



***Centacare***  
*North Queensland*

# ANNUAL REPORT 15/16



A photograph of a woman holding a baby in a grassy field at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare effects. The woman is seen from the side, holding the baby against her chest. The baby is wearing a striped onesie. The woman is wearing a dark dress. The background is a soft-focus field of grass and trees.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD

*"Centacare North Queensland is blessed with a dedicated, committed and talented team of staff working in some of the most challenging environments North Queensland can deliver."*



Pope Francis declared this year to be a Year of Mercy. In one of his many quotes he says, "Mercy... is generous, and gentle, and forgiving, and encouraging and courageous. It is ready to believe that people can change...", and "If I had to sum it up in one word I would say that mercy is about being large-hearted." Welcome to Centacare North Queensland's Annual Report for 2015-2016, its acknowledgement of the ways hope has been inspired, well-being was created, and social justice was pursued for all, as well as a celebration of its 'large-heart' beating in action.

As the Townsville Diocese' social services ministry and a home grown, local provider of community-based social services within north and north west Queensland, Centacare North Queensland has been at the forefront of significant reforms impacting and disrupting the sector at national, state and local levels.



Such changes included:

- Family support and domestic and family violence reforms that have rolled out as a result of the Carmody report (Child Safety) and the Bryce – Not Now Not Ever Report (Domestic and Family Violence) recommendations. For example: changes to the Child Protection Act (1999) definition to include significant harm criteria; introduction of dual pathways to report child safety concerns with the introduction of the Family and Child Connect services; increase to early intervention family support services, with a focus on better engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in such services; significant focus on a more integrated response to domestic and family violence, ensuring victims, including children are safe from violence, families and children access the right supports at the right time and those who use violence in their relationships are held accountable for their behaviour and provided with opportunities for change.
- The National Disability Insurance Scheme going live in the Townsville region from April 2016, and the transition of disability funded services. Now the participant has choice and control on who and how supports are delivered. No longer are we block funded in advance to provide support, we need to promote our services and seek customers.

Centacare North Queensland is blessed with a dedicated, committed and talented team of staff working in some of the most challenging environments North Queensland can deliver. In addition our families, young people and individuals are living through some of the toughest times experienced in generations within our regional, rural and remote communities. Our people are humble and their outreach to communities is significant. Some of these achievements are contained within this report, however the true impact and efficacy of such work is unable to be represented in data or statistics, it will largely go unnoticed except by the people who matter most in the equation and who have been touched by Centacare North Queensland's staff. On behalf of the Board and the Senior Leadership Team, we say thank you to the Centacare team. Your energy, passion and witness as the social services ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville is truly inspirational.

As you review the work represented in this Annual Report, it can never be achieved in isolation. We thank the members of our Advisory Board for their untiring efforts to ensure the vulnerable members of communities can access responsive and high quality services through Centacare North Queensland. We also acknowledge the support of our Commonwealth and State Government partners, in our addition to our community partners across north and north west Queensland. Together we are making differences in the lives of many across our region, and showing our collective 'large-heart' is pumping strong and still achieving much more above our weight.



Cris Dall'Osto  
Board Chair



Peter Monaghan  
Executive Director

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATOR



*"The message of mercy, of acceptance and grace for all people, is communicated through each of Centacare's staff. By witnessing to the importance of reaching out to anyone, regardless of religious, cultural or social background, this is a reality."*

During November 2015, Pope Francis declared a Holy Year of Mercy to encourage the Church to come back to its central mission of reflecting the heart of God - responding to others with a message of acceptance and compassion.

Pope Francis writes that, "In a world that is so filled with turmoil and suffering, we need to experience God's mercy in our everyday lives and bring that mercy to others. God never stops or goes a halfway ... [God] calls us to do the same."

This expression of mercy is the core work of Catholic social service agencies such as our own Centacare North Queensland. Every day, assisting those in need and offering solidarity to the vulnerable, these works of mercy are not just about what they do as social services agency, but how they do it. Centacare wants to respond to every person with respect, demonstrating a strong belief in the dignity and value of each person.

The message of mercy, of acceptance and grace for all people, is communicated through each of Centacare's staff. By witnessing to the importance of reaching out to anyone, regardless of religious, cultural or social background, this is a reality.

Our Catholic teaching upholds seven physical and seven spiritual "works of mercy" drawn from Jesus' teaching. These works of mercy, which include feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger and attending to the sick, aim to redress all forms of poverty, whether economic, relational or spiritual. The services provided by Centacare are continual expressions of such "works of mercy", recognising and responding to the needs of vulnerable people and communities across our north and north-western regions.

