



# NELSON WOMEN'S CENTRE

## TE WHARE ĀWHINA MŌ NGĀ WĀHINE PUAWAI

*"a supportive place where all women can flourish"*

**Nelson Women's Support Inc.**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

1 July 2015 - 30 June 2016



Nelson Women's Centre / *Te Whare Āwhina Mō Ngā Wāhine Puawai*

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CC # 25231; GST # 63-299-901

## **Introduction**

2015-16 was our second year as a single, unified organisation that includes the Women's Centre Coordination, Social Work and Counselling services. During the year we began a process to review the Governance structure and roles of the organisation. An employment group was formalised. We developed a Strategic Communications Plan to assist with the aims of the merger and developed strategic:

- Development of a strategic plan
- Further embed the changes following the merger of Women in Nelson and Women's Support.
- Strengthen the role of the Governing Collective
- Clarify the running of the counselling service
- Work with other agencies on provision of emergency accommodation
- Strengthen collaborative relationships with key community agencies
- Raise our profile as a unique and important service provider in Nelson

**Our mission is:** empowering women to be safe, resourceful, to value themselves and to reach their potential. This mission underpins everything we do here.

**We are a registered charity: CC25231** and we are tax-exempt; GST # 63-299-901.

## **Women's Centre Patron**

Annette Milligan, pioneer in women's health, Director and founder of INP Medical Clinic.

## **Personnel**

In many ways, the people make a place, and we are blessed to be able to attract a wonderful combination of people (paid and volunteer) with great heart and strong skills.

Our current Governing Collective members are:

Elena Meredith	Hilary Mitchell	Sarah Wilson`	Gail Collingwood
Lorellin Syben	Ruth Parsons	Myffie James	

The responsibilities of the Governing Collective are to: guide the strategic direction of the Centre; develop major policies; oversee the organisation's finances; employ staff; assist with fundraising. (Note: Lorellin joined the Governing Collective in February this year)

We regretfully accepted the resignation of long-time Governing Collective member Gail Collingwood in late 2015. Gail was an original part of the group Women in Nelson (WIN), who fundraised to purchase the 44 Trafalgar St property, so that the Nelson Women's Centre could have a stable home. Gail went on to serve as a 6-term Nelson City Councillor (two as Deputy Mayor), and for over 20 years provided a very helpful link for the Women's Centre with Council, and with many other parts of the community. We will miss Gail's perspective, quiet humour and practical common sense. We wish her very well in her retirement! Gail maintains a connection to the Women's Centre including creating our wonderful raffles.

The people employed by the Governing Collective are:

Centre Coordinator, Britta Hietz	Assistant Coordinator, Deanne Kilpatrick
Community Social Worker, Lyn Ginty	Assistant Social Worker, Christine Henwood
Cleaner, Lisa Ines	Finance Administrator, Kathleen O'Connor

We have a dedicated and skilled team of volunteer Counsellors:

Myffie James	Ruth Parsons	Kerri Flood
Alex Sawyer	Julie Jar	

Kerri Flood joined the Counselling teams this year and we welcome her on board!

Other regular Women's Centre volunteers include:

Clancy Hunt, our gardener

Debbie who organises the Op Shop (We were sad to see Debbie resign at the beginning of 2016 after many years of service)

Rona Spencer who offers Holistic Pulsing sessions every week

**Nelson Women's Centre Coordination**

In November 2015 Carrie Mozena who has been the Nelson Women's Centre Coordinator for 12 years left the Centre for a one-year contract as Director of Nelson/Tasman Housing Trust. A one-year contract was offered to Britta Hietz to fill the Coordinator's role in Carrie's absence. Britta, and Deanne Kilpatrick as Assistant Coordinator are facilitative leaders who focus every day on four key areas: people, programmes, our facilities and funding. They keep looking for ways to address issues in the community that are important to women.

**Highlights**

**Participation in all of our programmes and services at the Women's Centre remains strong.** Our total number of client contacts for this 12-month period was **2871** (this is almost the same as the previous 12 months). This includes Centre visits, phone calls and email queries and. Increasingly contacts are coming in via our website. This is in addition to the women who see our social workers and Counsellors

- **43% (1244) of contacts related to our SOCIAL/CULTURAL offerings.** Many people (individuals and agencies) enquire about our workshops; some approach us to be tutors; many attend other groups (e.g. 8-15 women and their children attend the Women Parenting Alone group every Friday; the 8-week Pathways to Power course runs twice every year; we ran three mindfulness meditation groups this year).

