

MONASH OAKLEIGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT & INFORMATION SERVICE

Reg No A0002446N



45TH ANNUAL REPORT



MONASH OAKLEIGH COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFORMATION SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

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 2018-19

PRESIDENT	Kathleen Hosie
VICE-PRESIDENT	Bernadette Allan
TREASURER	Peter Booth
SECRETARY	Karen Oakley
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Chris Krahn Sana Dabbous Liz Grant Maureen Winestone Robyn Wenger

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS

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

After some delay and uncertainty our main source of funding through the Department of Social Services has been locked in for the next 4 years. Unfortunately, the amount of funding has been reduced and the level of demand continues to grow. This has meant the Committee having to make the difficult decision not to renew the contract for our support worker Hayat Doughan. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hayat for her support of our most vulnerable clients.

The Committee has also taken the decision to reduce the value of the Coles vouchers given to clients. This is something we will continue to monitor and will adjust accordingly if we are able to do so.

Despite our funding constraints there is a sense of energy and purpose amongst the volunteers and the newsletter that Rosemary Goddard puts together also helps all the volunteers to feel connected. MOCSIS is very fortunate that we have volunteers of such a high calibre who all are so willing to ensure the smooth running of the House.

The results of our recent client survey bear testimony that our volunteers treat our clients with dignity and respect. There were 71 clients who filled out the survey in the month of June and of those 100% said they were satisfied with the service provided.

I for one have a strong sense of pride taking visitors on a tour of the House: The op shop is so organised; everything has a place. Food storage is very efficient with the new shelving and increased capacity of the additional fridge and freezer. The community garden is flourishing and growing fresh produce.

This has been a year of renewal and change; we have three new Committee members,

Liz Grant, Karen Oakley [Secretary] and Peter Booth [Treasurer]. Having the two new Office Bearers brings change in our management style and fresh eyes to oversee our work. The Committee has continued to be very busy this year: our planning day led to updating our Strategic Plan, revising and reformatting our Policies and Procedures Manual, and conducting the client survey. Everyone comments on the feel of our lovely old house and we must thank Monash Council for providing this facility. The Council organized painting of the house both inside and out and it has given a lift to the building. Our thanks also go to Council staff, including Colin Bostock and our two local Councillors Josh Fergeus and Stuart James for their ongoing support.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING Bernadette Allan & Liz Grant

Tracey Gardner and Elly Hayward completed their training in 2019. We are delighted that they are now eligible to be on the interview roster. Peter Booth who is our new Treasurer and Philip Graves are new volunteers who have helped with general work in the house and garden.

There have been five very well attended training sessions in 2018/19 beginning in August 2018 with Lisa Joyce Manager and Kathy Naumczyk Social Worker of Centrelink Oakleigh, who gave an interesting and informative presentation about updated processes at Centrelink. In October Vicki Selimi Multicultural Officer at Centrelink Oakleigh outlined her role working with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) clients and described four priorities of the program. In addition, Bernadette presented a thorough explanation about making sense of MOCSIS funding sources.

In 2019 commencing in February everyone participated in a quiz about being a volunteer at the house and a discussion followed about policies and processes. We all then enjoyed pizzas in the garden in pleasant weather. Also, Robyn conducted a very useful overview of the organisation of the room that stores donations for the op shop and other activities. In April, Jo McCarthy Monash Crime Prevention Officer and Taylor Smith Constable from Victoria Police Oakleigh spoke about management of aggressive clients. Their useful discussion resulted in several changes to processes at MOCSIS for the safety of volunteers and clients.

Training opportunities from CISVic have been promoted with strong attendance from MOCSIS volunteers at the VITAL (Volunteer Information Talking and Learning) program in May. This meeting was also attended by volunteers from Mt Waverley CIS.

