family violence red flags. Sam is undergoing regular counselling and has secured ongoing employment and is feeling much more optimistic about her future.



Business Division

BUSINESS DIVISION STAFF - YEARS OF SERVICE



RETAIL OUTLETS

- ANZAC AVENUE
- CHARLEVILLE SHOP
- DALBY SHOP
- EMPORIUM SHOP
- NEVER ENDING STORIES
- HERRIES ST SUPERSTORE
- OAKEY SHOP
- PERTH STREET
- RANGE SHOP
- ST GEORGE SHOP
- STANTHORPE
- TARA SHOP
- WARWICK SHOP
- WILSONTON SHOP
- WYALLA PLAZA



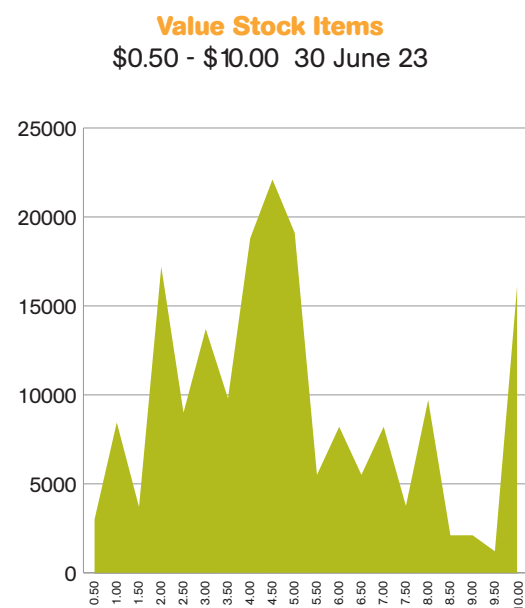
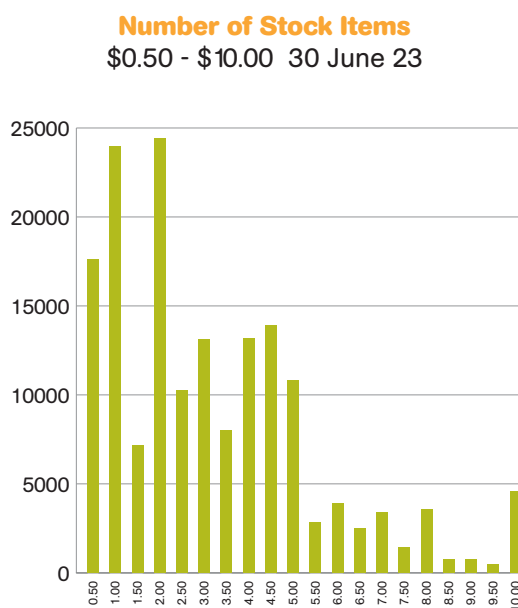
LDDSWQL Customer Survey

Customers (493 Survey Respondents)

- 96% 'Agreed' or 'Strongly Agreed' that they had a positive shopping experience.
- 83% stated they would shop at that Lifeline store again.
- 89% rated their overall shopping experience compared to other op-shops as 'Good' to 'Fantastic'.

