



Whitehorse Community Health Service Ltd

Annual Report

08/09



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President's Report

The year 2008/09 has been a year of considerable change for Whitehorse Community Health Service Limited (WCHS Ltd). Key amongst the changes has been the move of the organisation to become a company limited by guarantee, following a ruling by the Australian Tax Office that would have seen significant tax advantages removed had we continued as a government agency under an incorporated association structure. This process was marked by a Special General Meeting of members on 24 February 2009, who voted to accept changes to the constitution and make way for this significant change in organisational governance. As a result, the funding arrangements with the State government were altered and WCHS undertook a major piece of work to gain status as a Registered Community Health Service on 8th July 2009, thus allowing WCHS Ltd to secure a 3 year Funding And Service Agreement (FASA) on 1st July 2009. The Board, Senior Managers and Corporate Services staff, in particular, are to be congratulated for their hard work in ensuring a seamless transition and creating a positive framework on which to build new initiatives and directions, whilst continuing to offer quality services to the people of Whitehorse.

Another major change occurred in May 2009 when our CEO of 5 years, Jim Killeen left to take up the leadership role of Darebin Community Health Service. WCHS Ltd achieved significant growth under Jim's stewardship and became highly regarded as a leader in the field of chronic disease management. Jim led a number of initiatives including the Men's Shed, the Baby Makes 3 project supported by VicHealth, the Residents Making a Difference at Eastbridge in partnership with the City of Whitehorse and others. Jim provided a strong strategic focus on developing partnerships with other health providers in the region. Through Jim's Chairmanship, the Inner Eastern Primary Care Partnership became a flagship of integrated service delivery; working with our partners to provide seamless journeys for the clients in achieving better health and social outcomes.

Our new CEO, Gillian Leach commenced in July 2009 following a rigorous search conducted by the Board. The Board is confident that Gillian's appointment will assist WCHS Ltd in consolidating core business activities at the same time as promoting new and innovative solutions to our growing service need.

WCHS Ltd cannot operate without the efforts of our wonderful volunteers and we thank them for their ongoing support and service to their community.

In addition, major changes were made to the office accommodation and the implementation of the new client management system, TrakCare. The Board would like to acknowledge the huge effort this required of all staff during the implementation. Whilst some fine tuning of the system is still required, TrakCare will position WCHS Ltd on the pathway to state-wide consistency of electronic records and put us in a position to participate in the Commonwealth's drive towards a national e-health network and associated improvement to client outcomes.

Despite the many changes and the significant impost of implementing a new client management system and the changes in office accommodation, over 25,000 clients were treated during 2008/9, most with multiple visits and many people participating in more than one program. We would like to congratulate the staff of WCHS Ltd on seeing a record number of clients and helping so many towards better health outcomes.

WCHS Ltd cannot operate without the efforts of our wonderful volunteers and we thank them for their ongoing support and service to their community. We thank the Senior Leadership team and all staff for making this a fabulous organisation and we thank the Board of Directors for their insightful input and many hours of effort.

Jane Boag



President



Overview

Whitehorse Community Health Service provides services primarily to people who live or work in the City of Whitehorse. However, several of our services and programs, including Oral Health, NSP and HARP services, serve the regional population.

Whitehorse CHS prioritises service access to disadvantaged populations to assist in addressing health inequities. Services are planned with consideration of population health data.



Whitehorse Community Health Service Limited

Mission Statement

To restore and maintain the health and well-being of the Whitehorse Community in collaboration with the community and the broader system of service.

Whitehorse is recognised as an industry leader in provision of community health services. Services to the community are provided through three program areas that operate in an interdependent manner to address the health needs of our community.

