

# MONASH OAKLEIGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT & INFORMATION SERVICE

Reg No A0002446N



## 44TH ANNUAL REPORT



# **MONASH OAKLEIGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICE**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18**

### **SERVICE AIMS**

- **Provide free accessible information and support to the community**
- **Deliver a friendly, impartial service by trained volunteers**
- **Especially target those in our local community who are marginalised, isolated or suffering from poverty or discrimination**
- **Respect the privacy and independence of everyone seeking assistance**

### **COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT 2017- 18**

PRESIDENT	Kathleen Hosie
VICE-PRESIDENT	Bernadette Allan
TREASURER	Marion Gilchrist
SECRETARY	Vana Apokis
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Chris Krahn Sana Dabbous Maureen Winestone Robyn Wenger

### **HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS**

Bernadette Allan	John Anderson	Brenda Bacon
Joyce Bown	Nancy Evans	Rosemary Goddard
Judy Lee	Gwen Moyle	Dot Pearce
May Street		

## **ABOUT OUR SERVICE**

Monash Oakleigh Community Support and Information Service has been serving the local Oakleigh Clayton area since 1975. It is one of a network of Community Information centres which operate throughout Victoria under the umbrella of Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic).

Monash Oakleigh Community Support is staffed entirely by trained volunteers and is governed by an elected Committee of Management which meets monthly. Opening hours are from 10 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. weekdays.

The support services provided include emergency relief, tax help, negotiation and advocacy, assistance in completing forms, information and referral services and a No Interest Loan Scheme.

Volunteers work at the agency in a variety of roles, many of them multi-tasking. All volunteers who interview clients must have completed the CISVic approved, nationally recognised fifty-hour training program. On-going training sessions are also held throughout the year enabling volunteers to increase their knowledge and further develop their skills.

Many agency volunteers are also members of other community groups and bring a broader perspective to their agency work and assist with networking opportunities.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Kathleen Hosie**

This is my first year in the role as President and I am very grateful to Bernadette Allan who has been a great mentor to me during this transition.

This year has been busy with change being the one constant. The previous CISVic funding consortium ended in June and the Department of Social Services has given the consortium just six months of funding taking us up to the end of this year. A new funding submission process is underway as I write this. Being a part of our peak body, CISVic's consortium, is a strength for us and we are fortunate to have the support of such a professional organization.

My role is made so much easier because of our very active Committee and the volunteers who are always willing to take on tasks. Our volunteers are involved at every level whether it be at the frontline assisting the most vulnerable community members, or ensuring the smooth running of the House, Foodbank, Op shop, NILS, Tax Help, Garden and Little Library. We are very fortunate to have eight new volunteers who completed the CISVic training course this year.

Our volunteers make the House what it is, a place of welcome and support. To recognize their work the Committee hosted a "thank you" breakfast during Volunteer Week. We had the generous support of Councillors Josh Fergus and Stuart James who attended the event and presented name badges to everyone. During the year, a meeting was called of all volunteers interested in improving the running of the Op Shop. New guidelines were formulated, and Robyn Wenger was appointed Coordinator. This has led to a more uniform approach and the implementation of several improvements.

The community garden project has not had a lot of recent activity and a meeting was called to review its progress and look to the future. One of our volunteers, Joy

Graves agreed to take on the role of Garden Coordinator. With special help from her husband Phillip and one of our clients Victor, Joy has completed a lot of preparation work in the garden. There is now a renewed sense of purpose and we look forward to the results.

Our community House is only possible because of Monash Council who provide the building and the maintenance. Our thanks also go to Council staff, including Colin Bostock and our two local Councillors, Josh Fergus and Stuart James.

## **RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING**

**Bernadette Allan**

Liz Grant, Sangita Yeragulia and Vana Apokis completed their Civic training in 2017 and Maureen Winestone, Jenny Akers, Joy Graves, Alison Sarkies and Alok Verma were enrolled in the first course for 2018. We are delighted that they are all now eligible to be on the interview roster. Alok comes to us as a corporate volunteer whose employer releases him twice a month to do community work. We are grateful to South East Volunteers for steering Alok in our direction. Karen Oakley and Andrea Barlow are also new volunteers who help with Foodbank and OzHarvest.

At the end of 2017 Rosemary Goddard stood down as training coordinator, a position she capably held for many years. Bernadette Allan and Liz Grant took over the coordination in January 2018.

Training sessions in 2017 began in July when we combined with Mt Waverley to hear a speaker from Beyond Blue. On the 29<sup>th</sup> August we held an in-house training morning reviewing our agency's services and processes and developed a useful internal resource. Gerry Naughtin, guest speaker at our AGM, in September gave us an overview of the NDIS and at our meeting in October we concentrated on in-house matters.

