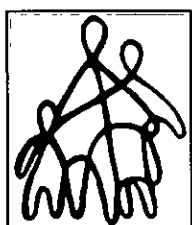
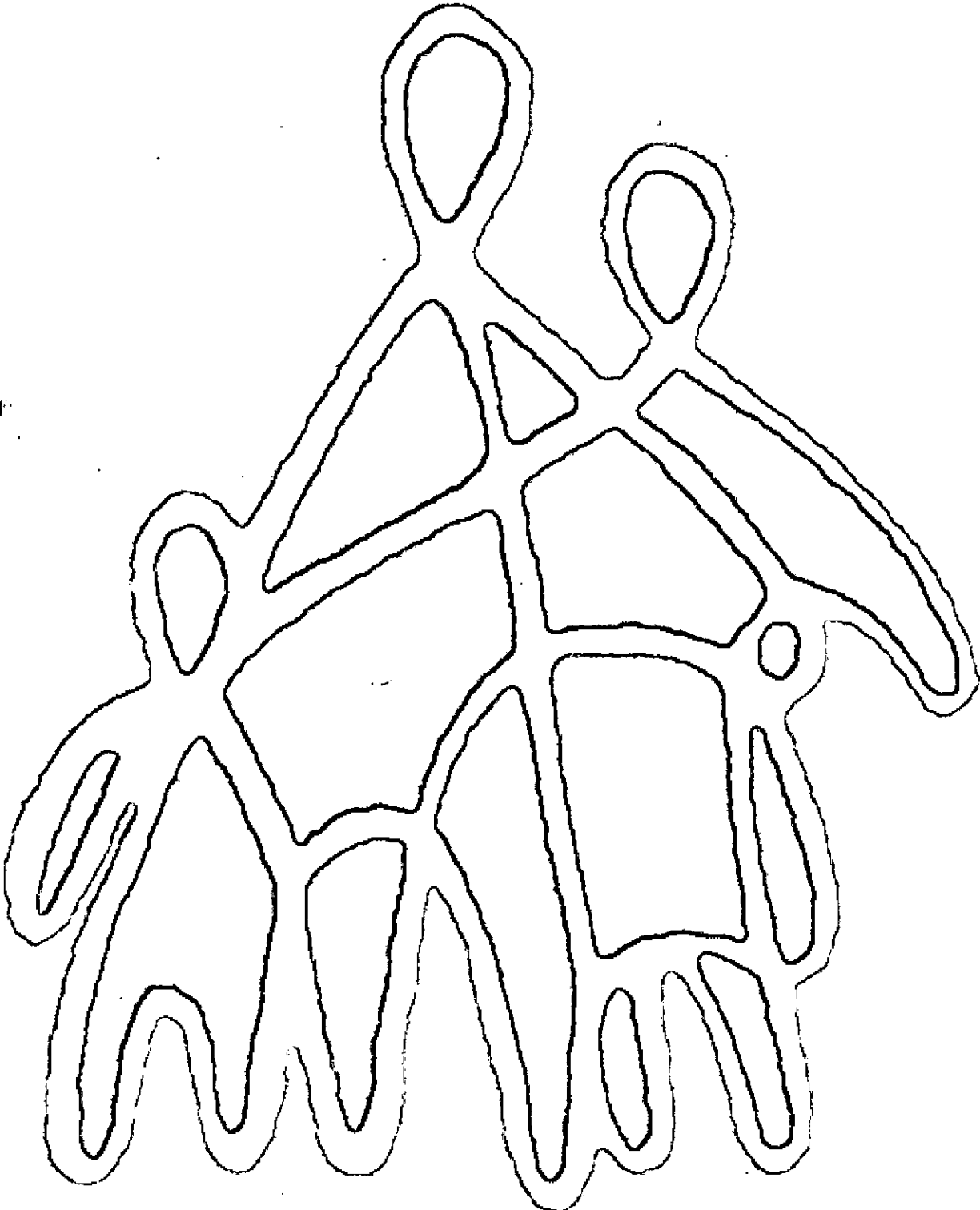
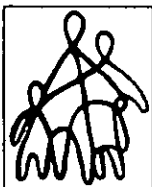


Annual report 2002



NCOSS

**Council of Social Service
of New South Wales**



NCOSS

The Council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCOSS) is the peak body for the social and community services sector in New South Wales. NCOSS works with its members on behalf of disadvantaged people and communities towards achieving social justice in New South Wales.

NCOSS was established in 1935 to promote cooperation in the provision of community services and influence social legislation. Today our constituents are:

- our members
- other peak community service agencies in NSW
- service providers
- other agencies working in the social policy and social services field
- individual members interested in social policy and social service issues
- disadvantaged and low income people and communities in NSW.

NCOSS provides an independent voice on welfare policy issues and social and economic reforms and is the major co-ordinator for non-government social and community services in NSW.

We act as a channel for consultation with government and between parts of the non-government sector with common interests and diverse functions.

NCOSS is a membership organisation. Through current membership forums, NCOSS represents more than 7000 NSW social and community services and over 85,000 consumers and individuals. Members range from the smallest community services to the largest major welfare agencies, state and regional level peak councils, churches, hospitals, local government and consumer groups.

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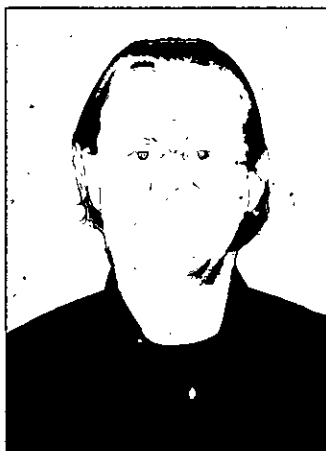
President's Message

At the beginning of my first year as NCOSS president it was clear that the key political and social issue confronting us all was the developing political auction on Law and Order. The potential of this issue to distort the priorities of government could not be overstated and the ongoing intervention by NCOSS and a growing range of community organisations and concerned individuals was successful in putting some rational argument into a debate dominated by the tabloid media. While the final outcome is still undesirable the potential outcome would have been much worse without the strong campaign arising from the *Scales of Justice* Conference and the development of the Behind Bars Alliance.

The regional tour NCOSS undertook to gain input to both our budget submission and our election intervention brought home to all of us the very real effects of locational disadvantage. This process is one we are committed to and more importantly is a process that is essential if we are really to be a NSW council rather than a Sydney organisation.

The culmination of the long term campaign for reform in Community Services and Child Protection was a real high point of the last year. The work remains to ensure adequate and proper implementation but the pathway is clear. The other highlight was the Government's commitment to fully funding the SACS award. The services, the departments involved and the Government all deserve our congratulations.

The wonderful success of our *Advocacy* Conference in early March 2003 reflects the changing times that we are living in. The debate on the topic "Advocacy is dead" summed up this new era. The central importance of advocacy was re-endorsed but within the context of activism. As poverty and disadvantage remain forgotten issues, as the remnants of commitment to universal



service provision come under attack and as governments remain committed to market solutions, the sector has an ongoing responsibility to lobby, to advocate and to actively organise campaigns to ensure that the bottom 20% of our population are not forgotten about.

Saying farewell to our Director Alan Kirkland saddens me greatly while the return of our Director Gary Moore pleases me greatly. I can not even begin to imagine anyone who could have risen to the difficult task of filling

Gary's shoes for two years as well as Alan has. Organisations like NCOSS are dependent on the commitment and skill of all their staff and in particular of the Director and the organisation is being returned to Gary strengthened and improved through Alan's contribution.

The work done by all of the staff over the last year has been exemplary and the impact of our organisation in society as a whole is due to the immense skill and dedication to improving the position of disadvantaged people that motivates our staff. I would also like to recognise the commitment to the organisation provided by our Board. The contribution of so many from throughout the sector ensures that NCOSS remains relevant, connected and focused on the key issues of the day.

With a new Board, a not so new director and our skilled and committed staff I am confident that hand in hand with our members we will continue to play a major and positive role in the ongoing social policy debates and that improvements in the lives of all NSW people will be not only our objective but also a clear outcome over the next year.

Chris Dodds
NCOSS President

■ Council of Social Service of New South Wales

Who we are

The Council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCOSS) is the peak body for the social and community sector in NSW. We were established in 1935 to promote cooperation in the provision of community services and influence social legislation. Today NCOSS provides an independent voice on social and economic policy issues and reforms and is the major co-ordinator for non-government social and community services in NSW. We act as a channel for consultation with government and between parts of the non-government sector with common interests and diverse functions.

Our Vision

NCOSS' vision is for a society where there is social and economic equity, based on co-operation, participation, sustainability and respect.

Statement of purpose

As the peak body for the social and community services sector in NSW, NCOSS works actively with our members and others towards achieving social justice for all disadvantaged people and communities and reconciliation with Indigenous people.

Our values

1. Social justice, access and equity for all individuals and communities
2. Reconciliation and justice for Indigenous people
3. Active participation of people and communities in decisions that impact on their lives
4. Cooperation and shared responsibility for sustainable community well being
5. Openness, ethical practices and accountability
6. Fair and just employment practices.

Our goals and objectives

Goal 1

Positively influence key government policies, business actions and community attitudes that affect disadvantaged people and communities.

1. Be an effective policy and advocacy body
2. Better balance the representation of the views of disadvantaged people and community sector organisations
3. Improve the policy development and advocacy capacity of the community sector

Goal 2

Support and resource the ongoing development of a high quality and effective community sector.

4. Provide leadership, support and coordination in bringing peak community sector organisations in NSW together
5. Maintain a diverse range of human service providers in a competitive environment
6. Improve the capacities of community organisations

Goal 3

Work to continually improve our workplace in order to achieve cooperation, equity, effectiveness and productivity and a financially secure organisation.

7. Provide a healthy and safe, high quality and productive work environment
8. Provide a workplace that reflects the community in which we work
9. Ensure financial viability and support organisational growth

■ Director's Message

2002 was a year of great change both within NCOSS and in its relations with the broader world.

One of the most important changes in our approach to advocacy was through our increased focus on issues facing communities outside Sydney. The new Board elected in May saw an increased role for regional representatives, through our President, Chris Dodds (from the Hunter) and new Board member, Jenni Funari (Northern Rivers). NCOSS built upon this representation by undertaking regional consultations in three parts of the state that lack funded regional peak organisations – the Central West, New England and Riverina. An important feature of these visits was a series of specific meetings and consultations with Aboriginal organisations, which provided extra depth and credibility to our policy work.