To ensure this sacredness of mercy is at the heart of who we are, next year will be an ordinary Year of Mercy, and an opportunity to celebrate the work of Centacare's ministry within our Diocese. On behalf of the Diocese, I thank the many people involved in the work of Centacare for all they have done. I am grateful for the remarkable contributions of the Centacare Advisory Board, the Management team, and all the staff. Their commitment and mercy in reaching out to the vulnerable in the name of Jesus is an inspiration for us all.

May God's spirit bring us more alive for each other.

Rev Mick Lowcock  
Diocesan Administrator



# 2016: YEAR OF MERCY



*"Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instills in us the courage to look at the future with hope." - Pope Francis*

The Jubilee Year of Mercy began on 8 December 2015 and concluded on 20 November 2016. Pope Francis says, "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

At times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives. For this reason I have proclaimed an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy as a special time for the Church, a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective."

The motto for the year, *Merciful like the Father*, serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of God who asks us not to judge or condemn but to offer love and forgiveness instead.



# STRATEGIC PLAN

Our Strategic Plan, based on Results Based Accountability, focuses on making a real difference for the wellbeing of our communities.

The strategic plan identified client populations, their needs and Centacare's response providing us with focus and guidance for both our client and corporate services. These priority populations and identified outcomes continue to be relevant. The following are priority populations:

- Children at risk and/or experiencing disadvantage
- Adolescents at risk and/or experiencing disadvantage
- People with disabilities
- Individuals and families seeking improved mental wellbeing
- Families
- Indigenous people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Remote communities

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Centacare North Queensland is funded by:

- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Department of Housing and Public Works
- Department of Social Services
- Catholic Diocese of Townsville
- Department of Health
- Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- United Synergies
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Australian Government Attorney-General's Department (AG)

## INCOME

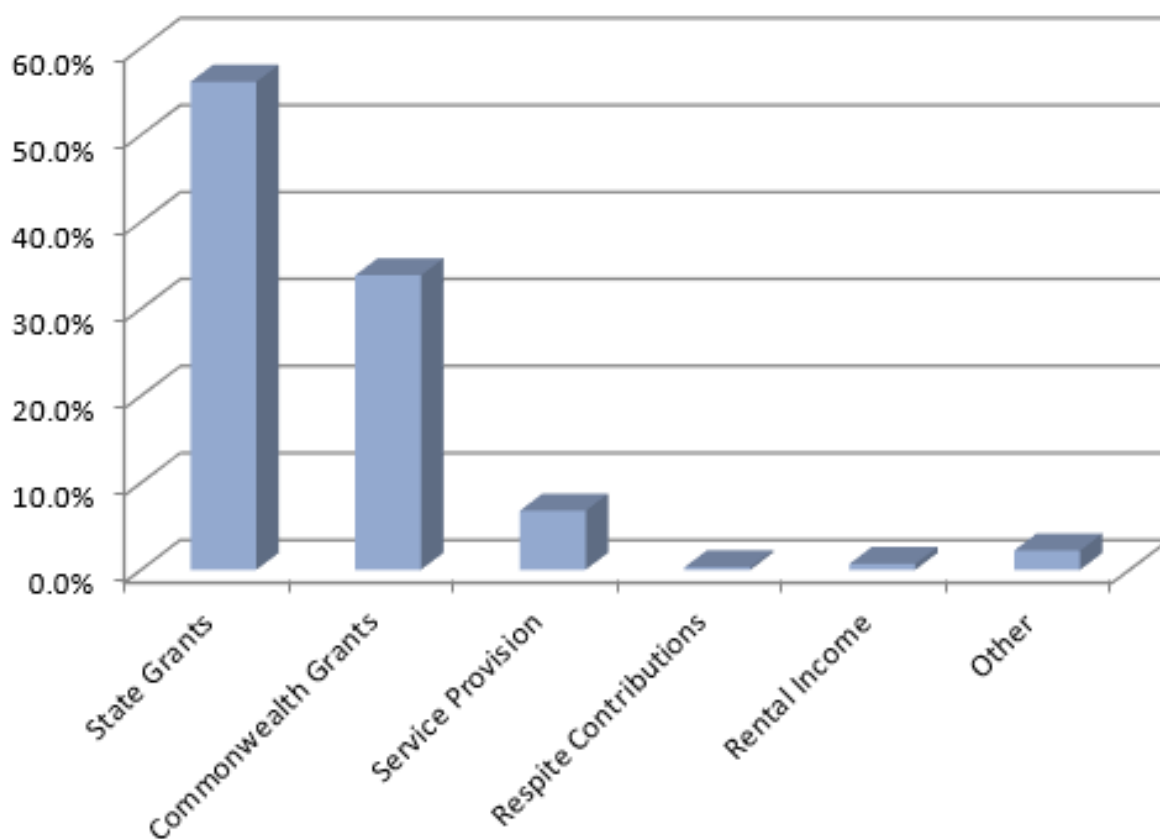
State Grants	56.1%
Commonwealth Grants	33.9%
Service Provision	6.8%
Respite Contributions	0.3%
Rental Income	0.7%
Other	2.2%
Total Income	100%