Oral Health

- › Oral health program for adults, adolescents and children
- › Smiles 4 Miles
- › Undergraduate teaching program

Health Development

- › Population health initiatives in housing estates and schools
- › Counselling and case work support
- › Needle and Syringe Program (NSP)
- › Men's Shed
- › Family violence services
 - Men Making Change
 - Baby Makes Three Project

Primary Health Care

- › Whitehorse Good Life Club - Chronic Disease Management
 - Evidence based pathways of care, health coaching support, and care coordination
 - Health education – 'Good Life Choices'
 - Diabetes services – diabetes education, Life! (Diabetes prevention)
 - Integrated Diabetes Education and Assessment Service (IDEAS)
 - Heart health
- › Physical activity groups
 - Good Life Gym
 - Hydrotherapy
 - Tai Chi
- › Children's services
 - Psychology, speech pathology, occupational therapy
 - Groups: post natal depression, school readiness, social communication groups
- › Adult Allied Health Services
 - Speech pathology
 - Nutrition and dietetics
 - Occupational therapy
 - Physiotherapy
 - Podiatry





Health Development Program Report

Olive Aumann Health Development Manager

The Health Development Program is committed to reducing health inequalities that exist in the local community. The key program objectives are

- › Ensuring equity of access to high quality services.
- › Implementing health promotion strategies which target the population groups in the community experiencing poorer health and high levels of chronic illness.

Health Promotion

The renamed Healthy Communities Team includes dynamic and diverse practitioners who have worked effectively together to implement and evaluate the organisation's Integrated Health Promotion Plan.

Key achievements in 2009 include:

- › Establishment of the WCHS Ltd Community Participation Model with two pilot Community Advisory Groups;
- › Final implementation and evaluation of the 2006-2009 Integrated Health Promotion Plan undertaken in partnership with the local community in the three public housing neighbourhoods and two local Primary Schools. Health promotion action in these initiatives was directed toward increasing social connectedness, physical activity, healthy eating and access to public transport in the community.
- › Minister for Health, Daniel Andrews, launched the new DHS publication of the work undertaken with the Residents Making a Difference (R-MAD) community group to improve neighbourhood access and walk-ability. This publication showcases quality and innovative practice to reduce health inequalities in the community. It was also presented at a State-wide Health Inequalities Forum and posted on a State Government website.
- › Ongoing implementation of the Smiles 4 Miles oral health promotion program with accreditation of 3 local pre-schools and participation of an additional 5 in the new financial year.

Needle and Syringe Program (NSP)

The Needle and Syringe Program has continued to provide an important public health service aimed at reducing the spread of blood-borne viruses in the Eastern Metropolitan Region. Within this program, the Community Health Outreach Program – Eastern Region (CHOPER) mobile team provided access to clean injecting equipment across the seven local government areas in the Region every night

of the year, connecting with 3,194 clients (double the target) and distributing 313,809 needles and syringes. Of these, 79% (target - 50%) were returned.

We have worked to expand the number of Needle and Syringe outlets across the region by supporting other community health services to establish programs. An Operational Manual has been developed and the EMR Quality Practice in the NSP manual, developed in 2002, has been reviewed.

Counselling Team

In the past year, staff have provided a professional service to a wide range of clients with mild to moderate, high prevalence mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety associated with issues of family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, chronic illness and complex social needs. Many clients experience social isolation and have limited access to social and emotional support.

'I am sure patience and efficiency is not an easy thing in your line of work but you still make a great deal of effort to practice such endearing qualities, for this I thank you.' MI

Staff have also worked in partnership with the Hospital Admission Risk Program (HARP), the Eastern Region Family Violence Partnership and with Drummond Street Relationship Centre. A program of professional development has supported staff throughout the year and contributed to the development of skills and expertise of the staff.

Men's Health

WCHS Ltd Men's Health programs engage men at critical times in the life cycle in line with the Federal government's 2009 Men's Health Policy focus on reducing barriers for men in accessing health services. During the past year extensive collaboration has been undertaken with organisations in the region to improve access to men's family violence programs and services to increase safety for women and children. Underpinning these programs is the understanding that isolation is a significant factor associated with negative health outcomes for men with resultant impacts on their family members.

Men Making Change Program

Addressing men's violence, this program has worked with over 100 men and their partners during the past year. Previous participants and GPs are an increasing referral source for the program. The considerable integration efforts this year, both with partner agencies and within the Health Development Program will result in more coordinated and effective assistance for those who are subjected to and perpetrate family violence.

Baby Makes Three Project

Funded by VicHealth for 3 years, Baby Makes Three is a family violence prevention project targeting first time fathers in the promotion of equal and respectful relationships between men and women during the transition to parenthood.

This three week group program increases new parents' awareness of relationship changes that follow the birth of a child, and provides them with practical strategies for responding to these changes.