TAX HELP

Robert Jamieson

Tax Help for the previous financial year [2017-2018] commenced 27 July and finished 26 October. On Fridays throughout the season two accredited Tax Help volunteers, Marlene Kar-Ng and Robert Jamieson assisted clients to complete their tax returns, using MyGov. They also assisted clients with other tax related matters and were ably supported by duty 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 2017- 30 June 2018

MyGov	8
MyGov THV Assist	35
Paper Returns (prior years)	5
Non Lodgement Advice	5
Tax Advice	6

PUBLICITY

Chris Krahn

Publicity using various mediums assists with recruitment of volunteer interviewers and other service workers including Foodbank volunteers, who order, collect, and store supplies, volunteers who take delivery of fruit, vegetables and bread, volunteers who work in the op shop and volunteers who look after the community garden.

The publicity mediums used include ongoing personal and electronic contact with Monash Resource Centre, Monash City Council, noticeboards in local libraries – Mount Waverley, Wheelers Hill, Oakleigh and Clayton and the Uniting and Anglican churches in Glen Waverley and Oakleigh.

All contacts are reviewed during the year for follow up and to encourage new people who may like to join our team and use their skills to make a difference in the community. MOCSIS has also rejoined Seek – Go Volunteer, who advertise volunteer opportunities. Although initial enquiries have been made there has been little follow up by prospective volunteers. The updated MOCSIS webpage is visited frequently and MOCSIS pamphlets advertising the Centre's aims and services are distributed at every opportunity in the local area. Personal contacts made by existing MOCSIS volunteers and contact with Monash Resource Centre continue to be our best mediums for recruiting.

EMERGENCY RELIEF Kathleen Hosie

The following Statistics Report shows that the demand for our services continues to grow. As a comparison on the previous financial year:

- number of clients up 8%
- services provided up 16%
- general enquiry services up 10%
- food parcels up 10%
- food vouchers up 10%

A total of \$80,222 was spent on emergency relief, and of this \$1500 was for start of school expenses. This assistance was made possible by the generous donation of \$1500 by Joy Graves of one of our volunteers.

We have been fortunate to receive a grant for storage of food from Freemasons Oakleigh to purchase a new fridge, a freezer and new shelving in our kitchen area for our dry goods stock.

Foodbank continues to be our main source of food and this is made possible by our dedicated volunteer team effort who order and pick up the food and later unpack and restock the shelves.

Oz harvest continue to deliver fresh fruit and vegetables every Monday.

Sacred Heart College girls come every second week to bag up the produce from Oz Harvest.

Our community garden is now also a source of fresh vegetables.

Bakers Delight in Oakleigh continue to provide bread every week and our thanks go to the family group who so generously pick up and package the bread for our clients.

The free op shop is being increasingly relied upon by our clients and our thanks go to our generous community for their donations.

Trish Facey is constantly sourcing donations all year for our clients. The toiletries she brings throughout the year are some of the much-appreciated items.

We again gave out Christmas gifts in December with the op shop coordinator and volunteers transforming the back room with a big array of gifts. This is only possible because of the very generous people in our community who donate new items to us. As an example, Sacred Heart College recently brought in a wonderful donation of beautiful ladies' bags, each of which was filled with female toiletries that women are thrilled to receive.

MOCSIS July 2018 - June 2019 Statistics Report

Kathleen Hosie

Emergency relief (food vouchers and food parcels) were given to 638 registered clients. The total number of emergency relief services provided for face to face clients was 6478. Total number of general enquiries for food and other services was 4283.

The combined total of services provided was 10761

Assistance by type for face to face services	Total
Food parcel	1797
Food voucher	1695
Advocacy & support/brokerage	5
Advocacy/support	29
Education support	21
Education & skills training	2
Health care assistance	15
Information/advice/referral	36
Intake and assessment	2014
Material goods-op shop	702
Transport assistance	75
Utility bills assistance	48
Other	39
Total	6478

General enquiry requests for services	Total
Accommodation	4
Centrelink	11
Emergency relief -referred internally	78
Emergency relief-unable to assist/referred externally	77
Material assistance-bread/fruit &veg/op shop	3719
Forms	6
Emergency services	4
Financial counselling	20
Administrative Services	87
NILS	116
Legal services	11
Tax Help	84
General enquiries	33
Health services/mental health	20
Other- various - services	13
Total	4283