Our success in advocacy through strong working relationships with government agencies was probably best demonstrated by the outcomes of our negotiations around the new Social and Community Services Award. As detailed elsewhere in this report, the State Government's decision to fund the costs of the award represented a significant shift in Government policy, not to mention funding.

Internally, I was pleased to be able to draw upon the skills of Deputy Directors Ros Bragg and Maz Thomson to implement the organisation's first Operational Plan, a one year plan underpinning the Strategic Plan. This plan, developed through consultation with staff and endorsed by the Board, provided the basis for substantial changes to systems for support of staff. Through work planning, supervision and the monitoring of staff hours, we were able to improve working conditions, as evidenced by a substantial reduction in workers compensation claims. To improve conditions during summer and winter, NCOSS



commissioned environmental engineers to provide advice on sustainable heating and cooling options. Staff were also able to benefit from an 8% pay rise.

The organisation's finances also grew through 2002, with over \$1 million in additional funding. While most of this funding is for time-limited projects, most are for two to three years, which provides some financial stability. Importantly, much of this funding has been targeted at industry development activities through the Insurance,

Emergency Relief, Management Support Unit, Better Service Delivery and Aboriginal NGO Capacity Building projects. While it is important to ensure that NCOSS retains its focus on advocacy for disadvantaged people and communities, we believe that a strong, well-resourced community sector is essential to this goal. That is why the development of a strong series of industry development projects marks an important stage in the organisation's history.

As this is my last Annual Report as Director of NCOSS, I would like to thank those who have supported me over the past two years. Our work would not be possible without an active board, committed staff, a strong network of peak organisations, supporters within government agencies, or the thousands of non-government organisations across the State that take time out of their day to day demands to participate in the broader non-government movement. I would also like to acknowledge the special role of the other COSS Directors around the country, who have been an invaluable source of support.

While I am sad to leave, I do so in the knowledge that NCOSS is a strong, sustainable and dynamic organisation with a long and successful future ahead.

Alan Kirkland
Director

■ NCOSS Board



Above - some members of the NCOSS Board for 2002:
Back row (left to right): Paul Drielsma, Chris Dodds, Stuart Gibb, George Varughese, Rob Lake, Kath Brewster, Deb Sharp
Front row (centre): Pam Batkin, Jenni Funari, Rhonda Coles

The NCOSS Board is a vital link between the social and community services sector as a whole and the NCOSS staff. Around half the Board is elected each year, with Directors' terms set at two years. During the year, additional Board members are co-opted to fill vacancies and to ensure that as many major community interests as possible are represented.

The members of our 2002 Board were:

Chris Dodds, President

Pam Batkin, Vice President

Roger West, Vice President

Larry Pierce, Treasurer

Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies

Kath Brewster

Council on the Ageing (NSW) Inc.

Jenni Funari

Northern Rivers Social Development Council

George Varughese

Multicultural Support Network of Randwick

Rhonda Coles

Australian Association of Social Workers – NSW Branch

Stephen Hall

Intellectual Disability Rights Service

Deb Sharp

Rob Lake

People with Disabilities

Annette Wade

Tenants Union of NSW Co-op Ltd

Stevie Clayton

AIDS Council of NSW (ACON)

Stuart Gibb

Local Government Community Services Association

Joseph Ferrer

Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre

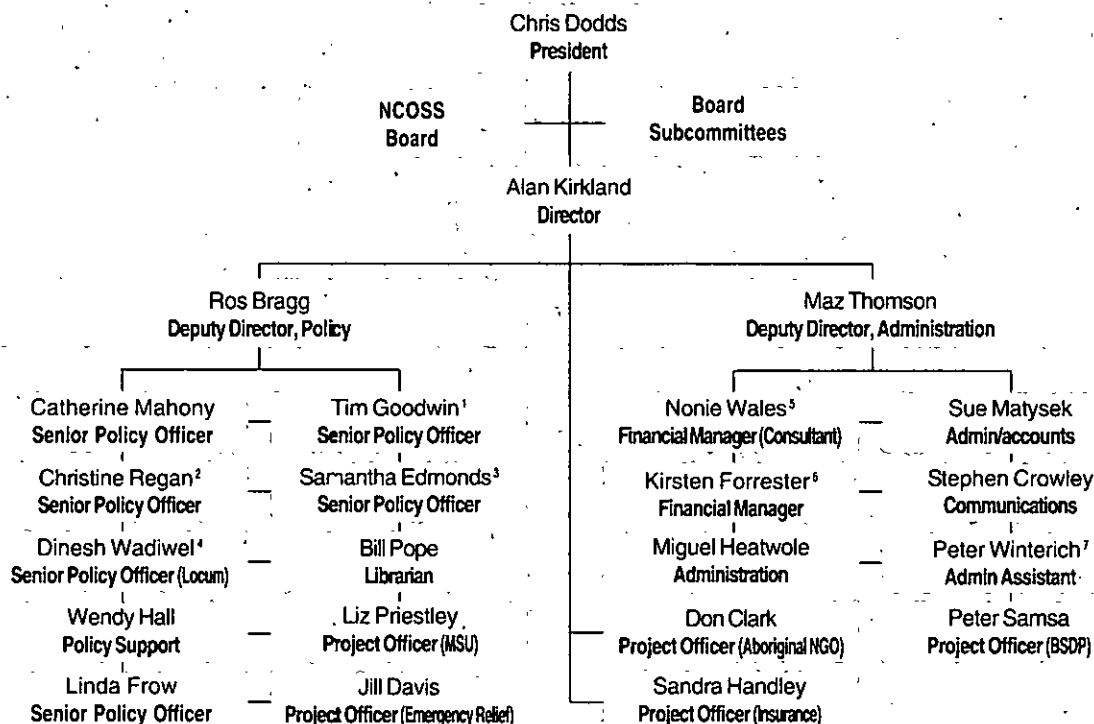
Jeanne Townsend

Lgov NSW

Paul Drielsma

UnitingCare Burnside

■ NCOSS Staff 2002



¹ Tim Goodwin, resigned December 2002; ² Christine Regan, on leave Sept - Dec 2002; ³ Samantha Edmonds, commenced December 2002; ⁴ Dinesh Wadiwel - Oct-Dec 2002; ⁵ Nonie Wales, March-Dec 2002; ⁶ Kirsten Forrester, maternity leave March-Dec 2002

Other NCOSS Staff throughout 2002: Mutz Herberstein (Administration Officer, retired Jan); Tammy Walsh (Project Officer, Feb-May); Kathleen Gandy (Project Officer, July-Aug); Ivapene Seiluli (Policy Support Officer, Sept), Nick Warren (Project Officer, Sept-Dec), Abi Groves (Project Officer, Aug-Dec)

We also had the valuable assistance of: Peter Bubb; Greg Courtenay; and volunteers provided by Volunteering NSW; and student placements Kate Middledorp, Julia Grigg, Leesa Ye and Kahsen Chang



Back row (Left to right): Peter Winterich, Stephen Crowley, Bill Pope, Catherine Mahony, Linda Frow, Jill Davis, Samantha Edmonds, Sandra Handley, Dinesh Wadiwel, Alan Kirkland, Don Clark
Front row: Peter Samsa, Maz Thomson, Miguel Heatwole, Wendy Hall, Liz Priestley



From far left to right: Ros Bragg; Nonie Wales; Sue Matysek; Christine Regan; Kirsten Forrester; Tim Goodwin

■ Policy and advocacy

Asylum seekers

NCOSS made two submissions to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission national inquiry into children in immigration detention. The first submission focused on the conditions within the detention centres, which are manifestly in breach of Australia's human rights obligations. The second submission was prepared at the request of the Commission, and dealt with conditions for Temporary Protection Visa holders in the community.

Following these submission, NCOSS advocated for changes to State Government programs to remove discrimination against Temporary Protection Visa holders. NCOSS took part in demonstrations at Villawood and spoke at a number of community meetings to raise this issue.

NCOSS advocated for the State Government to take action on child protection issues within detention centres. NCOSS was extremely disappointed at the slow progress on resolution of intergovernmental issues.

NCOSS also made a submission to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs review of settlement services for migrants and humanitarian entrants. The submission strongly objected to the Departmental policy of refusing access to services to Temporary Protection Visa holders, and the Departmental pressure on services to remain silent on issues affecting this population group.

Child Protection and Substitute Care

2002 was dominated by the blow out in reports to the Department of Community Services Help Line and ongoing concerns about the failure of the Government to implement the out of home care sections of the Act, particularly those relating to the functions of the Children's Guardian.

NCOSS continued to work with other peak organisations to monitor the workings of the Help Line and engage in regular meetings with the Department to raise concerns. NCOSS also continued to participate in the EnAct Reference Group and DoCS Dialogue Group.

As a result of a number of adverse media stories about individual cases and concerns about the Help Line generally, the Upper House finally agreed to establish an Inquiry into Child Protection Services, conducted by the Standing Committee on Social Issues.

The Inquiry into Child Protection Services

Initially there was some debate about whether an inquiry into child protection was necessary or useful. NCOSS had initially opposed an inquiry on the grounds that it was likely to impede the proclamation of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act* and that the Community Services Commission had recently completed a substantial inquiry into substitute care. NCOSS had also argued that the Community Services

Commission was the most appropriate body to hold such an inquiry if it eventuated because of its expertise in this area. However, once the Inquiry was established by the Legislative Council, NCOSS supported the process and worked with other peaks to identify common issues.

The Inquiry was held with a very tight timeframe. Public hearings were held in May, prior to the due date for submissions (June 7). In order to facilitate our response, the Board adopted a number of principles. These were as follows:

Strategic Plan Goal 1:

Policy and advocacy - Positively influence key government policies, business actions and community attitudes that affect disadvantaged people and communities.

- That the NCOSS response embrace a broad definition of child protection that encompasses prevention and early intervention, and explore the full child protection system, including that provided through the non-government sector.
- That NCOSS reject an approach to child protection based in criminality and seek to concentrate all resources on investigation. In particular, that NCOSS reject a movement of any child protection work to Police other than their role in relation to the Joint Investigation and Response Teams.
- That NCOSS endorse the fundamental objects and principles of the *Children and Young People (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, while accepting that minor adjustments to detail may need to be made in implementing it.
- That NCOSS seek to focus the inquiry on the response provided to children, young people and

families rather than just reporting and investigative systems.