## EXPENDITURE

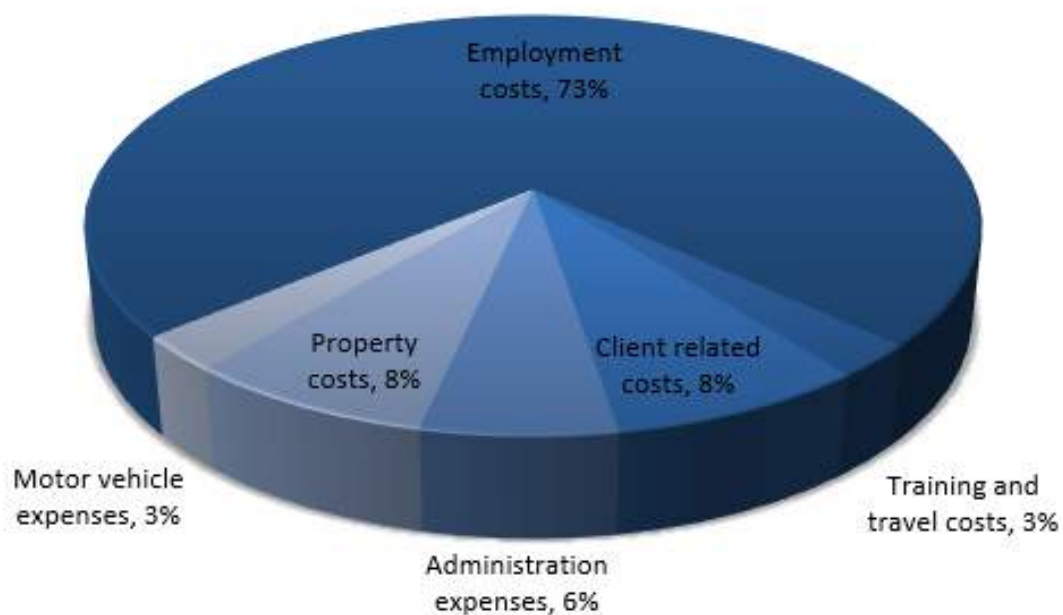
Employment Costs	73%
Training & Travel Costs	3%
Client Related Costs	8%
Administration Expenses	6%
Property Costs	8%
Motor Vehicle Expenses	3%
Total Expenditure	100%



## 2015/2016 INCOME SOURCES



## 2015/2016 EXPENDITURE







# ACHIEVEMENTS



○ **BRIDGE Specialised Counselling Support for Families** achieved some wonderful outcomes with families. One particular family we worked with during this financial year came to us at risk of entering the child protection system as serious conflict was a daily occurrence. Through weekly in home family support work, the Family Support Worker was able to set goals with the parents and work on creating a calmer household with consistent parenting, a routine that suited the family's lifestyle as well as behaviour management that included 123 Magic and Engaging Adolescents. Individual counselling was provided for each child to assist with anger management and emotional expression, and to teach protective behaviours. The mother also engaged in weekly individual counselling to assist her to work through some past unresolved concerns from her own childhood. The positive outcomes for this family include a generally calmer household, implementation of effective routines and rewards charts, improvement in family functioning due to improved communication and consistency between parents, up- skilling parents in behaviour management strategies that suit their family and improved attachment and parent/child relationships.

○ The Senior Counsellor for **BRIDGE** was accepted to present a paper at the bi-annual International Childhood Trauma Conference in Melbourne in June. The paper looked at the Bridge model and framework which is intensive and holistic and how it achieves positive outcomes for at risk families.

○ **BRIDGE** was also in the HSQF audit and invited families to be involved. All of the families we asked were willing to be involved and were interviewed by the auditor and provided valuable feedback about Bridge. This was a unique opportunity for an independent person to seek feedback directly from families we currently work with to gain valuable input and ideas on how to improve our program.