Project partners include Maternal and Child Health at the City of Whitehorse and Birralee Maternity Service at Box Hill Hospital and families participating in the program are linked with family therapy services outreached from Drummond Street Relationship Centre. The project also provided professional development and support to increase the capacity of health professionals in partner organisations in this field.

Men's Shed

The Whitehorse Men's Shed operates for two days a week with a full contingent of participants.

The Shed is involved in a variety of community projects from the construction of much needed possum boxes for Wildlife Victoria, to the production of children's toys and repair of equipment for local kindergartens.

Many of the men come with their own skills and interests and where possible, the Shed caters for individual needs. The social connections developed through the shed have ensured that men receive greater health benefits than physical activity alone.

Flu Clinic

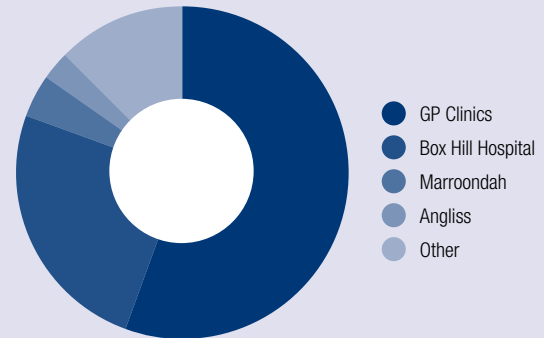
This year, WCHS Ltd demonstrated our ability to be flexible and responsive to needs by establishing a community-based Flu Clinic.

During the height of the pandemic, community health services were called upon to provide community based clinics in local areas to divert demand from acute services such as hospitals into more accessible and appropriate settings.

Within a week of meeting with the authorities from Department of Health, space and staff resources were redirected, support of partner agencies secured, and systems were developed to enable a clinic to be opened for flu screening and treatment and up-to-date information for the local community. The clinic operated from midday to 9pm, 7 days a week, for 3 weeks during the height of the epidemic.

Partnerships with local government and other health services were critical in the successful and timely commencement of the clinic, and WCHS Ltd acknowledges and appreciates this support.

Referrals to the flu clinic



Clinic usage

- › 554 clients were provided with screening, anti-viral medication and advice over 22 days
- › Number of clients per day ranged from 8 – 61

Referrals

- | | |
|---------------------|-----|
| › GP Clinics | 298 |
| › Box Hill Hospital | 143 |
| › Marroondah | 39 |
| › Angliss | 22 |
| › Other | 22 |



Primary Health Care Report

Dianne Berryman Primary Health Care Manager

The past financial year has been a period of change and innovation for the Primary Health Care Program area. Dianne Berryman took over the Primary Health Care Manager role in September 2008. Dianne brings a significant breadth of practical experience to this role and is capably leading the Primary Health team in the consolidation of service integration for chronic disease management. The enthusiasm and commitment of staff in constantly improving the quality of our service is illustrated in the program and service 'snapshots' below.

Children's Services

The Children's Services Team provides young children and their families with high quality speech pathology, psychology and occupational therapy services, using a multidisciplinary and family centred approach. Demand remains high for group programs such as the Social Communications Skills group, the School Readiness group and the Postnatal Depression group. One of the highlights for the year was the introduction of a Hanen (Speech Pathology) parent training program for families with children aged 2 years and below. Support from the R. E. Ross Trust fund, will enable staff professional development in the area of family violence and the purchase new equipment and assessment tools.

Good Life Gym

The Good Life Gym is well supported with an average of 30 people attending each of the 3 morning sessions. The clients are people with chronic conditions who will benefit from including regular exercise as part of the management of their condition.

*'(attending the Gym) is
sociable as well as improving strength'*

YMCA fitness instructors work closely with the Physiotherapists to supervise these clients. All clients attend an initial information session about exercise followed by an individual assessment with one of the physiotherapists who designs their program. All clients are offered regular reviews for up to 18 months and are then encouraged to graduate to a community gym, if appropriate. Our relationship with YMCA has helped facilitate this process.