- That NCOSS support the recommendations made by the Community Services Commission in its report *New Directions – from Substitute to Supported Care*, particularly in relation to the absolute need to quarantine child protection work from work in out of home care, and the need to shift long term out of home care to the non-government sector, while noting that this could be achieved without breaking up the Department.
- That NCOSS explore, with input from sector peaks and agencies, and highlight in its submission, the consequences for other DoCS' programs (SAAP, CSGP, Children's Services) of a break up of the Department of Community Services.
- That NCOSS base its submission on consultation with peak bodies and other agencies; on outcomes from a half-day forum to be held jointly with ACWA, Family Support Services Association, Youth Accommodation Association and the Women's Refuge Movement; and on previous work undertaken in this area, including submissions and the 1998 and 2000 surveys of relationships between community based agencies and the Department of Community Services.

The Forum held in late May was well-attended by community sector agencies and helped to flesh out the NCOSS response in its final form. A substantial initial submission to the Inquiry was followed up by a supplementary submission analysing funding to the NGO sector over the past ten years.

Following the release of a preliminary report on the related Inquiry into Early Learning Difficulties, a Round Table discussion was held by the committee with some of the major stakeholders including NCOSS. Discussion centred on the formation of a new Department of Child Development which, while it had some merit, received little support from those present. NCOSS argued that the recommendation for a new department focusing only on early intervention presented a number of problems and that we could not support it for the following reasons:

- the definitional confusion between levels of prevention and programs (both family support services and the Families First program range across primary, secondary and even tertiary prevention) and a belief that these should sit together and interact anyway;
- a concern that the full range of early intervention programs (including youth programs and neighbourhood centres) were not given sufficient attention;
- concerns about dealing with children/families on an age basis (where would young people sit?);
- concerns that such a huge structural change could create new bureaucratic barriers and 'turf wars';
- a belief that it would do nothing in the short or even medium term to address the problems facing child protection services.

However, NCOSS did welcome the focus of the committee on early intervention and prevention and its recognition that the child protection system did not rest with DoCS and investigative processes alone, but depended on a better resourced non-government system of services to support children and families.

DoCS Funding Package

Following the attention on child protection services that arose from the parliamentary inquiry, in December 2002 the Government announced an enormous funding package for the Department of Community Services.

Totalling around \$1 billion in increased recurrent funding over five years, the package will double the budget of the Department. It will provide additional funding for case workers, including some targeted at early intervention work. It also includes a substantial boost in funding for non-government organisations to provide early intervention and intensive support to children and families. The out of home care system will also benefit from increased funding to support the development of a broader range of services.

NCOSS was pleased that this announcement was not simply focused on the child protection system, instead recognising the value of targeting significant resources at early intervention services. NCOSS intends to work closely with other peak organisations in early 2003 to provide coordinated input to consultations on the implementation of the package. NCOSS will also be keen to raise the profile of services that will not benefit from the package, including children's services, youth services and community development projects.

Community Services Ministerial Advisory Committee

In late 2002, NCOSS was pleased to play a role in the formation of a new Community Services Ministerial Advisory Committee. The initial role of this Committee is to provide advice to the Minister on how best to progress proclamation of the remaining sections of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act*. It may then move on to a broader advisory role.

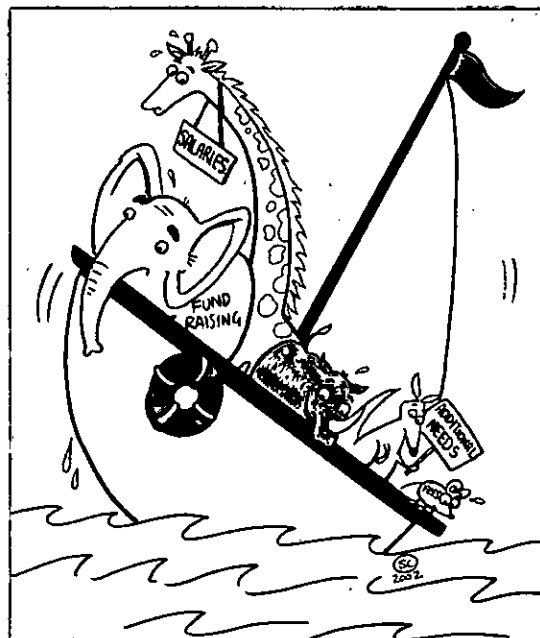
● Spotlight

Who Sank the Boat? - The Preschool Campaign

After 5 years of pushing for funding increases to community based preschools through the NCOSS Pre-Budget Submission process (it has been a high priority over that period), and getting nowhere, the NSW Children's Services Forum decided that a different and more sustained approach was needed.

A working group formed towards the end of 2001 and decided to hold a high level summit on early childhood education in February 2002 that would bring together stakeholders from governments (state and federal), peaks, service providers, and unions to take a fresh look at the issues threatening the survival of preschools in NSW. The major issues tabled for discussion included:

- The low level of funding applied to preschools in NSW compared to other states.
- The high level of fees compared to other states
- The lower level of participation of 4 year olds in NSW, particularly from those families unable to afford the high fees.
- The pressures placed on preschools by competition from relatively more affordable long day care centres.
- The increasing costs of service delivery due to salaries, insurance, superannuation etc and the difficulties this poses for community based management committees.
- The problematic structure of service delivery through two different government departments (the Department of Education and Training and



the Department of Community Services) with seemingly different policy aims and hugely differential levels of funding per service. There was also an overall concern about the level of commitment from the state government to early childhood education.

While the Summit failed to resolve these issues, it certainly raised a better awareness of both the existence of, and funding problems related to, the 800 plus community-based preschools across NSW. It also served to cement an alliance of organisations willing to pursue

Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility

From August of this year NCOSS, the Australian Consumers Association and the Labor Council of NSW worked with the Total Environment Centre and Community Solutions (consultants) on a project to enhance the capacity of non-government organisations to assess corporate sustainability. Entitled *'Building Community Capacity: Assessing Corporate Sustainability'*, the project was funded by the Premier's Department and is expected to be completed by March 2003.

Much of the project work in 2002 was concerned with strengthening relationships between the various parts of the community sector and developing a greater understanding of the range of perspectives on corporate sustainability and responsibility. Apart from convening forums within the sector, the project team have also facilitated corporate engagement in the debates and discussions. The key principles and indicators developed thus far will inform the final 'toolkit' which will be available early next year.

NCOSS also supported the Total Environment Centre's 'Green Capital' project, through contributing to the costs

work on preschool funding. As well as NCOSS, these include the Country Children's Services Association, which hosted the Summit, KU Children's Services, the Mobile Children's Services Association, Community Child Care and the Independent Education Union. Other members of the Children's Services Forum also gave support from time to time.

Realising that we needed much more information in order to make our arguments resonate at a political level the working group spent some months gathering detailed data based on funding history, individual service budgets, and comparative reports such as those produced by the Productivity Commission. NCOSS was also lucky to have the assistance of two fourth year students from the Institute of Early Childhood to research some case studies of services in rural areas. Meetings were then organised with Government ministers and the Opposition to put the case. On both sides there appeared to be some recognition of the problem but no real commitment to resolving the fundamental funding issues.

With an election in sight, a strategic planning day was held to look at where we had been and what we needed to do next. What became clear was that the complexity of the issues hampered our ability to get the message across and that if we were going to have an impact, we needed to be able to produce a document that dealt with the various issues separately and concisely. It was also agreed that we needed the local support of services, and particularly parents, to get any political response.

of a report on socially responsible investment and speaking on the subject at a breakfast seminar for the investment industry.

Domestic Violence: Focus on Rural Women

During this year NCOSS has focused its domestic violence advocacy work in three priority areas; the general lack of legal and support services for rural victims, inadequate levels of funding for the existing Indigenous Women's Safehouses and high unmet need in the Far West Orana region.

By this time we had linked up with an active group of 12 services on the Central Coast and were able to support them in the holding of a public meeting attended by around 200 people, including two local candidates and senior DoCS staff. They set up a website which the Forum was able to publicise and which became a focal point for putting parents and other services in touch.

Meanwhile the Forum wrote to every community based preschool in the State asking them to write to the Minister outlining their particular concerns. A large number responded and the message became louder. More groups of parents also began to contact the Forum for assistance and further information.

In December 2002, a discussion paper titled *Who Sank the Boat?* was distributed to all sitting members of Parliament and to selected media. In January 2003 it was also to go to preschools to use as a local lobbying tool.

Postscript:

In February 2003 the Government announced funding of approximately \$740,000 for 193 preschools (out of 800) and a review of the fee relief policy. While the additional funding is welcome, it is not enough to address the serious funding problems faced by services and parents. Hopefully the review will allow a more long term strategy to be developed and implemented. Certainly the Forum believes that this is an ongoing campaign.

Through various policy processes NCOSS consistently argued for a doubling of the current level of funding to the Safehouses located in Wilcannia, Bourke, Brewarrina, Walgett and Lightning Ridge. One of the most disturbing trends during this year was the growth of recorded domestic violence assaults in rural NSW. NCOSS has continued to lobby for increased funding for legal representation and court support to meet this need.

The needs of Indigenous women and children in the Far West Orana region have also remained a high priority. In spite of its small population, this area had the highest rate of recorded domestic violence assaults

last year. The urgent need for more sexual assault and domestic violence counselling remains a major issue.

NCOSS has also continued to participate in the DoCS Draft Domestic Violence Policy External Reference Group.

Education

Through 2002 NCOSS continued to support the recommendations of the Vinson Inquiry into Public Education, both publicly and in our pre-Budget submission. We also had regular liaison with the NSW Teachers Federation over a number of issues including preschools, public/private financing of schools and child protection issues.

A meeting was requested with the Department of Education and Training over its plans to extend its preschools to 21 new sites. In meeting with senior officials it became clear that the lack of a coherent policy framework between government agencies (DET Preschools and DoCS preschools) is of very real concern, as is the unwillingness of the Department of Education and Training to engage with organisations it does not regard as its stakeholders.

Health

Electronic Health Records

NCOSS advocated for effective community participation in the development of the Electronic Health Record, and for input into the *Health Records and Information Privacy Bill*. NCOSS successfully obtained funding from NSW Health to hold a community forum on these issues.

The forum, which was held in May 2002, involved in excess of 100 people from across NSW. While the participants recognised the potential benefits of the Electronic Health Record, particularly for people with complex care needs, there were also concerns that consumers have the information to provide fully informed consent and concerns about discrimination if they chose not to opt in.

Following on from the forum, NCOSS sought amendments to the *Health Records and Information Privacy Bill*.

Health-related transport

NCOSS continued to advocate for NSW Health and other Government agencies to develop effective strategies for health-related transport in NSW. This advocacy built on the 2001 NCOSS discussion paper, *Transport to access health services in rural and remote NSW*.