Our first meeting in Feb 2018, was an informative presentation by Andrew Goddard on legal matters, followed by pizza and drinks. In April, Deakin Hulley from Housing Services, Salvocare, Eastcare explained their services and some of the issues around finding suitable accommodation for people. In May, volunteers enjoyed a getting to know you breakfast as a part of Volunteer Week Celebrations. Finally, in June we again joined Mount Waverley for some training around family violence delivered by Katriece Boland from Whittlesea Community Connections.

Training opportunities from CISVic and SEV have been promoted and some volunteers have taken up the offer of these sessions.

## **CASE WORK**

**Hayat Doughan Case Management Worker**

The Case Management service responds to the needs of our clients who present with complex issues. A Case Worker is available at 25 Downing Street every Thursday from 10.00 am to 3.00 pm to assist these clients. This service is funded by the DSS CISVic consortium and delivered through MOCSIS' partnership with South East Community links. Approximately 120 meetings with clients took place during the financial year.

## **PUBLICITY**

**Chris Krahn**

Recruitment this year has been assisted by publicity in various mediums, including word of mouth in the immediate area around the agency. Contacts have continued with Monash Resource Centre, Monash City Council, noticeboards and local libraries – Waverley, Oakleigh, Wheelers Hill and Clayton and the Uniting and Anglican Churches in Glen Waverley and Oakleigh. Golden Age Radio also provided us with some free advertising on air. All these contacts were followed up, during the year to encourage new people seeking to use their skills to make a difference in the community, to join our valued volunteer team. These efforts have helped MOCSIS gain at least 6 new volunteers during the reporting period.

Seek- Go Volunteer, who advertise volunteer opportunities also continue to be in contact with MOCSIS. Initial contacts are made by interested persons, but unfortunately few enquiries are followed through after the initial contact has been made. The updated MOCSIS webpage is being visited and pamphlets advertising the Centre's aims and services are distributed at every opportunity including at street stalls in the Monash Oakleigh area.

Monash Resource Centre and personal contact by various MOCSIS volunteers remain our best publicity pathway.

## **EMERGENCY RELIEF**

**Kathleen Hosie**

The following Statistics Report shows that our services continue to be much in demand. The breakdown of these statistics gives some idea of the range of support MOCSIS provides the community.

A total of \$78461 was spent on emergency relief, and of this \$2500 was for a first-time initiative to help with start of year school expenses.

This was made possible by a grant from Bendigo Bank Pinewood. A special thank you to the volunteers who helped pull together the Pitch night where we had to sell our proposal for this funding. Angelo Apokis, son of volunteer Vana Apokis was a natural up on stage.

Foodbank continues to be our main source of food and involves a fortnightly volunteer team effort: drawing up and submitting the order, collection from Dandenong, and finally, unpacking and reorganising the shelves.

Donations from individuals, groups and organisations also help keep our shelves stocked.

We could no longer pick up from Second Bite when they moved premises and were without a source of fruit and vegetables for about six months. Fortunately, in May we started getting Oz Harvest deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables on a weekly basis. We are also fortunate to have Bakers Delight bread, packaged and delivered to us every week by a dedicated family group.

The generosity of the community in donating items for our Op Shop is also much appreciated.

We again gave out Christmas gifts in December. The generosity of so many people in our community made for a great range of gifts, especially the selection of wooden toys from Waverley Woodworkers.

**SERVICE PROVISION July 2017-June 2018**

Kathleen Hosie

Number of emergency relief services provided to face to face clients: 5502

Number of food parcels and food vouchers provided to face to face clients: 590

Number of general enquiries relating to emergency relief and other services: 3884

**Combined total of services provided-9386**

<b>Breakdown by type for face to face assistance</b>	<b>Total number</b>
Food parcels	1624
Food vouchers	1534
Advocacy & support/brokerage	2
Advocacy/support	44
Education support	32
Education & skills training	6
Health care assistance	15
Information/advice/referral	38
Intake and assessment	1546
Intensive support	7
Material goods: op shop	461
Transport assistance	109
Utility bills assistance	51
Other	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>5502</b>

<b>General enquiries services requested</b>	<b>Total number</b>
Accommodation	4
Centrelink	5
Council services	2
Emergency relief services-unable to assist/referred externally	46
Emergency relief services-referred internally	36
Material assistance-bread/fruit &veg/op shop	3291
Forms	3
Emergency services	4
Financial counselling	8
Administrative enquiry	70
NILS	182
Legal services	20
Tax Help	112
General enquiries	47
Health services/mental health	8
Transport	8
Other	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>3884</b>

<b>General enquiries -enquiry type</b>	<b>Total number</b>
Face to face	3069
Phone	815

## **TAX HELP**

**Robert Jamieson**

Tax help for the previous financial year [2016-2017] commenced on the 25<sup>th</sup> August and finished on the 27<sup>th</sup> October. Two accredited Tax help volunteers, Marlene Kar-Ng and Robert Jamieson assisted clients to complete their tax returns, using My Gov, and assisted clients with other tax related matters on Fridays throughout the season. They were ably assisted by other volunteers who took the bookings and screened prospective clients.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to making this another successful Tax help year.