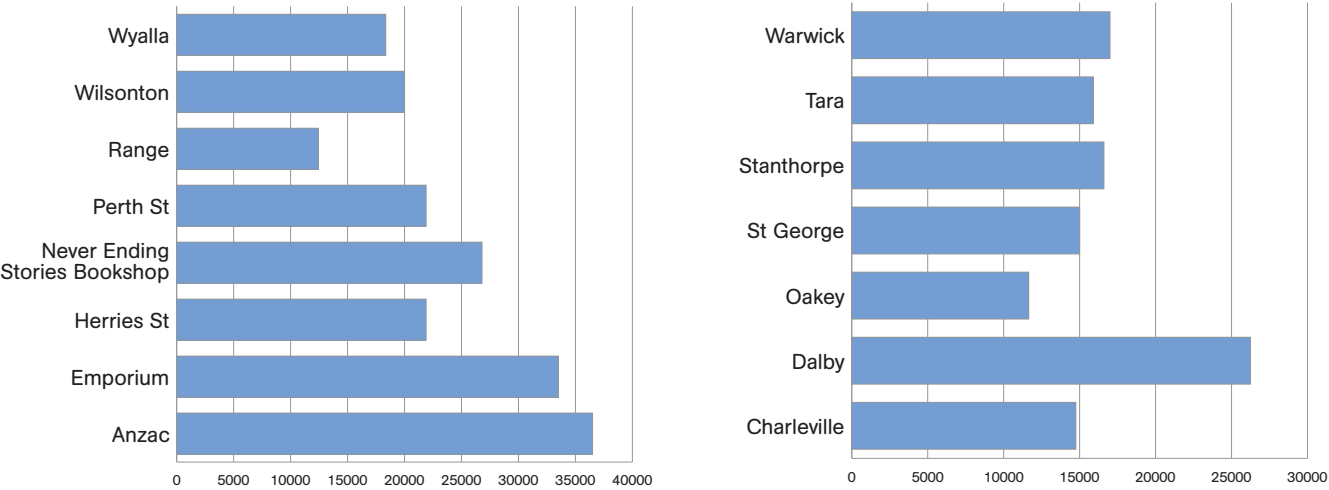


Stock Items & Values

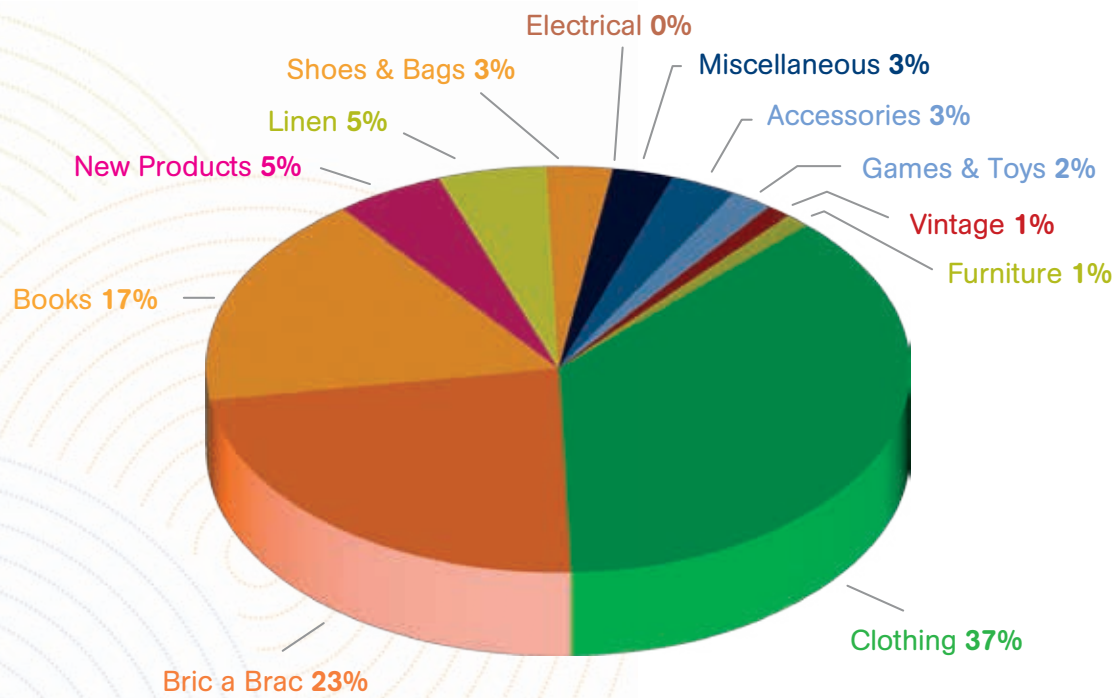


**91% of stock items are \$10 or less (165 911)
and are 53% of the stock value (\$532 668)**

ITEMS SOLD PER SHOP



SALES ITEMS % SOLD 2023



Staff Milestone



Tania Griinke

St George Qld
Shop Manager

Thank you for 25 years Service with Lifeline



What happens to my donation and **how does it help people in need?**



Material goods donated
are collected and sent
to our warehouse to be
sorted and priced.