○ The **Disability Services'** Trinity House completed a successful audit, securing the Human Services Quality Standards Accreditation. With the many changes to staff during this time, it has been inspiring to see how staff function in such a fluent manner to achieve this outcome.

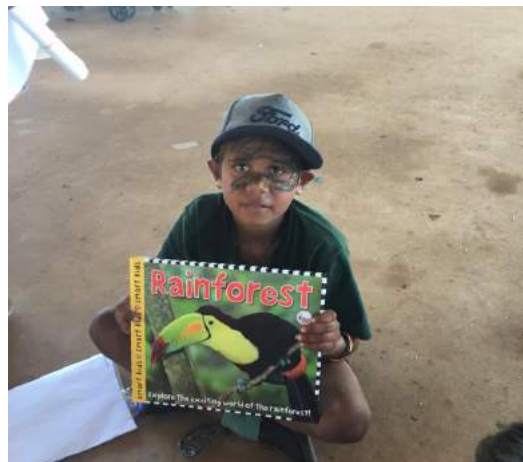
○ The **Homestay** program was approached by two services in delivering the Happy, Healthy, Homes Program in their centres/shelters with mutual clients.

○ Centacare NQ won the 2015 **Mount Isa Community Services Award** for Community Services Event of the Year. The Homelessness team was involved in the planning and delivery of the event. This was excellent recognition of the collaborative events Centacare hosts each year for the local communities in which we work.



○ In addition to winning the Community Services event of the year in 2015, **Reconnect** supported young people to attend three Sport of Life events, which builds the capacity of young people in the community to participate in pro-social activities in and outside of the school setting.

○ The first **Cloncurry** Megaplaygroup was held on May 20, 2016. It coincided with National Families Event where we emphasised the theme of 'stronger families are stronger communities'. The Megaplaygroup event succeeded in uniting the local children, toddler groups, playgroups and the local schools. By aligning community services within the demographic it enabled Centacare NQ to showcase what Cloncurry has on offer for parents within the Shire and extending interest to neighbouring Shires.



○ In October 2015, the **Education & Life Skills** team received a national award from Catholic Social Services Australia for our Parents Apart Program. This program is aimed at parents who have separated, to understand the impact separation has in their lives and to foster a positive co-parenting relationship into the future. Based on a strong research framework, Parents Apart recognises the importance of children experiencing an ongoing relationship with both parents after separation that is safe, positive and enduring. The program's ultimate aim is to support parents to maintain a strong, positive relationship with their children and a positive co-parenting relationship with the other parent after separation.





# HIGHLIGHTS



○ The Senior Counsellor for **ROSA Therapeutic Counselling Service** was accepted to present a paper at the bi-annual International Childhood Trauma Conference in Melbourne in June. The paper presented ROSA's model of engaging the therapeutic support team around each child/young person and how to work together collaboratively to achieve positive outcomes for the child in their journey of healing from past trauma.

○ In June 2016, **StandBy** was requested to provide support at a Rugby Nine's event in Bedourie. Preston Campbell and Clinton Toopi in collaboration with QLD Health (AODS Service) and the Central West Suicide Prevention Network travelled to a number of Central Western communities throughout June. Both retired National Rugby League players, Presto and Toops' Community Tour aimed to highlight men's holistic health and the support services available for men in the Central Western QLD region. During the tour and while coaching and mentoring young men and boys in Rugby League, Presto and Toops shared their personal stories of ill-health and how they overcame difficulties with positive coping strategies including asking for help and support. It was a privilege for me to share information about the StandBy program and to be available to provide support when needed. The Preston Campbell Foundation Charity continues to provide a number of positive community initiatives state-wide.

○ The **Education & Life Skills** Strong 6 Project continues to gain fantastic feedback: *"To all Centacare staff who have been involved in the Strong 6 project at Currajong State School. Thank you for all your input, the resources, the programs, the safety circus (the kids loved it) and your willingness to be so approachable and flexible with program delivery. We greatly appreciate your assistance in helping children and families stay safe".*

○ Centacare's **Disabilities Program** continues its pro-active approach to facilitating opportunities for people living with a disability to engage in social and community activities in a manner of their choosing. May 2016 saw a new approach to inclusion at Centacare's Respite House with staff from the local branch of St George bank volunteering their time over 2 days to build a garden for the guests to enjoy. Careful consideration was given to the garden with raised beds being constructed to allow guests to touch and smell the various plants. The garden has both a practical and sensory aspect, with edible plants and herbs. Guests now have an opportunity to participate in gardening activities to keep the garden flourishing and the produce can be used by guests and their families as they choose. All guests that were staying at Respite House during the construction of the gardens were included in activities and had some fun times with the 'St George Dragon' mascot as part of the days' adventures.