**Hands-On Art and Discovery Afternoon workshops are popular: 461** women attended **59** workshops in the 12 months. The wide variety of workshops we offer accomplish many things: they introduce women to creative arts and crafts, help them to learn new skills, enable them to get to know new people, and boost their confidence in many ways. The tutors we engage are dynamic, skilled and inspiring people to be with. Our workshops also provide many women an easy introduction to the Women's Centre, which encourages them, later on as they may need, to link with the support groups, social work, advocacy and counselling services offered here.

Our Hands-On Art & Creative workshop topics included: painting techniques, patchworks, 3-D felting for beginners, working with colour, tree sculpture, dot painting, mixed media, poetry as a therapeutic tool, bookbinding, landscape painting, flax weaving, stretch & prime your own canvas, papier mache vessels and making a mould

Our Discovery workshops included a mix of personal development and life skills topics: fermented foods, belly dancing, menopause, legal workshops, CV writing, clearing negative beliefs, essential practices for healing, raw cakes, relaxation and mindfulness, dress on a budget, Qi Gong, making smoothies, juices & salads

- **15% (440) came for a TIME OUT or to visit the OP SHOP.** We are a drop-in centre where women can pop in for a cuppa, browse in our Women's Library, meet a friend for lunch, have an informal chat with someone, just hang out, or hunt for bargains in our Op Shop. There is a consistent flow of donations to and sales from the Op Shop, which raised over \$1,500. These extra funds help cover the daily running costs of the Women's Centre (such as power, internet, printing, milk, tea, rubbish, cleaning supplies, etc).
- **9% (246) contacted us for HEALTH reasons.** Many women ask us for referrals to counsellors, GPs or other health services. This is because they are new to town, on a low income, or not happy with their current health provider. We refer women to Nelson Women's support and SASH for support and counselling, and we maintain a resource list of private counsellors who are full members of NZAC or NZAP. We also have had a skilled volunteer who offer a gold-coin reiki or holistic pulsing sessions for women on low incomes. In the past 12 months **138 women received a 50-min healing session** here at the Women's Centre.
- **2% (69) contacted us for help with INCOME.** We are a contact point for the Angel Women's Loan Fund, who provide no-interest loans up to \$1200 for women to help with training/ education or to help develop a small business. We continue to get many requests for help with benefits and often link people with BUWT (Beneficiaries and Unwaged Workers Trust), CAP (Christians Against Poverty), Nelson Budget Service, and the Fifeshire Foundation (for grants in cases of domestic hardship). Also, due to ongoing tough times, many people come to the Women's Centre seeking food. We almost always have surplus bread, meat and fish to give away to individuals and families in need. **We are immensely grateful for regular food donations from Sealord (fish) and Lonestar Farms (meat) as well as ongoing food donations from National Council for Women**
- **2% (63) were requests for help with HOUSING issues.** This includes emergency housing and finding affordable rentals.
  - a. **Emergency Housing:** At the beginning of 2016 the Tahuna Holiday Camp emergency housing closed and under a new arrangement we now offer a room at Franklyn village for those needing short term emergency housing.
  - b. **Affordable Rental Housing:** Women on their own and families on low incomes have a hard time finding decent housing they can afford in Nelson. It is not unusual for people to struggle to pay rents that are 50-70% of their weekly incomes. We provide information on where and how to look for housing, link people to our Women's Centre social workers and the Salvation Army for skilled advocacy on accommodation issues.

- **Many daytime VOLUNTEERS** contributed to the centre this year. We hugely appreciate Clancy Hunt for her gardening skills and creative additions to our grounds. Heartfelt thanks as well to Rona Spencer for freely giving her time to provide Holistic Pulsing each week to women on low incomes. Laquisha Edwards from Nelson College for girls volunteered several weeks at the centre through the Gateway programme. We thank Adrienne for helping chop and stack our firewood, Venessa and Alana for assistance with the workshop program and many other women helped keep the op-shop tidy after Debbie left and helped with many domestic and administrative chores.

### **Development Projects:**

Each year we work to improve the Women's Centre facility in some important way.

This year we have focussed on two key projects:

**a. Counselling Cottage:** The new Counselling Cottage was completed pending finalising the NCC consent process and a few finishing touches. A new deck was built which now joins all our outbuildings and creates a wonderful additional space for a variety of activities. We thank the willing volunteer labour from NMIT.

**b. Exterior House Renovation:** The northern exterior wall of the house had started to deteriorate including dry rot in a few places and was in urgent need of repainting. We received several quotes and started to fundraise. By the end of the financial year we had raised \$500 towards the project and bought paint and materials.