NCOSS welcomed the announcement of \$2.4 million for health-related transport services, and contributed to the development of NSW Health policy in this area.

NCOSS worked with Mountains Community Transport to hold two statewide forums on health related transport. These were attended by community transport organisations from across NSW, representatives from several Government agencies, and a range of other community groups with an interest in effective health-related transport services. The outcomes of these forums informed the development of the NSW Health 'Transport for Health' initiative, and provided useful information to assist community transport organisations in their negotiations with Area Health Services.

Earlier discharge

NCOSS participated in the Models of Care Implementation Working Group, which developed the Effective Hospital Discharge Framework. Still in draft form at the end of 2003, the document was a substantial improvement on previous policies. The NCOSS paper, *Earlier discharge: issues paper* (2000) was a useful source document for policy makers in this process.

NCOSS strongly advocated for monitoring of the outcomes of hospital discharge. Under existing arrangements, there was no documentation of instances when the services prescribed in a discharge plan did not occur. NCOSS organised a community-driven process to survey community care providers and consumer advocacy groups about problems in hospital discharge. The survey was scheduled to occur in 2003.

NCOSS published a research project to identify the elements of good practice in hospital discharge. The project report, *Good practice in earlier discharge*, was widely distributed and was used as a resource document in the development of the Effective Hospital Discharge Framework.

Chronic illness

During 2002, NCOSS continued as chair of the Chronic Illness Alliance. The Alliance is a network of 90 community organisations working to improve the quality of life of people with a chronic illness.

The Alliance identified insurance as an area of concern for people with a chronic illness. The Alliance held a forum on the issue which attracted approximately 30 participants, and followed this with a survey of consumers. The survey asked consumers whether they had faced any difficulties with insurance. The outcomes of the survey were due in 2003.

The Alliance also established a website and commenced work on an on-line directory of chronic illness organisations.

Mental health

NCOSS made a submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into mental health and was also called to give evidence. This inquiry undertook a very broad

investigation into mental health in NSW. The NCOSS submission focused on evidence of unmet need in mental health services, transparency and funding levels in mental health expenditure and integration with other government services. Mental health was subsequently identified as an NCOSS Board priority for 2003.

Oral health

NCOSS continued to convene the Oral Health Alliance which is a network of community organisations and health consumers concerned with public dental services in NSW.

In 2002, key areas of advocacy on oral health were funding, access to public dental services for older people, cost issues, regional services and community participation in dental service planning, and the appropriateness of service delivery and educational strategies for disadvantaged groups. NCOSS provided detailed comment on the Oral Health Fee For Service Scheme.

NCOSS participated in the NSW Health planning meeting 'Oral Health Needs of Older Persons' and delivered a presentation on community views.

Housing

Social Housing Reforms

In February the Minister for Housing announced a package of reforms to the public housing system. Much of the year was spent addressing issues arising from these reforms. NCOSS consistently opposed the two key reforms of this package; the introduction of market rent bonds and renewable tenancies for all new public housing tenants. These reforms challenge the key principles of affordability and security of tenure for public housing tenants, 90% of whom are reliant on social security benefits.

NCOSS, ShelterNSW and the Tenants Union issued a joint *Statement of Concern* about these reforms. The Statement was endorsed by over one hundred agencies and sent to all Members of Parliament and relevant forums. We argued that the adoption of these private rental practices by the Department of Housing would replicate the very barriers that consistently exclude disadvantaged people from the private housing market.

Later in the year, NCOSS proposed a compromise position that focused on equity issues. We suggested that if bonds were to be introduced they should be at a rebated rate for those clients eligible for a rebated rent; that is at 25% of the person's income. Unfortunately this option was not accepted and market rent bonds for all new public housing tenants will be introduced in 2003. This reform will have a negative impact on those least able to absorb this additional cost. It is also likely to impact on sections of the community sector, notably the SAAP system and providers of emergency relief.

NCOSS and key housing peaks continued to meet with the Department of Housing throughout the year in relation to these reforms and a number of others contained in the package. These included the Tenancy Guarantee Scheme, the Neighbour Aid Program, The Homeless People Protocol and a Shared Ownership Scheme.

Viability Issues for the Department of Housing

Negotiations between the State and Federal governments regarding the next Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (CSHA) highlighted the serious viability issues confronting the Department of Housing. NCOSS participated in sector forums convened by ShelterNSW that provided advice to the Department. In addition, NCOSS wrote a separate submission to the Department highlighting the need to ensure that special purpose grants, such as the Crisis Assistance Program (CAP), remain tied grants within the CSHA. CAP funding provides accommodation for crisis and transition accommodation and thus underpins the SAAP sector.

The continuing decrease in funding from the Federal government to the CSHA has contributed to some serious viability problems for the Department. The last State Budget included a 6.7% increase in the contribution from the NSW government. However, most of the funds allocated for additional properties were for head leasing from the private rental market. A large proportion of the budget was also marked to address maintenance backlog on existing properties. The Department's reliance on the sales of assets also continued, with a 10% increase on the previous year. All this contributes to less capital stock. During the year NCOSS has continued to urge the Government to consider alternative revenue streams including stamp duty, superannuation funds and land taxes to provide funding for public housing.

Public Private Partnerships and Estate Redevelopment

The proposed redevelopment of the Erskineville housing estate (Sydney) raised concerns about the potential impact on public private partnerships on the public housing system. This proposed partnership between the Department of Housing and private developers would have seen the construction of an additional 460 units of housing on the estate. There were objections to this proposal on a variety of grounds, including that the redevelopment would not result in any net increase in public housing stock and the plan represented a substantial overdevelopment of the site. Following considerable opposition to the proposal from estate tenants and local residents, the redevelopment plans were cancelled by the Minister in November.

As a result of this proposal, and the redevelopment of the Minto estate in southwest Sydney, NCOSS developed an explicit policy on public private partnerships on public housing estates. The policy includes guiding principles, and assessment criteria with which to assess future proposals of this nature.

General Housing Policy Issues

During the past year NCOSS also responded to a range of Department of Housing policy changes. Following a review of the RentStart Scheme, assistance with removalist costs and utility bonds was no longer available to clients. NCOSS encouraged the Department to reinstate these two types of assistance for high need clients, including women escaping domestic violence and newly arrived migrants without a local credit history. We also raised privacy concerns about the introduction of the Income Confirmation Scheme and a new Independent Living Skills Assessment form.

Homelessness

The Community Services Commission, SAAP Access and Exit Project

This project aims to identify those client groups most likely to be excluded from assistance through SAAP and the reasons why. It will also consider ways to improve the sector's capacity to meet the needs of complex need clients. NCOSS was a member of the Reference Panel through 2002, during which the Commission surveyed SAAP services on a range of access issues and also considered existing sector policies that deal with access, assessment and referral processes.

Submission to the Senate Committee Inquiry into Community Housing

The NCOSS submission focused on the relationship between community housing and SAAP in terms of client pathways to housing security. It considered the effectiveness of the existing formal links between these sectors including support agreements, CAP and CAP11. The submission raised a number of issues including the inadequacy of existing levels of community housing stock, the lack of SAAP funding for outreach support, and the high rate at which clients exiting SAAP are recycled back into the system. The separation of support and housing and the impact of market rent bonds on clients were also raised.

The Youth Accommodation Association Links Project

Funded by the Department of Community Services, the Links Project aims to facilitate improved working relationships between SAAP services and mental health services. NCOSS is the sponsoring body for the project and represented on the Reference Group. One of the main outcomes of the project will be local protocols

that ensure an enhanced level of service delivery to SAAP clients with mental health issues. During the year research and local consultations were undertaken in Western Sydney, the Greater Murray and the Hunter regions.

Gambling

NCOSS continued to advocate for improved consumer protection and regulation in the gambling industry in 2002. In 1998 the *Report to Government: Inquiry into Gaming in NSW* recommended an overhaul of existing regulatory structures, including the establishment of an independent gambling commission. Such a commission would oversee the probity of operators, control gambling activities and assess social impacts of gambling operations in the state. Pressure for implementation of this recommendation remains a priority for NCOSS.

The Government's gaming reforms announced in 2001 were welcomed but during 2002 it became evident that the impact of these reforms is limited by a lack of community awareness and a lack of funding for community participation in gambling policy. This was most clearly demonstrated by flaws in the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) process, which applies where a venue seeks a licence for additional gaming machines. The only community organisation that is required to be notified of SIAs for large numbers of machines is NCOSS. Without funding to facilitate community responses NCOSS found that the process introduced by Government did not operate effectively. NCOSS was unsuccessful in its attempts to achieve funding to address this issue.

Older People

Meeting bi-monthly, the NSW Aged Care Alliance advocates for the needs, rights and interests of older people, especially but not exclusively in residential aged care. In 2002 the Alliance focused upon residential aged care and the treatment of people in nursing homes; the inquiry into mental health services in NSW; and the legal needs of older people.

In late 2002 the NSW Aged Care Alliance also produced an Election Kit for the NSW State Elections in 2003. The Kit contained a range of issues, ranging from healthy ageing, to dementia, to transport as well as raising other pertinent questions around public liability issues, workforce issues and volunteers. The Kit also contained a range of questions for candidates relating to aged care in NSW. The Alliance agreed in 2002 to jointly host, with the Council on the Ageing (NSW), an election forum in February 2003.

In 2002 NCOSS worked with a number of groups on issues around services for residents of retirement villages.

Issues raised by the group included the perceived inequity of access to community care services, misleading advertising by developers and sometimes questionable planning approvals by local government around village developments.

NCOSS, the NSW HACC Issues Forum and the Aged and Community Services Association of NSW and ACT (ACS) jointly sponsored the Community Aged Care Industry Policy Working Group, which is working to develop a series of proposed position papers designed to protect the best features of the community aged care industry and identify options where improvements are needed. These proposed position papers will be consulted widely within the industry and consumers, after which they will be converted into Industry Policies. The Policy Working Group has already sought consultation for a number of papers, with four papers close to completion by the end of 2002. The group plans to release seven policy papers in September 2003, allowing for a period of promotion to raise the profile of the group and develop awareness around the need for community aged care industry policy.

People with Disability

In 2001 NCOSS, in partnership with the Aged and Community Services Association and ACROD, had contributed to the development of an Issues Paper canvassing appropriate service responses to people with longstanding disabilities who are ageing. In 2002 NCOSS was successful in securing funding from Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to hold consultations with industry and consumers around the issues paper. These consultations will take place in 2003, culminating in the development of an industry position paper.