### Tax Help Statistics 1 July 2016- 30 June 2017

My Gov	6
MyGov assisted	30
Paper returns	5
Non-lodgment advice	5
Appointments not kept	5

Most Franking credits are now returned automatically by the ATO.

## **NILS**

**Kathleen Hosie**

The MOCSIS NILS program has still not been actively promoted as the delivery of the program has undergone significant change. MOCSIS is now working with the loan provider Cockatoo & Hills NILS who are one of the few Good Shepherd Microfinance accredited loan providers.

MOCSIS conducts the loan interview and completes the loan application online.

This new process is still being bedded down.

I would again like to acknowledge the work Jean Leoncio has put into the program this year.

It is still the case that a large number of enquiries are received, and information sent out but the client makes no further contact.

MOCSIS received a total of 182 NILS related enquiries over the period, and 89 requests for loan application details to be sent to interested people.

Four enquires were referred to the StepUP program which can offer loans up to \$3,000. Six enquiries were referred to other agencies.

Four appointments were made and not kept by the enquirer, and 7 applications were not approved because the budget was too tight.

In the case of one loan application, the NILS worker was able to advocate for the client to receive a utilities refund which meant the client no longer needed a loan [a good result for the client]. Well done Jean!

A total of ten loans were approved.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Very many people and organisations have contributed to the success of MOCSIS this year and we thank everyone for their generosity, commitment and hard work.

## **MOCSIS VOLUNTEER STAFF 2017-18**

### **Interviewers**

Jenny Akers	Kathy Hosie*
Bernadette Allan*	Rob Jamieson*
Vana Apokis	Marlene Kar-Ng
Elizabeth Becker*	Kate Kennedy
Sue Brown	Chris Krahn
Judy Collard*	Monica Lausch*
Sana Dabbous	Maria Lia Szabo
Marion Gilchrist*	Tess Little
Rosemary Goddard*	Allison Sarkies
Carolyn Grandine	Alok Verma
Liz Grant	Maureen Winestone
Joy Graves	Sangita Yerangula

### **Non-Interview support**

Jordan Burns	Jean Leoncio
Doug Calvert	Karen Oakley
Morny Cochrane	Joy Stevenson
Maureen Fordyce	Ted Young
Bev Gair*	

### **NILS**

Kathy Hosie	Jean Leoncio
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### **Tax Help**

Robert Jamieson	Marlene Kar-Ng
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### **Garden**

Coordinator: Joy Graves  
Victor, Merci, Phil, Gary, Franklin, Michael

### **Op Shop**

Coordinator: Robyn Wenger	
Andrea Barlow	Melanie Somers
Jenni Sampson*	Maureen Winestone

\* *Recipients of Caroline Chisholm Award / Chisholm Volunteer Award*



## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Australian Tax Office  
City of Monash  
CISVic Consortium  
Department of Social services  
Foodbank Victoria  
Oz Harvest

Good Shepherd Microfinance  
Kogo  
Second Bite  
South East Community links  
The Nappy Collective  
Share the Dignity

## **COMMUNITY NETWORKS**

Centrelink Oakleigh  
Inner South Network  
Link Health  
Monash Waverley CISS  
Monash Council Homelessness Network

Monash Welfare Network  
South East Volunteers  
South East Emergency Relief Network  
Waverley Benevolent Society

## **DONORS**

Bakers Delight Bentleigh  
Balkara Uniting Parish  
Bendigo Bank  
Brad, Fitness First Glen Waverley  
Centrelink Staff Oakleigh  
Dorka Seventh Day Adventist Oak South  
Dot Jenkins  
Jess McDonald  
Josh Fergus  
Kishor Dabke  
Knitters of Combined Probus Club of Syndal  
Lance McGraw  
Lions Club of Oakleigh

Mandalay ladies  
Marlene Kar-Ng  
Mavis Paterson  
Majella knitters - Meri Chenhall  
Morrison family  
Oakleigh Trimmers  
Paul Angeleri  
Probus Club of Oakleigh  
Robyn Wenger  
Rotary Club of Glen Waverley  
Rotary Club of Huntingdale  
Rotary Club of Oakleigh  
Trish Facey

## **FINANCIAL REPORT 2017-18**

**Marion Gilchrist**

As Treasurer, I have the honour to present the attached audited Financial Report of the Monash Oakleigh Community Support and Information Service for the year ending 30 June 2018. This year our Auditor, Mr. E. J. Bates has announced his retirement. We wish him well and thank him for the many years of efficient service he has given our organization.