Good Life Choices

The Good Life Choices program has been developed to provide health information and self-management support to people with long term health conditions. Education modules that are important to good self-management including heart health, medications, exercise, healthy mind, and healthy eating are offered over a term. The program is flexible to meet the needs and time frames of clients, enabling them to choose the topics relevant to them.

GP Communication Processes

A streamlined communication system benefitting clients, allied health staff and general medical practitioners resulted from a 6 month collaborative project between WCHS Ltd and Melbourne East General Practice Network (MEGPN) funded by the Australian Better Health Initiative. The GP Network now receives consistent information about clients referred for allied health services and regular waiting list information. Articles in *Eastern*, the GP Network newsletter, and the Australian Disease Management Association Newsletter featured the key successes of this project in improving GP engagement.



Oral Health Program Report

Paula Bacchia Oral Health & Quality Manager

In 2008/09, the Oral Health Program has focused on ongoing integration with the School Dental Service, expansion of the Smiles for Miles (S4M) program in conjunction with the Health Development Team, targeting preschool age children, professional development for staff and the continued provision of emergency and general dental services to the eligible population.

In 2008/09, the Oral Health Program provided dental services to 3,049 children in 6,291 dental visits; and 3,643 dental services to adults received in 10,823 visits. The total number of visits increased by 10% and the total number of patients treated decreased by 2% from the previous year. This indicates a greater complexity or increased treatment was provided per patient in comparison to the previous year.

The Program continued its focus on provision of services for children, particularly those at high risk of dental disease. The program operates on a 12/24 month cycle with children at high risk of dental disease recalled every 12 months and all others offered an appointment every 24 months. Over the past year, we have actively worked to decrease the recall times for both high and low risk from 15 and 34 months respectively to our target of 12 months for high risk and to 27 months for low risk. This will allow us to actively promote the program to local schools in 2010 and to develop strategies to increase the high risk recall response rate.

Recruitment and retention is an ongoing challenge in the public dental sector. Continuing professional development is important in ensuring clinical staff are satisfied with their role in the sector. Both dentists and dental assistants received exceptional education opportunities during the year. Dental Assistants were sponsored to undertake a Certificate IV in Health Administration specifically tailored for the public dental sector. This course will be completed in December 2009 and has provided valuable learning opportunities that will strengthen their role within the agency and prepare them for any future career endeavors. Dentists completed a 40-hour professional development course in Fixed Prosthodontics, which allowed them to develop practical clinical skills as well as theoretical knowledge in the provision of more complex dental treatment including crowns and resin-boded bridges. This is a useful addition to their clinical skill set that will enable the provision of more complex care locally rather than referring patients requiring this care to the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne.

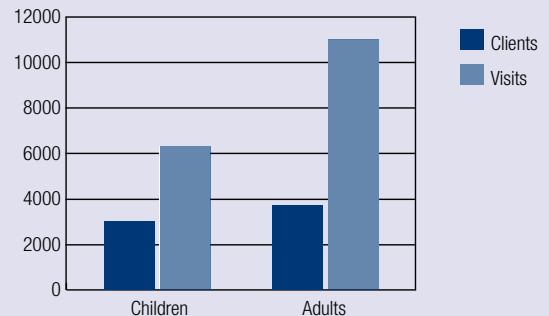
Smiles for Miles (S4M) program

S4M is now in its second year. There are now six preschools participating and one day care centre. The main focus for those in the second phase of the project is sustainability to ensure that the “eat well”, “clean well” and “drink well” messages are incorporated into the centre’s curricula and influence day to day operations.

Challenges exist around ensuring waiting times for care are kept below the state target of 24 months and ensuring timely access to emergency care. In 2010 we plan to focus on promoting services to children and targeting high risk population groups within the City of Whitehorse. We also hope to establish a private after-hours low cost dental service, which can provide care to local population groups that are not eligible for care within the public sector.

‘My dentures fitted perfectly from Day 1... (the dentist’s) professionalism, her competence, kindness and helpfulness. She is truly a credit to your dental department.’ CS

WCHS Dental services





Strategic Partnerships Report

Carina Martin Strategic Projects Manager

The position of Strategic Projects Manager in WCHS Ltd demonstrates the commitment to growing partnerships across a range of health, social and community services, both from a strategic and operational perspective. It recognizes the importance of partnerships in bringing together a variety of skills and resources and ensuring the active involvement of all partners in joint planning and monitoring of services. The position provides the agency with a focal point, internally and externally, to explore, respond and participate in a changing health sector environment.