General enquiries -enquiry type	Total
Face to face	3553
Phone	730

GARDEN REPORT

Joy Graves

The foundation season of the garden has been very productive and rewarding for all involved. We have been able to significantly bolster the variety and quantity of fresh herbs and vegetables available for distribution to our clients, who in turn have frequently expressed their delight as the recipients of our garden produce. The decision to build wicking beds has proved very successful, despite the initial considerable effort and expense. They reduce the effort required for watering and tending the garden during the summer months, although we still have a considerable area of open beds to tend. Hopefully we can pursue some community funding in the near future and install an automatic watering system thereby reducing the workload and commitment required to maintain the garden open beds particularly during the summer holiday break. We have established a composting area with the aim of recycling spoiled food, garden refuse and our shredded office paper, which in turn will feed and improve the garden.

I would like to thank Victor Singh for his considerable assistance with building the wicking beds, and his ongoing help in the garden. Also, many thanks to the volunteers who are currently propagating seedlings for our spring planting. Hopefully we will have fresh produce to distribute in the run up to Christmas.

Lastly thank you to Monash Council for providing the fruit trees, Oakleigh Rotary for funding the building of the wicking beds, Bunnings Notting Hill for supplying plants and seeds for our initial planting, and for helping us to plant them, and Steve Dimopoulos MP for Oakleigh, for a small cash grant.

NILS

Kathleen Hosie

The MOCSIS NILS program provides access for people to apply for a loan. It is not restricted to our area. Our partnership with Cockatoo & Hills NILS as the Loan Provider is working well. They are a very helpful and responsive provider.

MOCSIS had 116 NILS related enquiries, 68 of which were sent loan application details but it is always the case that many enquiries do not progress to a loan application.

Three loans were declined as they did not have enough funds, and two of those applicants were referred to Financial Counsellors.

The other applicant was assisted by MOCSIS to apply for a washing machine through Eastern Emergency Relief.

In total, 13 loans were approved.

A big thank you to Jean Leoncio for all her hard work during the year.

Good Shepherd Microfinance [GSM] has recently advised that major changes are underway. The GSM Board will be disbanded, and GSM will once again be an integrated part of Good Shepherd Australia & New Zealand. This change will take place over the next year, but I don't foresee this having any significant impact on our assisting clients to apply for a loan.

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*
Elizabeth Becker*	Marlene Kar-Ng
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

Andrea Barlow	Maureen Fordyce
Aida Blas	Bev Gair *
Peter Booth	Jean Leoncio
Jordan Burns	Karen Oakley
Doug Calvert	Joy Stevenson
Morny Cochrane	Amy Wyhoon
Norman D'Souza	

NILS Kathy Hosie
Jean Leoncio

Tax Help Robert Jamieson
Marlene Kar-Ng

Garden

Coordinator Joy Graves
Victor, Phil, James

Op Shop

Coordinator Robyn Wenger
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
CISVic-Inner South network

DONORS

Bakers Delight Oakleigh
Balkara Uniting Parish
Bendigo Bank
Bunnings
Centrelink Staff Oakleigh
Dorka Seventh Day Adventist Oakleigh South
Freemasons
Garden Gear
Helena Feldman
James Walton
Jarrod and Kelli Foster
Jenni Sampson
Jess McDonald
Josh Fergus
John Aspinall
Joy Graves
Kishor Dabke
Knitters of Combined Probus Club of Syndal
Lance McGraw
Lions Club of Oakleigh
Lucy Burt and friends
Marlene Hansford

Marlene Kar-Ng
Majella knitters - Meri Chenhall, Judy, Chris
Masako and family
Mt Waverley Heights Primary School
Mt Waverley Inter-Church Council
Nevo Hair Design
Oakleigh Traders
Paul Angeleri
Probus Club of Oakleigh
Robyn Wenger
Rotary Club of Glen Waverley
Rotary Club of Huntingdale
Rotary Club of Oakleigh
Trish Facey
Sacred Heart College
Sonia Keddy
Susan Rich
Steve Dimopoulos
Stockstore (formerly One Bean)
Weary Dunlop Retirement Village

TREASURER'S REPORT

Peter Booth