### **Social Work Services - Overview**

The uniqueness of our agency is we are able to see all women within and around our community; we have no restrictive criteria. All women seeking our help are validated and heard and treated with respect and dignity in a confidential and safe environment. Our Māori wāhine are embraced within the kaupapa of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

We respond to all enquiries as quickly as possible. We prioritise urgent cases. These are generally walk-in clients who are in distress and need urgent help: women of different cultures and ages who may need to talk to someone regarding food, housing, domestic violence, advocacy re Work & Income or lawyers' appointments etc. Women also present with mental health issues that need immediate attention. We have an outreach service that allows our social workers to make home visits. This is beneficial for all women who are disadvantaged financially and physically.

Our referral system is simple: a phone call to the landline or our cell phone which is held by one of the social workers at all times, or via email or the website. We aim to respond to any messages left within one hour during work hours or otherwise within 24 hours. Women are referred to Nelson Women's Support by family, friends, co-workers or other agencies such as Nelson Hospital, GPs or practice nurses, Work & Income, CYF etc. We received **764** enquiries this year.

We work collaboratively with SASH who are also based at the Women's Centre. Whenever women have been affected by sexual violence we can connect them easily with caring, specialist help, and our social workers can continue to assist them in many practical ways.

## **Social Workers' Roles**

We employ two social workers, Lyn Ginty and Christine Henwood, who are both full members of ANZASW (Aotearoa NZ Association of Social Workers). They are both very experienced and respected in the community, with good reputations for being honest and trustworthy when working alongside other agencies. Both social workers work from a strengths-based perspective which allows the client to determine their own journey or course of immediate action. Our Māori social worker, Lyn, is able to employ appropriate practices when working with Maori women. As an example Te Wheke Māori model based on whakapapa alongside the whānau determining whakapapa can be very effective in establishing relationships with women and whanau..

Both social workers have a strong belief regarding safety of children. Notifications are made alongside whānau as we promote transparency, trust and support. Anonymous notifications are only made if there is a threat to the safety of the social worker. Both social workers have a wide knowledge of the Nelson community, which enables them to refer to other agencies who may have more expertise in specific areas.

Both of our social workers also have a lot of experience helping women address domestic violence. We are able to help women understand the dynamics of power and control, create safety plans, and help them secure protection and parenting orders if needed. We frequently refer women to the programmes of Stopping Violence Services. We also link clients to the services of SASH so that women who had been sexually abused as children or raped as part of ongoing family violence can get specialist support and care. Our social workers continue to help these clients with practical matters re housing, food, clothing, children's education and more.

**Social Work Support & Advocacy** – this service has three “streams”:

- a. **Intensive Family Support**, for 60 families per year, funded by a contract with Ministry of Social Development. This year, we worked with a total of **86 high-risk families** (with **112 children**), with **all** of these families achieving at least 80% of their goals set through their case plan.
- b. **General Social Work Support**, largely funded by grants from NZ Lottery and the Rātā Foundation (formerly The Canterbury Community Trust). This year, we worked with **132** women and families in this general area.
- c. **Social Work Support for women over age 45, struggling on their own**, funded by a contract with Nelson City Council. This year, we worked with **over 64** such women.

## **Primary Presenting Issues for All of Our Clients**

20% Accommodation  
 18% Controlling Relationships  
 60% Financial  
 10% Other (health, family relationships, mental health)

These categories overlap with each other. For example, violent or controlling relationships usually bring accommodation issues, and financial stress.

**AGES of Clients**

37% 18-30 years  
 29% 31-40 years  
 36% 41-50 years  
 07% 51-60+ years

**ETHNICITY of Clients**

69% NZ European  
 28% Māori  
 01% Pacific Islander

**Results-Based Accountability**

We have continued to track all clients' progress in terms of positive changes in their

- information, education, skills
- attitudes, perceptions, awareness
- behaviour and actions
- circumstances

This happens via a closing assessment between the social worker and client. Results for each client vary according to each person's situation and their set goals. Examples of common results are: better understanding of the harmful effects of family violence on children; improved parenting skills; stronger ability to take care of self; learning to set better boundaries; resolving difficult access arrangements; and gaining secure housing.

**Outreach Service**

Referrals are made to our social workers from agencies such as Nelson Hospital social workers. We will visit and make sure those women who have recently had surgery whether young, old or middle-aged are able to cope. Many of them cannot drive and need help to attend their follow-up appointment. These usually involve short-term plans.