○ This year the **Family & Relationship Services Counselling (FRSC)** team were provided continued professional training in family therapy with the best highlight taking the form of 2 days with Maurizio Andolphi facilitating family focused therapy for couples in crisis. This training was perfect for the service we provide and the demographic of clients we assist and to help with the continued requests for family therapy from the Family Court of Australia. Maurizio helped give an understanding of providing assistance for every generational level impacted by distress in a family system whether the nature of the stress is separation, financial, grief/bereavement, mental health, occupational, trauma or interpersonal.

○ There have been many positive outcomes with regards to most recent resident of **Trinity House**. Communication difficulties have lessened and the resident has been adapting to routine when required, and showing initiative in undertaking jobs around the home and assisting staff and residents.

○ This financial year the **Family Intervention Services** in Townsville, Mount Isa and Normanton worked together to combine policies and procedures to ensure that the Family Intervention Services across the region remain best practice and consistent across the region.

○ At a recent event, Centacare NQ's **Drought Support** team gave two \$100 Caltex vouchers away to participants at the event (which has been won from a lucky door prize at the local Cattle Expo). The people who attended the family fun day came from up to 200kms away, and were so grateful and humbled that we were there to support them through their journeys. They described their recent battles with the drought, including low stock numbers, increasing debts, lack of staff, and now E.coli in the water systems. Several families were unaware of the support networks available, and showed welcomed surprise that they were able to access a Centacare counsellor at their properties. The day was a great success; social networks were strengthened as people met neighbours and other locals within the community, children played with other children, and everyone collaboratively came together to enjoy the day.

○ During 15/16, there has been a continued shift in focus to working with families as well as individuals. Participating in community events like NAIDOC, The Pacific Festival, Deadly Family Fun, the Queensland Country Women's Association event in Cloncurry, the Julia Creek Campdraft and Here4Life days allowed us to continue the relationships that we have made with the community.





- The **Bowen Counselling and Support Service** was involved in the Domestic Violence Awareness Month Candelight Ceremony. Our counsellor was the master of ceremonies chairing the event. This was organised as part of the domestic violence action group, and focusing on the prevention of Domestic Violence.

- The Neighbourhood Centre partnered with Centacare's **Communities 4 Children** to facilitate two, one day Puppet making workshops in Cloncurry. The workshop encouraged creativity, confidence and imagination. It engaged kids in team work, and encouraged participants to pause, wonder and reflect, helping to grow and nourish their emotional intelligence. Plus, they were introduced to the world of puppetry.

- In late 2015, Centacare North Queensland undertook a series of activities to prepare for the transition to the **National Disability Insurance Scheme**, assisted by an external

consultant. National Disability Insurance Scheme services in Townsville commenced in a phased approach from 1 April 2016. The full implementation for Townsville commenced on 1 July 2016. Centacare North Queensland already had a number of clients funded under State Government arrangements, and a key component of the Centacare North Queensland National Disability Insurance Scheme transition strategy was migrating existing clients into the new Scheme. Centacare North Queensland is working to ensure that the organisation can meet these needs through new staffing arrangements, enhanced service delivery models, and working closely with Government, National Disability Insurance Agency, other providers, and the community to ensure the best outcomes for the community. Centacare North Queensland is also committed providing services to people in rural and remote areas, and from culturally diverse backgrounds.



# STORIES



○ Jonathon was a middle aged man who attended the Replace Your Rage course through the **Education & Life Skills Program** at Centacare in Townsville. Jonathon, who was a father of 3 daughters and a husband, discussed the difficulties he was currently facing and faced in the past when it came to the management of anger. He would often “lose his cool” at the girls and found it near impossible to resolve any issues with his wife. Jonathon was already able to identify work as a source of stress and discussed past attempts at managing the overload of stress impacting on family relationships. Throughout the course starting with identification of triggers, behaviors and situations where anger was difficult to manage, Jonathon displayed a keenness and dedication evident by his self reports of “Replace Your Rage” homework completion and his contributions to group discussions. At the end of the course Jonathon reported a decrease in behavioral symptoms (mirrored by the anger thermometer self report tool used in session) of uncontrollable anger at home and in the workplace as well as reporting better marital satisfaction, increased wellbeing at work and a closer relationship with his daughters.