Inner East Primary Care Partnership (IEPCP)

WCHS Ltd continues to be an active participant in Primary Care Partnership activities. In particular, the Primary Health Care Program is actively involved in the Service Coordination Steering Committee and practitioner group and participated in a community services expo in April 2009. We also participate in the Integrated Chronic Disease Management (ICDM) Steering Committee and several ICDM working groups including the Life! consortium, Early Intervention in Chronic Disease (EICD) Project leaders' network, Evaluation and Monitoring working group, and the client-held record pilot group. The Health Development Program has also been engaged in the PCP's Integrated Health Promotion Steering Committee with active involvement in the development of the 2009-2013 IEPCP Catchment Plan as well as the Inner East Social Inclusion Initiative.

Eastern Health

Creating and maintaining links with key personnel within Eastern Health has been a key focus. Several new service initiatives have resulted out of these active partnerships in both the Primary Health Care and Oral Health Programs of WCHS Ltd.

- › Client pathways into the Good Life Gym and health coaching – work undertaken in collaboration with the staff implementing the Osteoarthritis Hip and Knee Service within Eastern Health. This process supports people on the waiting list for Hip or Knee replacements in maintaining or improving strength and mobility through supervised exercise.
- › In conjunction with the Endocrinology Department service, options for women with gestational diabetes are being explored - ethics approval has been obtained to undertake a survey with these clients that will inform service development and implementation. A new service will bring together the expertise of both

organisations and be based on the expressed needs of this group.

- › In partnership with the Endocrinology Department and Eastern HARP, we are establishing an Integrated Diabetes and Assessment Service (IDEAS) to be operated at WCHS Ltd. This exciting initiative will provide services for people with diabetes from a range of funding sources, including MBS, in a way that is seamless for clients.
- › Establishment of a new system for priority access into WCHS Oral Health services for pregnant women – working with Birralee Maternity Unit (including specialist services for young women, those with special needs and with drug and/or alcohol issues).

Melbourne East General Practice Network (MEGPN)

The long standing and successful working relationship with MEGPN has evolved, becoming more formalised and strengthened in terms of strategic planning with development of a memorandum of understanding and communication at CEO and Board levels. A project establishing a joint vision and strategic initiatives between the organisations has begun and will be completed by the end of 2009. In addition, several service based initiatives have been implemented with a specific focus on systems review and development, ensuring WCHS Ltd staff communicate effectively with general practitioners.

WCHS Ltd and MEGPN also worked together on a project to support improvement in health care plans for disability clients in residential services.

City of Whitehorse

Primary Health Care continues to build on strong partnerships with City of Whitehorse, particularly around provision of Home and Community Care (HACC) services. It is a high priority for our organisation to work collaboratively with other service providers to ensure a 'seamless' journey for clients.

Box Hill Institute of TAFE (BHI)

WCHS Ltd, in partnership with BHI and DHS Workforce Branch, facilitated a state-wide forum 'Ensuring Workforce Competency in Effective Chronic Disease Management'. This brought together workers in the field of higher education, vocational education

and training and the health sector to explore workforce issues in addressing chronic disease. Subsequent to the forum, BHI have been successful obtaining federal funds to pilot the development training packages relating to chronic disease management skills in health professionals and WCHS Ltd provide expertise to the steering group of this initiative.

A 'corporate placement' pilot program for students undertaking the Diploma and Certificate IV in remedial massage has been overwhelming successful. In addition to enabling students to practice skills and build professional capacity, the benefits from a worker health perspective have been very positive. Building on this success, information sessions for clients with chronic health conditions conducted by students and links for clients to low cost massage services are being trialed. Future development of this partnership will expand service provision for clients in conjunction with improved learning opportunities for students, from these and other courses.

As a result of the positive outcomes of this partnership, WCHS Ltd contributed to the development of a 'standard template' for partnerships between Community Health Services and higher education providers now on the Department of Human Services, Work Force Branch website. In addition, our case study of "WCHS-BHI Partnership Work" is also described as an example for other services.