We also do home visits with young mums who have no transport, women with addictions who get into difficulty, all women in urgent need of support, e.g. doctor's appointments as well as when children are sick. Our service has on occasions reached from Nelson, Richmond and surrounding areas to Motueka. We are able to evaluate clients' needs at home and then put other agencies and resources in place for them within their area.

**Counselling Service**

Nelson Women's Support has five qualified, volunteer counsellors, who provide up to 10 free counselling sessions to any woman over age 17. Our social workers assess women who request counselling, and will "hold" these clients until they are able to be seen by a counsellor (usually within 2-3 weeks). Our counsellors are required to keep written records and evaluation sheets on each client as an accountability measure for the agency. The counsellors attend a meeting with all staff once per month, and meet as a peer group after the main meeting. All counsellors have individual external professional supervision, plus some training paid for by the agency (thanks to ongoing fundraising for this purpose).

Over the last few years the complexity of clients' needs has grown and this year we decided to pay a senior counsellor for one day a week, to take on the most complex cases and to support the other volunteer counsellors

**In the past 12 months, our counselling service worked with 51 new clients, providing 440 hours of free counselling.** A very big thank you to our counsellors Ruth, Myffie, Alex, Julie and Keri for all of their work in empowering women to make positive

choices and changes. Their skilled presence in working with largely low-income women who aren't able to pay for private counselling makes a tangible difference in women's lives.

**Outcomes from our counselling service include clients reporting:**

- positive changes in their attitudes and perspectives on grief, conflict, and loss;
- improvements in abilities to set appropriate boundaries in their relationships;
- improved self-acceptance and sense of self-worth;
- greater willingness to try new things;
- enhanced ability to assert themselves when necessary.

**Pathways to Power Courses**

Each year we run two Pathways to Power courses, skilfully facilitated by Kindra Douglas. (Kindra created the course 10 years ago and continues to develop the course material). Pathways to Power is an 8-week (2 hours per week) guided course in exploring one's sense of self, strengths, ability to reflect on one's behaviours and beliefs, the power to choose and make things happen, and to feel more in charge of life – now and for the future. In the past 12 months, **18 women attended two Pathways courses**. Participant feedback 98% positive.

**Learning outcomes from Pathways to Power are:** increased self-knowledge, centredness, and self-confidence, and a clearer sense of life direction and goals.

**Important Trends Seen by Our Social Workers This Year:**

**Housing**

There is a serious lack of affordable rental housing of a reasonable standard available in Nelson. Housing NZ have a very long waiting list and private landlords are being more selective.

**Poverty/mental health**

There is a link between the stresses of poverty, including in families where both parents work for low returns, and anxiety, depression and loss of hope. The lack of resource means that medical and dental services are not accessed and social activities are impossible. Teenagers suffer when they cannot participate in normal teen activities.

There are also anxious, shy and self-destructive young women who do not fit the DHB mental health system

**Relationships with Government and other Organisations**

Many clients require coaching to be able to attend appointments with police, lawyers, the Courts, Work & Income, and schools. They also need someone to accompany them; Women's Centre workers do accompany them but only speak for them when they are unable to do so themselves (language barriers, inability to articulate their needs).

### **The Aftermath of Domestic Violence**

Women and children frequently experience ongoing trauma from being involved in or witnessing domestic violence. They require ongoing support and education. Trust needs to be established to encourage women to take out Protection Orders, and children's safety must be paramount.

### **Drug 'P'**

Parents, grandparents and partners approach the centre seeking help with family members addicted to "P". They speak of paranoia, family violence, partner abuse, financial crises, and homelessness. The Centre can offer counselling and support for women affected by the addict as well as practical assistance. Unfortunately change has to come from the addict.

### **Internet pornography**

Both young women and older women distressed because of their partner's behaviour in relation to internet pornography. They are reassured that it is not their fault, and they are offered reliable information which can inform their decisions.

### **One-Off-Clients**

These are walk-in clients who need instant relief from burdens. They may be lonely, isolated from whanau or tired and hungry. The Centre has emergency food, a shower and a washing machine, as well as someone to talk to. There is excellent information about how women can access help for specific issues. We saw **300** walk-in clients during this period.