Items are distributed to
Lifeline Shops.



Funds from the sale of your
donation are used to support
Lifeline's crisis support and
suicide prevention services.



Every purchase you make helps us save lives.
Thank you.

 **Lifeline** Saving
Lives
Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.

Digital and IT – Supporting our Services

The past year the ICT team focused on completing all cost reduction projects undertaken during the previous year while also developing multiple internal processes and registers to ensure that all cost-saving measures are maintained and that we make maximum use of all paid services. The team were also involved with the implementation of some new systems and the completion of multiple projects to improve services/systems for all LDDSWQL.

2024 Projects and systems:

- **Roll-out of new Systems**

We implemented new finance and accounting software and systems to maximise efficiencies across the organisation.



- **Printers and Internet**

Over the past 12 months we have implemented new printing solutions which have created significant cost savings. We have also changed internet providers to ensure we are getting the best value for our money and services.

- **Staff cyber security training**

Cyber security awareness training is important because it helps employees understand the risks and threats associated with cyber-attacks. By providing employees with the knowledge and skills to identify potential cyber threats, organisations can significantly reduce the likelihood of falling victim to an attack. To build a stronger security culture ICT have enrolled all LDDSWQL staff in monthly Cyber security training sessions through KnowBe4, we also send out monthly phishing emails to enhance employee security awareness.

- **Shop reporting and Training**

The implementation of a POS (Point of Sale) system in all our shops enabled ICT to gather valuable sales information from all our shops. ICT converted the relevant information into usable reports that enabled the business management team to make important decisions and provide training to all shop managers. The training helps the shop managers to improve sales, pricing and stock requirements.

- **Russell Street security cameras**

The ICT team installed a new security camera system in the reception area of our Russell Street office. The cameras provide the admin team with visibility of the area outside the Russell Street entrance, the admin area, and the main gate at the parking area. We hope that the cameras will improve our monitoring and the overall safety of our amazing admin team.

We would like to thank all our staff and volunteers for their support over the past year and look forward to working with all of you in the new year.

Donors & Supporters

MAJOR DONORS (over \$5000)

Brazil Family Foundation
Lions Club of Toowoomba West
Peter Hauesler
PJ Sedl

CORPORATE SPONSORS

Workwear Discounts
The Chronicle
Centenary Heights State High School

FUNDING BODIES

STATE GOVERNMENT

Department of Justice and Attorney-General
Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
Department of Employment, Small Business and Training
Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts
Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services
Department of Youth Justice

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Attorney-General's Department, Commonwealth of Australia
National Indigenous Australians Agency
Department of Social Services

OTHER FUNDING BODIES

Lifeline Australia
Rhealth
Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN
Western Queensland PHN

DONORS (over \$1000)

Tara Men's Day Out
Ian Mitchell
Manuel MacDiarmid
SV Partners
Pamela Mallyon
Dalby & District Friendly Society
Dispensary Ltd
PG Brodie
Downs & South West Qld Law Association
Dalby Filipino Community Association
Donald Dippelsman
A Pfeffer
PG Brodie
Lynda Sugars
Kitchener Street Dental

Financials

**Please click here to see the
Audited Financial Reports**



Lifeline in the Community



**Christmas Hamper
giveaway -**
December 2023 recipients

Healthy Relationship activity - February 2024



**Charleville
Community Notice
Board**

Lifeline Shines

Our teams doing great work building awareness and visibility for survivors and victims of domestic violence. Thank you for your efforts to bring awareness to our community. It was a beautiful display through the streets of Charleville by Lifeline Darling Downs & South West QLD Ltd in support of LGBTQIA+ Domestic Violence Awareness Day.



DV Month – May 2024 – LGBTQIA+ community awareness promotion



**Charleville HOPE program
attended Roma-Con 2024**
for a day trip to embrace community engagement.



Roma Court House –
Roma Police, Lifeline, Legal Aid and Probation & Parole.
Other local services also attended over the time frame.

OUR VOLUNTEERS



OUR VOLUNTEERS





Head Office

33 Russell Street, Toowoomba, Qld 4350

PO Box 2119, Toowoomba, Qld 4350

ABN: 97 075 403 959

Contact

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