The Upper House Standing Committee on Social Issues held its final hearing on unmet need in disability services in 2002. NCOSS presented on a range of issues, again emphasising the need for an overall Disability Services Plan which drives the development of disability services in a deliberate, co-ordinated and efficient manner. NCOSS also used the opportunity to highlight work on people with longstanding disability who are ageing as well as younger people in nursing homes and other aged care facilities.

NCOSS was involved in the production of a significant discussion paper on the issue of younger people with

disability in nursing homes, released on 13 September 2002. NCOSS participated in a discussion convened by Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care on progressing this issue through government negotiations and with identified priorities. Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care has indicated that it is willing to convene a Round Table discussion in order to devise a NSW plan.

NCOSS also facilitated a day of consultations on the availability and appropriateness of disability services for people and families of Arabic speaking backgrounds for the Disability Council and Community Services Commission.

Pre-Budget Submission

As in previous years, NCOSS developed a Pre-Budget Submission which outlines social justice priorities for the 2003 State budget.

In 2002, the process of consultation for the Pre-Budget Submission was substantially enhanced with the addition of a series of regional visits. These provided valuable input on issues for rural and remote communities.

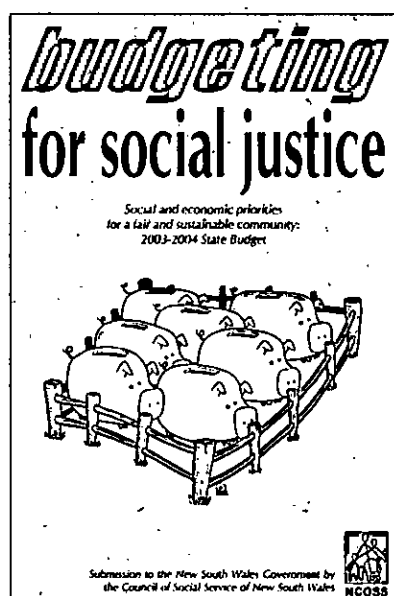
As consultation for the Pre-Budget Submission and the forthcoming State election, NCOSS held a one day conference, *The State We're In*. This conference provided participants with a series of critical commentaries on current issues, and an opportunity to discuss priorities for sector advocacy. This alternative format for consultation provided NCOSS with input from a much broader range of organisations than had occurred in previous years.

As in 2002, NCOSS worked to a tight timetable which ensured that the submission was forwarded to

government agencies well before they were required to submit priorities to Treasury. This allowed the submission to perform its role of influencing the budget process.

Sustainable Development

NCOSS continued to play an active role in the Sustainability Advisory Council, which provides advice to Planning NSW on strategies to encourage the growth of sustainable design and construction. NCOSS involvement focused on developing effective strategies for community education and the incorporation of



Budgeting for Social Change: NCOSS 2003-04 Pre-Budget Submission

principles of social and environmental sustainability into several new land release areas. In 2002 the Council also supported the establishment of the Australian Green Building Council, which has the potential to fundamentally change community and industry attitudes to sustainable construction.

Transport

Transport Concessions

NCOSS continued strong public advocacy on the need for reform of transport concessions through 2002. Our submission to the Independent Inquiry into Social Security Breaches and Penalties highlighted the impact of current State policies, which see jobseekers lose their transport concessions when breached by Centrelink. The final report of the Inquiry recommended changes to these policies.

As at the end of 2002, NCOSS was working closely with a coalition of organisations to coordinate a campaign on the inequities in transport concessions policy during the State election.

Public Transport Fares

The NCOSS submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) inquiry into public transport fares reiterated long-standing NCOSS concerns. These included the need for the external benefits of public transport to be reflected in levels of government subsidy and in pricing decisions, the lack of key stakeholder involvement in development of

customer charters for rail and bus services and the inadequate service standards and performance assessment regimes for public transport services. In 2002 NCOSS also raised specific concerns about the reduction of service standards and fare increases in the Newcastle area.

NCOSS also made a brief submission to the IPART review of fares on private buses and taxis, raising concerns relating to the social impact of fare pricing policies, anomalies in public transport concessions, Western Sydney Transitway fares and performance assessment. The submission also opposed the proposed additional lift fee for wheelchair accessible taxis.

Public Transport Advisory Committee

NCOSS Senior Policy Officer, Tim Goodwin, was appointed to this Committee and participated until his resignation from NCOSS later in the year. As appointments to PTAC are personal rather than organisational, NCOSS membership of the committee lapsed with his departure.

Transport Development Workers Forum

This forum continued to meet and provide valuable opportunities for workers from across the state to discuss issues and share information. A two-day meeting in Berry in May brought together NCOSS, the four regional transport development workers and People With Disabilities. The meeting dealt with a range of issues relating to public transport, including concessions reform, bus reform, disability standards, regional issues and the role of NCOSS in statewide policy issues.

■ Sector support and resourcing

Aboriginal NGO Capacity Building Project

In 2002 NCOSS received funding from the Department of Community Services for a two-year project to examine strategies to build the capacity of Aboriginal community organisations funded through the Community Services Grants Program. NCOSS was cautious about undertaking this project but after consultations with Aboriginal organisations decided that it could make a difference if based on strong participation of Aboriginal organisations and communities.

This project commenced in December 2002. Over the next two years it will examine existing approaches to capacity building for indigenous organisations, consult with Aboriginal communities and organisations and provide intensive assistance to organisations in at least two targeted regions. It will also identify strategies and resources for DoCS officers to use to support Aboriginal communities to manage their own services.

Better Service Delivery Program (BSDP)

The Better Service Delivery Program developed from little more than an idea at the beginning of 2002 to something more tangible. The Program will use modern technologies to assist human service organisations, both Government and non-Government organisations to improve services to the people of NSW. It represents a whole of sector and whole of state approach. NCOSS is represented on the Executive Steering Committee of the Program along with representatives of NSW Government human services agencies.

Much of the year was spent informing community service organisations throughout NSW about the Program. This was performed initially by staff of the Program, but, as the size and scale of the Program became clearer, NCOSS obtained funding to employ two Project Officers and a Support Officer until 30 June, 2003. Their main priorities are to inform NGOs about the Program, but also to feed back the concerns of these organisations to the Program.

As at the end of 2002 the software for the Program was being trialled in Gosford and the Upper Hunter, with four NGOs participating. The software allows services

to refer client information electronically and securely between each other, and also to find information about other services. There are many challenges ahead, but it does promise to provide a valuable resource for community sector workers in NSW.

Children's Services

NCOSS continued to act as Convenor and Secretariat to the NSW Children's Services Forum through 2002. As usual the children's sector faced many difficult issues and challenges during the year, but a particular focus this year was our preschool campaign, which is highlighted on page 10.

The Forum, which meets bi-monthly, held regular meetings with the Office of Child Care to discuss

funding, planning and program issues, including those related to the redistribution of special needs (SCAN) funding, progress of the regulations, staff shortages and funding agreements.

Specific concerns of the sector continued to centre around staff shortages, delays to the regulations (which were finally released in draft in December) and the need for regulation of outside school hours care services. The introduction of privacy legislation was also seen as a big issue for children's services and

NCOSS resourced several discussions around the new obligations for services, assisted by the development of a sample privacy policy by Community Child Care.

NCOSS participated in a Round Table held by the Commonwealth Child Care Advisory Council, part of discussions held around Australia to look at the recommendations of its *Child Care Beyond 2001 Report*. We will continue to work on national policy through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Inquiry into Children's Health and Well Being that has partly derived from that report.

A major submission was developed by the Forum in response to the Upper House Standing Committee on Social Issues' Inquiry into Early Learning Difficulties. The preliminary report of this Inquiry indicated that the Inquiry had moved well beyond its initial focus to look at access to children's services more broadly, including the role of universal versus targeted services and the efficacy of existing departmental arrangements for

Strategic Plan Goal 2:

Sector Support and Resourcing - Support and resource the ongoing development of a high quality and effective community sector

promoting early intervention. The proposal for a separate Office of Child Development received some but not universal support from the children's services sector.

During the year a proposal to develop a Children's Services Service Framework, comparable to those developed for CSGP and SAAP, was floated with NCOSS agreeing to co-partner the process with the Department of Community Services. The mechanism for progressing this has still to be discussed.

Community Sector Banking

Community Sector Banking is the result of a joint venture between Bendigo Bank Limited and Community 21, a unlisted public company whose shareholders are community sector organisations, including NCOSS. C21 was established with the express purpose of facilitating the development of Community Sector Banking and subsequently providing a range of financial services through Community Sector Banking (CSB).

CSB operates under the Bendigo Bank Limited banking authority. Due to the support of the community sector CSB has commenced developing its own products to enhance the products already provided by Bendigo Bank.

Community Services Grants Program

Most of 2002 was spent consolidating the work undertaken on the CSGP Service Framework. Services have responded well to the process although a few difficulties needed to be ironed-out.

The CSGP Round Table continued to meet, although less frequently, and a process for progressing the data collection phase was developed, although as at the end of 2002 this had not progressed further.

Family support was a key focus of our response to the Inquiry into Child Protection Services (see page 8). In arguing for a differential response system in child

● Spotlight

Funding of the Social and Community Service Award

In August 2002 the State Government stepped in to meet the Commonwealth's share of the costs of the new SACS Award in Commonwealth-State programs. This marked the end of nine months of constant work by people from across the community sector and Government. It also represented a significant shift in Government policy, with recognition of a responsibility to ensure that services did not close as a result of their inability to meet rising costs. It is interesting to look back on the process that brought us to that point.

When the award was handed down by the Industrial Relations Commission in November 2001, both NCOSS and the Australian Services Union expected to have to launch a new wave of the campaign for the State Government to provide funding. We were therefore surprised when within a few working days the Treasurer announced that the Government would fund the award costs in State programs and the State's share of the costs in Commonwealth-State programs such as HACC, SAAP and Disability Services. It then became evident that the focus of our work would be on negotiating the nature of the State's contribution, while campaigning for the Commonwealth to pay its share.

A few weeks later, a working group began a series of regular meetings. On the non-government side, this involved the Australian Services Union, NCOSS, the Women's-Refuge Movement, St Vincent de Paul, the Youth Accommodation Association, ACROD, the Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies and NSW Meals on Wheels. Government representatives were drawn from Treasury, the Department of Community Services, the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, NSW Health, Premier's Department and the Human Services CEOs.

The first meeting was called so that the State Government could announce its initial assistance package for State-funded agencies. At that stage, there was probably no expectation that the package would change, but the peak organisations present quickly identified that the package was insufficient for 24 hour services. They also identified that organisations funded through Commonwealth-State arrangements would soon be in financial trouble without further assistance.