Monash University

A significant project has been undertaken to explore the priorities of each organisation and develop a working Memorandum of Understanding. The cornerstone of collaborative work will be research-based. WCHS Ltd recognises that in tackling issues related to the changing needs for service in chronic care, research is needed to identify strategies and systems that enable the health care workforce to be better equipped and to develop models of care based upon current evidence. This will include provision of improved learning environments for students and staff in a way that builds inter-professional teams across acute, general practice and community health services. This project brings together several other key partners and a final action plan relating to joint research will be completed at end 2009.

Naomi Kubina, of Healthy Active Partners, is acknowledged for her key role in advancing this project.



'Just thought I'd take time out to congratulate you (receptionists) on doing your job in such a compassionate and friendly manner. It is lovely to get happy helpful service when I attend my multiple appointments.' CB



Corporate Services Report

Deb Miller Corporate Services Manager

We have been able to achieve significant milestones in the Corporate Services Area this year.

These include:

- › Go Live with TrakCare in October 2008
- › Change of status to a company by limited guarantee
- › Stage One of the introduction of our intranet
- › Compliance Register
- › Traineeship in Reception
- › Employer of Choice

Human Resources

Employer of Choice

We have continued to develop WCHS Ltd as an employer of choice to attract the high caliber of professionals that we currently employ. We have achieved this in the following ways:

- › Staff development - organisational and individual
- › Staff Health
- › Work Health Checks
- › Access to the gym
- › Access to Yoga
- › Relaxation sessions
- › Massage Sessions
- › Flexible working hours & family friendly workplace

Student Placements

Over the year, we placed 64 Allied Health Students including international students and 70 Oral Health Students.

There are many advantages to having the students. These include:

- › Builds partnerships with training organizations and tertiary organisations
- › Our service providers have opportunities to pass on their wealth of knowledge and experienced clinical skills
- › Provides oral health clients the opportunity for timely access to services through the supervised student clinic

'Continuing professional development is an important aspect of ensuring clinical staff are satisfied with their role.'

Professional Development

Staff are encouraged to participate in ongoing professional development and maintain membership in the relevant professional associations.

Recruitment

Our focus on growth of services provided and workplace flexibility has resulted in 37 new staff placements and 1 new traineeship (Reception).

Vacancies have been filled through internal recruitment where possible. Opportunities for movement into leadership and project positions in addition to several episodes of Long Service and Maternity Leave have enabled staff to step into varied new roles assisting us to retain a high quality calibre of staff.

Environment

Staff are encouraged to address the impact our organisation has on the environment. We have:

- › Improved recycling of our kitchen waste
- › Established of a Green Committee
- › Reduced electricity usage.

Information Technology

Introduction of the Trak Client Management System

The Department of Health have been progressively rolling out the introduction of HealthSmart across the broader health sector. WCHS Ltd went 'Live' with TrakCare, the community health component of HealthSmart, in October 2008. The implementation of this application was one of the most significant changes that WCHS Ltd has incurred in its Information Technology history. The benefit of this implementation is that it positions WCHS Ltd on the pathway to statewide consistency of electronic records and e-health.

The implementation required commitment from the CEO, Senior Management and every staff member within the organisation.

It involved:

- › Providing training and support for 120 staff members. To enable this to occur we needed to set up and equip a dedicated IT training room.
- › Upgrading the organisations' connectivity pathways to a GWHIP connection.
- › Reviewing and rewriting the Business Process manual to reflect the work practices taking into account the capabilities of TrakCare.
- › Involvement in TrakCare Community Health User Group.
- › Participating in the State Wide Foot Print Committee. This is the avenue to influence the future directions in TrakCare and also improve its current performance.
- › Involvement in the Victorian Community Health Information Technology Committee allowing us to keep abreast of the ever changing Information technology directions within the public health care sector.

Intranet

- › Development of the intranet within the organisation is well underway. We have the skills within Corporate Services to design, build, implement and introduce the intranet into WCHS Ltd. The initial stages are currently being rolled out through the organisation.