### **"Hard to reach" clients**

There are groups of women who need assistance but do not come to the Centre:

- Women over 50 and young mums who cannot get to the centre because of finance, transport or physical disability. They are often lonely and isolated from the community and referred by doctors or through self-referral to our website. The website is a great boon for these women as they are able to converse with Centre workers through the Internet. More younger women and professional women are using the website for information.
- Women from middle-income families are reluctant to seek help and come in only when they are in crises. They are often exhausted from trying to make ends meet for the family. Listening and encouraging them helps, along with assistance from Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, the Anglican Church Trust and the Fifehire Foundation.
- Women who live in destructive relationships with abusive partners and/or are ripping off the system by living with a partner on a single-parent benefit. They are often referred by friends who have been helped by the Centre. They are frequently

Maori and their circumstances may be gang-related. They usually come in to get help to leave Nelson urgently or to get a Protection Order. Whakapapa helps build a connection so that the Centre can work with them. Working as a community through CYF and Strengthening Families achieves the best outcomes for these whanau.

Together, we have made tremendous progress in growing and developing the Nelson Women's Centre *Te Whare Āwhina Mō Ngā Wāhine Puawai*. This place is so much more than the sum of all its parts, so much more than any of us as individuals.

**In conclusion** We wish to thank all those who make donations to the centre Sealord's, Lonestar Farm, Tasman Bay Food Group, community fruit harvesting, National Council of Women, Fifeshire Foundation and the many individuals who donate clothing items for our op shop and food for our pantry for families in significant need. We also wish to thank Rona Spencer for her donation of many holistic pulsing sessions much appreciated by women throughout the year.

Most importantly we wish to thank the Governing Collective members, Elena, Ruth, Sarah, Hilary, Myffie and Lorellin for all of their support, vision and energy. We also want to thank all our wonderful Counsellors, Ruth, Myffie, Alex, Julie and Keri, as well as our co-workers, Deanne, Kathleen, Christine, Sarah-Jane, Delia, Rebecca, Sylvia and Jemma for their heartfelt work and good humour this year. We, all of us, make the Nelson Women's Centre a good place to be.

In sisterhood,

Britta Hietz  
Women's Centre Coordinator

Lyn Ginty  
Community Social Worker

**Financial Summary:**

Nelson Women's Support has a diverse mix of funding sources. We have a social work contract with the Ministry of Social Development. We appreciate the ongoing support of NZ Lotteries, Rata Foundation, COGS, Frimley Foundation, United Way, Nelson City Council, RG & EF MacDonald Trust, Lion Foundation, and NZ Community Trust.

This year we won a monthly \$1,000 prize draw from SBS Banking and received donations from various Nelson Community Groups and business's including Soroptomists International, Tasman District Council and You Realty. We also greatly appreciate the donations from individuals and the community support for our fundraising events.

**New Accounting Policies**

NWS Net Deficit is -\$38,904. This result is due to carrying forward unused grant income from NZ Lotteries and Rata Foundation. Under the new PBE Tier 3 rules the unused income of \$32,167 has been transferred to the next financial year. Further for the first time we have accrued holiday pay – (what we would have to pay out if all staff left on 30 June 2016) of \$6,685. Taken together we have \$38,853 less net income. If these changes had not been made our net deficit would be -\$51 only.

At 30 June 2016 we had \$30,679 in the bank and \$70,908 in term deposits a total of \$101,587.

**Nelson Women's Support  
Financial Summary 30 June 2016**

MSD CYF Contract	30,000.00
Rata Foundation	20,833.33
NZ Lotteries Grant Board	14,000.00
Rent Received	7,442.00
COGS	6,000.00
Springhill/ Frimley Charitable Trust	4,000.00
United Way	3,900.00
Counselling Donation	3,379.00
Term Deposit Interest	2,988.00
Lion Foundation	2,800.00
Fundraising Income	2,780.00
NCC Comm Assist Grant - Soc Wk	2,400.00
Individual Donations Counselling cottage	2,165.00
NCC Comm Assistance-Workshops	2,100.00
Give a Little	1,845.00
Donations Workshops	1,720.00
McDonald Trust	1,500.00
SBS Donation	1,000.00
Donations General	516.30
NZ Community Trust	500.00
Tasman District Council	345.00

Soroptomists International	200.00
Membership	161.00
You Realty	100.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>112,674.</b>

**Expenses:**

Wages including ACC	113,026.00
Overheads	13,923.00
Workshops, groups & advertising	5,073.00
Volunteer costs - Counsellors	5,295.00
Supervision, Training, Travel	3,148.00
Repairs & maintenance	1,527.00
Fundraising costs	1,306.00
Depreciation	1,596.00
Holiday Pay Accrual	6,685.00
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>151,579.00</b>
<b>Net (Deficit) for Year:</b>	<b>-38,904.</b>