These two issues kicked off a process of further negotiation. This soon led to grant instalments being brought forward and a significant increase in assistance for 24 hour services. As discussions continued, they

protection – one that can stream children and families away from investigation into family and other support services – NCOSS highlighted the need to develop a full range of service responses to families building on existing family support services.

Concerns more generally about the viability of CSGP services, particularly small organisations, have also been a priority this year and were the focus of our Pre-Budget Submission and pre-election lobbying.

2002 also saw NCOSS funded by CoCS for a project to assist Aboriginal organisations funded through CSGP (see page 17).

Compact

NCOSS continued to coordinate the participation of non-government organisations in the development of a 'compact' between the NSW Government and the non-government sector. Originally promised in 1999, this process has developed slowly. In late 2002, the

Government provided a revised draft of the document, based on a document drafted by the Forum of Non-Government Agencies (FONGA). The Premier's Department also agreed to provide funding for NCOSS to distribute to regional organisations for consultations across New South Wales. The document is expected to be finalised in the first half of 2003.

Emergency Relief

NCOSS continued to convene the NSW Emergency Relief Provider's Forum and to participate in the State Advisory Committee for the Emergency Relief Program.

The first ever Emergency Relief State Conference was held in November, largely driven by the State Advisory Committee. NCOSS gave a keynote presentation on the relationship between emergency relief and the community services system and also talked about the training project. The positive evaluation of the conference bodes well for its annual continuation.

also led to a further increase for very small organisations and arrangements for emergency assistance for organisations in Commonwealth-State programs while we campaigned for the Commonwealth to pay its share.

The joint NCOSS-ASU campaign was characterised by numerous regional media stories, campaign events across the State and strong support from the Federal Opposition and independent MPs. Support also came from an unexpected source in Alan Jones, who used his program to pressure the Prime Minister over a number of months.

Eventually we reached a point where it was clear that unless the State Government stepped in to pay the Commonwealth's share of the costs in Commonwealth-State programs, services would begin to close. Thankfully the State Government agencies were by then as aware of the seriousness of the situation as non-government organisations. This led to the announcement of further State funding in August 2002.

The description of the process of negotiation with the State possibly makes the process sound easier and smoother than it was. In reality, there were a number of meetings where there was no agreed outcome.

Tempers frayed on several occasions. Despite these tensions, the working group continued to meet on an almost monthly basis and step-by-step, the package of measures to assist the sector evolved.

As the months rolled on some organisations were understandably starting to question whether the process of negotiation would resolve the funding crisis facing the sector. Most people involved in the discussions probably shared some of these doubts. In hindsight, however, one of the reasons that we ultimately won the assistance our sector needed was that we stayed at the table and kept the dialogue running.

There are probably several lessons to be drawn from the experience. One is that it sometimes takes time to bring government agencies around to seeing the importance of an issue that to us is obvious. Another is that sometimes the only way we can achieve this is by devoting the time to winning over key government officers who can then work to build support within government. The relationships and ways of working together that were built through this process will hopefully benefit the non-government sector for some time to come.

Emergency Relief Training Project

Training became the focus of work this year with our successful bid for funding from the Department of Family and Community Services Stronger Families and Communities Strategy resulting in a two year project developing and offering training to volunteers and other emergency relief staff. The project is seen as a means of improving service standards for Emergency Relief provision and referrals for clients in financial crisis. The need for the project arose in part from the fact that the majority of ER service provision is performed by volunteers.

The project commenced in August and developed a service training survey form that was sent to all providers along with the reintroduction of an ER network Newsletter.

The project Steering Committee met for the first time in September with ten members with from various locations and areas of ER expertise. The Steering Committee has provided guidance/feedback in relation to training content and process.

The first round of training was due to commence in March 2003.

Home and Community Care

The NSW HACC Issues Forum meets bi-monthly and comprises nearly 80 organisations and agencies involved in Community Care from around NSW. The Forum in 2002 pursued issues relating to HACC program guidelines and eligibility; occupational health and safety issues for HACC services; issues relating to changes in the SACS Award for HACC workers; and ongoing discussions relating to the interface between HACC and disability programs. In 2002 the Forum received presentations from a number of agencies and projects including the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC), Home Care Service of NSW, Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Community Services Commission, the Aged Abuse Monitoring Project, The Aged Care Rights Service, Kiama Shell Harbour Medication Management Project, and a presentation from Policy Link USA, Berkely California.

NCOSS continued its involvement in facilitating the enhancement of networks for HACC training, including seeking a seeding grant for the development of the NSW HACC trainers Alliance.

During 2002 NCOSS maintained an association with the Community Care Industry Council. This newly launched Council comprises peak industry representatives, and aims to discuss and advocate for practice and industry improvement to the provision of community care in NSW.

In 2002 the NSW HACC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Gathering Issues paper was finally distributed after a period of consultation. The paper examines issues of autonomy and self-determination, Aboriginal representation within the system, needs and assessment, service development and training and co-ordination. The State Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Gathering Committee received approval for funding from Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care for another Gathering, which will be aimed at all Aboriginal workers in our sector and is again being auspiced by NCOSS. The State Gathering Committee is helping to organise this event, which is planned for June 2003.

NCOSS continues its involvement with the NSW HACC State Peaks Network. This Network provides support and advice in addition to working on issues of mutual concern. The Network has recently been reviewing the HACC Validation Instrument, working with the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to provide an appropriate mechanism by which to evaluate the work done by workers who perform HACC policy, research and advocacy work.

Insurance Project

Insurance has dominated discussion in the social services sector in the past few years, with many organisations being unable to obtain cover or struggling with drastically increased premiums. As a result, NCOSS successfully approached State Government in 2002 to fund a two-year Insurance project that involves establishing a bulk-buying insurance program, conducting insurance research and improving practice through the provision of education resources and training.

This project aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- improved capacity of non-government organisations in assessing insurance needs;
- less volatility in insurance costs for non-government human service organisations;
- improved information on the impacts of changes in the insurance industry on non-government organisations, to inform government policy; and
- assistance to other types of non-government organisations that seek to establish bulk-buying schemes.

From the time the project began in September 2002 to December 2002, the telephone information line assisted more than 600 organisations and 450 organisations registered their expression of interest to join the NCOSS bulk buying program. The bulk buying program is the first priority and aims to provide a wide range of

insurance policies for non government, not for profit organisations based in NSW, delivering human services, or involved in community development, policy or advocacy. Early in 2003 NCOSS will move to select a broker to develop and implement the scheme.

Management Support Unit (MSU)

In 2001, NCOSS had written to NSW Health with a proposal that a Management Support Unit (MSU) be established to facilitate access to training and resources on management and governance for Health funded NGOs. It was also envisaged that the MSU would adopt a developmental model of growth to cater to new and emerging needs within the sector. This proposal resulted from recommendations in the *Bcdy Corporate* report, published by NCOSS in 2000.

In 2002 NCOSS received core funding to establish this unit and a project officer was appointed in October. An Advisory Committee was established to guide the project with membership comprising health peaks, government and training representatives.

In the early stages of the project, the emphasis will be on providing easy access to training information via the NCOSS website as well as developing resources such as a management and governance lending library. Of primary importance is the development of effective networks and linkages with training providers and peaks and ensuring the Unit is well publicised to stakeholders.

While NSW Health has provided initial funding, the funds will be insufficient to maintain a full time unit beyond the first year. It is essential that funds be sourced from departments outside Health. This will enable the Unit to assist a broader range of NGOs and will provide the means to undertake regular training needs analysis and identify emerging issues. Further information is available on the MSU website - www.ncoss.org.au/msu

Privacy

Throughout 2002, NCOSS advocated for resourcing for community organisations to meet the requirements of the new privacy legislation.

In May, NCOSS held a seminar on the new Commonwealth privacy laws and their application to the community sector. Speakers included the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner, and Blake Dawson and Waldron.

NCOSS subsequently delivered a workshop on good practice in privacy management for health NGOs at the Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (NADA) conference.

NCOSS sought funding from NSW Health to develop compliance tools and training materials for use by health-related NGOs in managing new information privacy requirements. The project would seek to clarify the significant uncertainties that currently exist in relation to NGOs with multiple funding sources, and to develop materials for use by organisations with compliance obligations. These tools would have been readily adaptable for use by a broader range of community organisations. NCOSS remains extremely disappointed that NSW Health has refused funding for this work.

Review of Grants Administration

The Review of Grants Administration, managed by the Premier's Department, gathered considerable steam in 2002. In late 2001 NCOSS had facilitated the nomination of non-government representatives to four working groups, most of which began meeting in 2002. The Principles Working Group developed a document outlining principles for good practice in grants administration which, after consultation with the Forum of Non-Government Agencies (FONGA), was endorsed by the Government. Two other working groups then began meeting - the Applications Working Group, which developed a standard application form for funding, and the Planning Working Group, which began work on a consistent planning methodology. More substantial outcomes can be expected from this process in 2003.

Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SAAP Peaks Forum

NCOSS continued to convene the SAAP peaks forum on a bi-monthly basis throughout the year. This forum, representing ten peak groups, is the sector's vehicle for addressing common issues, SAAP IV reforms and working with the Department of Community Services (DoCS). Throughout the year some of the major reform topics covered included the service specifications and the area planning process. Other key issues were the impact of the SACS award, the DoCS purchasing policy and the on-going serious financial viability problems confronting the sector.

The SAAP Rural Consultation Project

In 2002 NCOSS was pleased to receive additional project funding from the Department of Community Services to enable four rural SAAP delegates to participate in forums and consultations in Sydney during 2002. It proved to be a popular and efficient strategy to enhance rural participation and direct input into DoCS and NCOSS processes.

Delegates from Wilcannia, Orange, Albury Wodonga and Armidale attended three, two-day programs between June and December. The programs included participation in the SAAP Peaks Forum, the Community Services Commission's SAAP Access Project, meetings with the Manager of SAAP and the NCOSS PBS/Election Conference *The State We're In*. Delegates also attended an orientation on the new SAAP Training website and visited innovative SAAP projects.

Apart from providing valuable input into NCOSS processes, the rural delegates were instrumental in strengthening the flow of information between their regions and NCOSS

Webjobs and NCOSS website

Community Jobs, a special service available through the NCOSS website, has had its most successful year since its inception. Thousands of job seekers visited Community Jobs and hundreds of job positions statewide were listed by a range of community organizations, councils and government departments seeking to fill position vacancies.

The NCOSS website continues to be an increasingly significant means of providing resources for, and communicating with, our members, the community sector, government, students, media and the public.