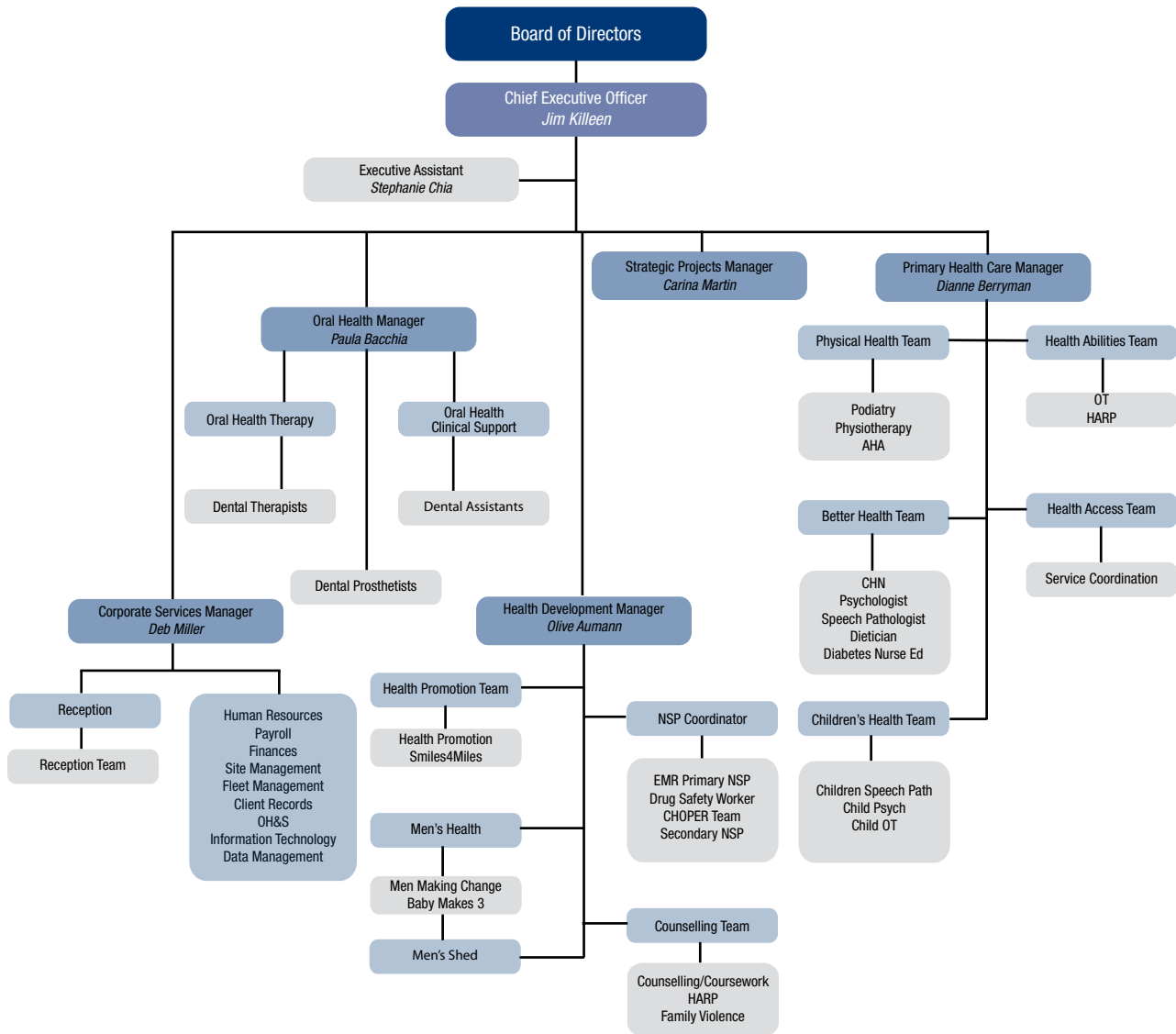
Finance

- › The current Finance IT application has reached the end of its life providing us with the opportunity to work with other Community Health Services to secure a contract with ISOFT to implement and support a new application for our services. Networking with other services enabled us to look at other areas that would benefit like organisations working together for a common purpose. The process will continue over the next year.
- › Implementation of a compliance register within the organisation has provided us with a tool to ensure that we are complying with all legislative requirements in all areas.





Organisation chart 2008/09





08/09

www.wchs.org.au



Whitehorse Community
Health Service Ltd.

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