○ A family that attended the **Family & Relationship Services Counselling Program** this year comprised of Mum, Dad, twin 16

year old sons and a 19 year old sister. One of the twin boys was diagnosed with ADHD from a young age as well as other pervasive developmental disorders. The child was heavily medicated due to major behavioural issues at home and school which included fighting, stealing and lying. The Family relationships counsellor was able to assist the family to work on damaged relationships that had occurred during the child growing up and the stress of managing the challenging behaviours. Through working with the family unit, the child has since returned exemplary reports from school in regards to behaviour and academic achievement (expulsion was discussed at the beginning of 2016), reported improvements in family functioning at home from multiple family members (Dad, Mum and Brother) and also a reduction in medication for the child (no longer takes additional Ritalin in the afternoons).

○ A client that was referred due to relationship difficulties and had self harming and suicidal ideation, working through issues in counselling and at the end was able to identify her supports, focus on goals for the future, work on thoughts and beliefs, self esteem and communication and was able to finish counselling with a plan for the future. Other people in her life saw the changes in the client.



- Throughout the previous six months Centacare NQ's **Drought Team** have participated in several initiatives, including mental health days and community capacity building activities. At these events, brief intervention and information and awareness is paramount. At one event, an elderly woman in her 70's attended. She explained that this was the first event she had attended in decades, and as of lately she has not left the station as her partner had passed away, and due to the drought she had to feed and water the cattle twice a day. The lady participated in all of the activities, including a belly dancing lesson at the end of the day designed to increase well-being and lower stress. Whilst she had to leave early to feed the few cattle she had left, she reported that she had had a wonderful day and really enjoyed herself. The struggle this lady faced every day and her determination was incredible, however her attending this event brought her closer to the community and reinforced old friendships and connections

- **Family Intervention Service** worked with a mother and two children on attachment, parenting strategies, behavior management, routines and worked with the mother on self care, healthy behaviours, and healthy relationships. With the help of our program the mother learned ways to positively interact with her children, to maintain a healthy household and to ensure she had positive supports in her life. The children were reunified back into the mother's care and Child Safety closed with the family.

- Within the **Community Inclusion Program** many of our workers have assisted the individuals we support gain valued roles in the community by volunteering at numerous organizations. These individual take the time the time to give back to a community that can *sometimes* overlook and undervalue their abilities. Earlier in the year, Volunteering North Queensland took the

time to pause and acknowledge the efforts of these volunteers. A celebration day was held to recognize the contributions our clients had made and the time they had put back into our community. Mayor Jenny Hill was present and was also thanked the volunteers personally for the work they had done within their varying roles. The volunteers were presented with certificates and morning tea was provided. Each client expressed that this celebration had made all the time they had offered in the volunteer roles worthwhile.



# QUICK FACTS

## 15/16



8448  
CLIENTS  
SUPPORTED



SERVICE TO 25%  
OF QUEENSLAND

3905  
FEMALE



2835  
MALE



6 SITES



9 SERVICE  
AREAS



4154  
ADULTS



2932  
CHILDREN

62554  
CONTACT HOURS



160  
STAFF



2517  
INDIGENOUS CLIENTS

# ORGANISATION DIRECTORY

## TOWNSVILLE

410 Ross River Road, CRANBROOK QLD 4814  
PO Box 1362, AITKENVALE QLD 4814  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4755 0322  
Email: [centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au)

## MOUNT ISA

80 Short Street & 5 Miles Street, MOUNT ISA  
QLD 4825  
PO Box 1375, MOUNT ISA QLD 4825  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4743 3184 or (07) 4743 5492  
Email: [centacareisa@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacareisa@centacarenq.org.au)

## BOWEN

5/36 Powell Street, BOWEN QLD 4805  
PO Box 826, BOWEN QLD 4805  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4755 0322  
Email: [centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au)

## NORMANTON

26 Dutton Street, NORMANTON QLD 4890  
PO Box 398, NORMANTON QLD 4890  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4745 1093  
Email: [centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au)

## BURDEKIN

2/143 Edward Street, AYR QLD 4807  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4755 0322  
Email: [centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au)

## CLONCURRY

57 Sheaffe Street, CLONCURRY QLD 4824  
Phone: 1300 NQCARE (1300 612 273)  
Fax: (07) 4742 0737  
Email: [centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au](mailto:centacarenq@centacarenq.org.au)

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