■ Improving our workplace

Enterprise agreement

By the end of 2002, negotiations on the NCOSS Enterprise Agreement, which has been underway for a number of years, were drawing to a close. With all substantive issues resolved, the Agreement was ready to proceed to registration following final advice from the Australian Services Union and Jobs Australia. This agreement includes a pay rise of over 8% which was passed on to staff in December.

Information Technology

To ensure effective review of our information technology infrastructure NCOSS undertook two audits of hardware and software assets during 2002. This resulted in the purchase of several computers for new projects commencing at NCOSS and to replace old stock. This new hardware and software has helped to improve work efficiency. Further to these improvements, NCOSS changed Internet Service Providers in 2002, resulting in a more reliable email and internet connection. NCOSS will continue to conduct audits twice a year, planning long term contingencies to ensure our information technologies remain up-to-date. The 2003 NCOSS Budget includes funding for a new communications server and the introduction of broadband internet access.

Industry development projects

During 2002, NCOSS grew rapidly with the addition of seven staff working on five industry development projects. Rather than expanding management staffing, NCOSS allocated supervisory roles amongst managers and senior policy officers, and established coordination processes. Projects staff, supervisors and managers meet regularly as a group, with additional coordination processes established for specific issues as they emerge.

NCOSS employed a Project Support Officer to provide administrative assistance to the projects, and monitored impacts on communication and other support services.

Flexible responses are being pursued to ensure that the organisation can reduce expenditure on support services when fixed term projects are completed.

Policy and Procedure Manual

In 2002 NCOSS set aside funds to engage a casual project officer to develop a policy and procedure manual. As at the end of 2002 a comprehensive manual was in draft form and ready to be finalised following consultation with staff and consideration of relevant sections by the Board.

Staff workloads

In 2002, NCOSS placed strong emphasis on addressing workload issues amongst policy staff.

NCOSS established a formal system for work planning and review for policy staff. Senior Policy Officers meet quarterly with the Director and Deputy Director Policy to establish priorities for the coming three months. Based on these priorities, Senior Policy Officers prepare monthly work plans which are discussed in meetings with their

supervisor. These monthly meetings are useful in identifying workload bottlenecks before they occur. A similar work planning process was implemented for the Policy Support Officer.

These strategies were aimed at reducing the number of claims for repetitive strain injury, and succeeded in doing so.

Workplace environment

As the NCOSS building is old and poorly ventilated, heating and cooling issues have been a concern for some time. During 2002 the Department of Community Services agreed to provide funds to allow NCOSS to engage an environmental engineering firm to provide advice on sustainable solutions. Pursuant to this advice, the Management and Finance Committee allocated funds for the installation of ceiling insulation. The engineer's report is due to be completed in early 2003.

Strategic Plan Goal 3:

Improving our workplace - Work to continually improve our workplace in order to achieve cooperation, equity, effectiveness and productivity and a financially secure organisation.

● Treasurer's report

As in the previous year the staff, and in particular, finance and administration staff and the Board have worked hard and effectively to ensure that NCOSS remains a financially secure organisation into the future.

NCOSS ended the year with a small operating surplus of \$142. The operating surplus can be attributed to several factors including effective budget forecasting and a greater than anticipated income from specific project grants. This figure would have been much larger had it not been for a new provision for extended sick leave as a result of enterprise agreement negotiations, which had to be drawn from an expense account.

Those who take a close interest in the financial reports will notice a significant reduction in the retained profits reported, from \$371,006 in 2001 to \$185,167 in 2002. This does not reflect a reduction in the organisation's discretionary reserves. It occurred because until 2001 the figure reported as retained profits included large amounts that were in fact grants paid in advance. The 2002 report more accurately reports this situation by treating these grants as liabilities rather than retained profits (*see note 11 in the auditor's report*). The 2002 retained profits figures of \$185,167 is therefore an accurate report of discretionary funds at the organisation's disposal.

We acknowledge the core and recurrent grants from the Department of Community Services, Department Health and DADHC. NCOSS has taken active measures to ensure a sustainable future through investments

such as the Community Sector Banking, income streams from memberships, sales of publications and conferences and our on-line job vacancy advertising service continues to generate a surplus. Recoveries from specific project grants remain strong. This reflects the contribution from project budgets to our core costs, in recognition of the infrastructure and management provided by NCOSS to make projects possible.

I am happy to report to the membership that in an ever increasingly complex grants administration and financial management environment including the significant changes the new tax system has imposed and the spiralling impost of doing business in the community sector, NCOSS has met, and effectively managed these challenges.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Kirsten Forrester, NCOSS Finance Manager and Matrix on Board, who were retained as NCOSS Financial Consultants, during Kirsten's maternity leave, for the outstanding financial systems implemented.

I commend our Audited Financial Statements to our members for their perusal and am pleased to report that NCOSS continues to be a financially secure organisation.

Larry Pierce
Treasurer

■ NCOSS sector involvement

Committees and groups convened by NCOSS

- Better Service Delivery Program NGO Taskforce
- Chronic Illness Alliance (NSW)
- Community Aged Care Industry Policy Working Group
- Emergency Relief Providers' Forum
- Forum of Non Government Agencies (FONGA)
- Management Support Unit Advisory Committee
- NCOSS Health Policy Advice Group
- NCOSS Regional Forum
- NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HACC Gathering Committee
- NSW Aged Care Alliance
- NSW Children's Services Forum
- NSW HACC Issues Forum
- NSW HACC State Peaks Network
- NSW Oral Health Alliance
- Roundtable on the NSW Health Council
- Rural SAAP Consultation Forum
- Supported Accommodation Assistance Program Peaks Forum
- Transport Development Workers Forum

NCOSS involvement in other community sector boards and committees

- ACCORD Board
- ACOSS Board
- ACOSS Oral Health Alliance
- Charities Aid Foundation
- Coalition for Appropriate Supported Accommodation for People With Disability
- Community 21 (Community Sector Banking)
- Disability Advocacy and Information Network
- Disability Safeguards Coalition
- Domestic Violence Network
- Families Campaign
- HACC Trainers Alliance
- Links Project Reference Group, SAAP/ Mental Health Protocols Project
- Marrickville Local CDSE Committee
- NSW Carers Coalition
- NSW Community Services and Health Industry Training Advisory Body (ITAB)
- NSW Health Consumers Network
- NSW Industry Group on people ageing with disability

- NSW Quality Management Services Management Committee, and NGO Standards Sub-Committee
- Shelter NSW Board
- South Sydney Local CDSE Committee
- UCAP/PIAC Community Home Energy Efficiency Partnership (CHEEP) Committee
- Utility Consumers Advocacy Program Reference Group
- Workers Health Centre
- Younger People out of Nursing Homes Working Group

NCOSS involvement in government and private sector committees and advisory bodies

- Better Service Delivery Program Executive Steering Committee
- Casino Community Benefit Fund Funding Allocation Committee
- Community Development Support Expenditure Steering Committee
- Community Justice Centres' Council
- Community Services Commission SAAP Project Reference Panel
- Community Services Grants Program Round Table
- Computer Re-use Reference Group
- Corrections Health Service Consumer Council
- Department of Family and Community Services Families Forum
- Department of Health and Aged Care Enhanced Primary Care Reference Group
- Department of Housing External Reference Stakeholders Group
- Department of Housing New Products and Services NGO Forum
- DOCS Dialogue Group
- DOCS Domestic Violence Policy External Reference Group
- ECC Ageing and Disability Reference Group
- Emergency Relief State Advisory Committee
- EnAct Reference Group
- Energy Accounts Payments Assistance Working Group
- Energy Australia Customer Council
- Health Care Complaints Commission Consumer Consultative Committee
- Integral Energy Customer Council



- IT Strategic Planning Roundtable
- Local Government and Shires Associations' Community Planning and Services Committee
- NSW Alliance of Peak Councils
- NSW Health Chronic and Complex Care Implementation Group
- NSW Health Consumer & Community Participation Implementation Group
- NSW Health Health Care in the Community Working Group
- NSW Health Information Privacy Reference Group
- NSW Health Models of Care Implementation Working Group
- NSW Health NGO Advisory Committee and Accreditation Sub-Committee
- NSW Health NGO Review Reference Group
- NSW Health Nurse Practitioner Committee
- NSW Health Oral Health Promotion Statewide Steering Committee
- NSW Health, Health and Equity Statement Project Reference Group
- NSW Primary Care Reference Group
- Premier's Department NGO Capacity Building Reference Group and associated working groups
- State Rail Authority Stakeholder Group
- Sustainability Advisory Council
- Sydney Water Corporate Customer Council
- Telstra Consumer Consultative Council, NSW
- Total Environment Centre Corporate Sustainability Project Committee
- Transport Safety Advisory Committee
- Triple Bottom Line Forums, State Chamber of Commerce
- WorkCover Advisory Committee (Safety Pak III)
- WorkCover Health and Community Service Industry Reference Group
- Youth Justice Advisory Committee

Reports and submissions to government on priority policy issues

- Comments on the draft Youth Policy 2002-2006
- Comments on the proposed DADHC Funding Agreement
- Forum of Non-Government Agencies response to the draft Principles for Good Practice in Grants Administration
- Forum of Non-Government Agencies response to the Standard Application Form and Handbook for the Review of Grants Administration
- NSW Aged Care Alliance Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Mental Health Services

- NSW Aged Care Alliance Submission to the Standing Committee on Ageing Inquiry into long-term strategies to address the ageing of the Australian population over the next 40 years
- NSW Children's Services Forum Submission To The Standing Committee On Social Issues re: Foundations For Learning: A New Vision For New South Wales
- Pre-Budget Submission 2003-04
- Response to draft disability policy for community housing and Office of Community Housing
- Responses to Department of Housing on the Social Housing Reforms; Homeless People Protocol, Tenancy Guarantees, Market Rent Bonds, Renewable Tenancies
- Submission to Department of Housing on the next Commonwealth State Housing Agreement (Crisis Accommodation Program)
- Submission to the Department of Veterans Affairs on the Exposure Draft Request for Tenders for DVA Booked Care with Driver (Taxi and/or Hire Car, or Similar) Services
- Submission to the Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal 2002-03 Public Transport Fares Determination
- Submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal Review of Fares for Private Transport Operators
- Submission to the Independent Review of Breaches and Penalties in the Social Security System
- Submission to the Inquiry into Mental Health Services by the Select Committee on Mental Health
- Submission to the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention
- Submission to the Parliamentary Committee on Children and Young People Inquiry into Education of Children in Out of Home Care
- Submission to the Review Of Settlement Services For Migrants And Humanitarian Entrants
- Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into Early Learning Difficulties
- Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into Child Protection Services
- Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into Community Housing
- Submission to the Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into an Equal Age of Consent

Funding submissions

- Submission to NSW Treasury for the NCOSS Insurance Project – successful.
- Submission to the Department of Community Services for the Aboriginal NGO Capacity Building Project – successful.

- Submission to Department of Community Services for SAAP rural consultation project - successful
- Submission to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care for the 2003 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander HACC Gathering - successful
- Submission to the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care for the consultation project for People with Longstanding Disability who are ageing - successful.
- Submission to the Department of Information Technology Management for employment of additional staff to assist with engagement of the Non-Government Sector in the Better Service Delivery Program - successful.
- Submission to Department of Gaming and Racing for a Gambling Project Officer - unsuccessful.
- Proposal to State Rail for development of stakeholder consultative mechanisms - unsuccessful.
- Submission to the National Office for the Information Economy for an e-banking project, in partnership with NSW Federation of Housing Associations - unsuccessful
- Submission to NSW Health for project on good practice in health privacy management in the NGO sector - unsuccessful
- Submission to develop a training program for Health Care Consumer Advocacy in the NSW Public Health System, in partnership with QMS - unsuccessful
- Submission to support the development of the NSW HACC Trainers Alliance - awaiting response.
- Submission to the Casino Community Development Fund for a Gambling Project Officer - awaiting response.

Financial statements

Council of Social Service of New South Wales
A.C.N. 001 797 137
Operating as NCOSS

Directors Report

Your directors present this report on the company for the financial year ended 31 December 2002.

Directors

Names of directors holding office at 31 December 2002 are:

Batkin, Pan
Brewster, Kath
Clayton, Stevie
Coles, Rhonda (*Appointed May 2002*)
Dodds, Chris
Drielsma, Paul (*Appointed Oct 2002*)
Ferrer, Joseph
Funari, Jenni (*Appointed May 2002*)
Gibb, Stuart
Hall, Stephen (*Appointed May 2002, resigned Nov 2002*)
Lake, Rob
Pierce, Larry (*Appointed June 2002*)
Sharp, Deb
Townsend, Jeanne
Varughese, George (*Appointed May 2002*)
Wade, Annette
West, Roger

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Directors' Meetings

<i>Name of Director</i>	<i>Attended Meetings</i>	<i>Meetings Possible</i>
Alcock, Carol	4	4
Ball, Alannah	3	4
Batkin, Pam	10	11
Brewster, Kath	7	11
Burrell, Michelle	3	4
Clayton, Stevie	2	11
Coles, Rhonda	5	7
Dodds, Chris	11	11
Drielsma, Paul	3	2
Ferrer, Joseph	2	11
Funari, Jenni	5	7
Gibb, Stuart	9	11
Hall, Stephen	1	6
Hampshire, Anne	3	4
Lake, Rob	3	11
Pierce, Larry	3	6

Senior, Annabel	0	4
Sharp, Deb	8	11
Townsend, Jeanne	3	11
Varughese, George	7	7
Wade, Annette	2	11
West, Roger	5	11

Operating result

The profit of the company for the financial year after providing for income tax amounted to \$142.

Significant changes in the state of affairs

No significant changes in the company's state of affairs occurred during the financial year.

Principal activities

The company acted, during the course of the financial year, as the major coordinator of non-government welfare and various community organisations in New South Wales. No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

After balance date events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year, which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the company in subsequent financial years.

Future developments

The company expects to maintain the present status and level of operations in future financial years.

Environmental issues

The company's operations are not regulated by a significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory.

Dividends

NCOSS, as a non-for-profit community organization, is not permitted to declare dividends at any stage.

Directors' benefits

No director has received or has become entitled to receive, during or since the financial year, a benefit because of a contract made by the company or related body corporate with a director, a firm which a director is a member or an entity in which a director has a substantial financial interest. This statement excludes a benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the company's accounts, or fixed salary of a full-time employee of the company or related body corporate.

Indemnifying Officer or Auditor.

No indemnities have been given or agreed to be given or insurance premiums paid or agreed to be paid, during or since the end of financial year, to any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the company.

Proceedings on Behalf of Company

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the company or intervene in any proceedings to which the company is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the company for all or any part of those proceedings. The company was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors at Surry Hills, NSW 2010 on 14th April 2003.

CHRIS DODDS

Director

LARRY PIERCE

Director

Statement of Financial Performance

	Notes	2002 \$	2001 \$
Total revenue from ordinary activities	2	1,258,223	1,070,990
Correction of accounting treatment (unearned grants 01.01.2002)	1(j)	185,981	-
Unearned Grants 31.12.2002		(227,626)	-
Employee expenses		(822,163)	(739,851)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	3	(15,900)	(13,224)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(378,373)	(307,016)
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax expense		142	10,899
Income tax relating to ordinary activities		-	-
Net profit from ordinary activities after income tax expense		142	10,899

Statement of Financial Position

	Notes	2002	2001
Current Assets	5	1,466,149	764,737
Cash assets	6	8,205	14,121
Receivables	7	3,325	(15,649)
Total current assets		1,477,679	763,209
Non-current assets			
Other financial assets	8	20,000	-
Plant and equipment	9	42,117	26,985
Total non-current assets		62,117	26,985
Total assets		1,539,796	790,194
Current liabilities			
Payables	10	150,423	77,556
Provisions	11	1,204,206	341,632
Total current liabilities		1,354,629	419,188
Total liabilities		1,354,629	419,188
Net assets		185,167	371,006
Equity			
Retained profits	12	185,167	371,006
Total Equity		185,167	371,006

Statement of Cash Flows

	2002 \$	2001 \$
Cash flow from operating activities		
Receipts from customers	1,807,709	1,121,033
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,091,134)	(1,137,315)
Interest received	35,869	27,523
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	752,444	11,241
Cash flow from investing activities		
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(31,033)	(17,904)
Payment for investments	(20,000)	-
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(51,033)	(17,904)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	701,411	(6,663)
Cash at beginning of year	764,737	771,400
Cash at end of year	1,466,148	764,737

Notes to the financial statements

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

The financial report is for the entity Council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCCSS) as an individual entity. NCOSS is a public company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia.

In the event of NCOSS being wound up, the maximum liability of each member both during the time that they are a member of NCOSS and for one year thereafter is limited to ten dollars each.

The number of members of NCOSS as at 31 December 2002 was:

Individuals	115
Organisations	530
Affiliates	107
Total	752

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the company in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

a) Income Tax

NCOSS is exempt from company income tax.

b) Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows, which will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have not been discounted to present values in determining the recoverable amount.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a diminishing value basis over their useful lives to the company commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are:

Plant and equipment 5-37.5%

c) Leases

Leases of fixed assets, where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not legal ownership, are transferred to the company are classified as finance leases. Finance leases are capitalized recording an asset and a liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual value.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives where it is likely that the economic entity will obtain ownership of the asset or over the term of the lease. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for the period.

Lease payments under operating leases, where subsequently all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

d) Investments

Non-current investments are measured on the cost basis. The carrying amount of investments is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount of these investments. The recoverable amount is assessed from the quoted market value for shares in listed companies or the underlying net assets for other non-listed corporations. The expected net cash flows from investments have not been discounted to their present value in determining the recoverable amounts.

e) Unearned Grants

Grants are only taken into account as income to the extent that they relate to the current financial year. If funding is received for a subsequent period, it is included under Grants in Advance as a current liability in the balance sheet. Where a grant has been received for a project, which has not been completed, a calculation has been made of the amount considered to relate to the unexpired funded period and the amount is included under unearned grants as a current liability in the Balance Sheet. The justification for this accounting policy is to more accurately match income and expenditure in any one financial year.

f) Employee entitlements

1. Annual Leave is charged from services rendered by employees to the reporting date.
2. Long Service Leave is provided for on completion of the minimum number of years' service and in accordance with the regulations of the various statutory bodies.
3. Continuous service leave is provided at the rate of 0.5 weeks per annum in accordance with the terms of NCOSS's Staff Agreement.
4. Contributions are made by NCOSS to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

g) Cash

For the purpose of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in all call deposits with banks or financial institutions, investments in money market instruments maturing within less than two months, net of bank overdrafts.

h) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

i) Revenue

1. Revenue from the sale of good is recognised upon the delivery of good to customers.
2. Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers
3. Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.
4. All revenue is stated net of the amount of good and services tax (GST).

j) Change in Accounting Policy

The company in accordance with note 2(e) Unearned Grants adjusted retained profits to recognise that portion of retained profits, which related to unexpired/unearned grants as at 31 December 2001.

Note 2: Revenue from ordinary activities

	2002 \$	2001 \$
Revenue from operating activities		
Grants	984,880	839,382
Membership	124,890	121,270
Publications	22,428	15,443
Conference	64,877	35,369
Interest	35,869	27,523
Recoveries	14,360	24,105
Miscellaneous	10,919	7,898
Total revenue from operating activities	1,258,223	1,070,990

Note 3: Profit from ordinary activities before income tax expense

Profit from ordinary activities before income tax expense has been determined after:

	2002 \$	2001 \$
Expenses		
Depreciation of property, plant and equipment	15,900	13,224
Remuneration of auditor – audit or review	7,850	7,780

Note 4: Income Tax

NCOSS is exempt from company tax.

Note 5: Cash Assets

Cheque Account	21,801	764,546
Cash Management Account	1,444,047	-
Cash on hand	300	191
	1,466,148	764,737

Note 6: Receivables

Receivables	8,205	14,121
	8,205	14,121

Note 7: Other Current assets

Prepayments	3,325	(15,649)
	3,325	(15,649)

Note 8: Other Financial Assets

Shares in other corporations at cost	20,000	-
	20,000	-

Note 9: Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment at cost	181,477	148,097
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(139,360)	(121,112)
Loan from related entities	42,117	26,985

Note 10: Payables

Trade creditors	20,481	37,245
Sundry creditors	129,942	40,311
	150,423	77,556

Note 11: Provisions

Current		
Employee entitlements	139,114	104,323
Grants in Advance	837,466	224,563
Unearned Grants	227,626	-
Sundry Provisions	-	12,746
	1,204,206	341,632

Note 12: Retained profits

Retained profits at beginning of period	371,006	360,107
Correction of Accounting treatment	(185,981)	-
Net profit	142	10,899
Retained profits at the end of the period	185,167	371,006

Note 13: Notes to the statement of cash flows**a) Reconciliation of cash**

Cash as at the end of the financial period as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:

Cheque account	21,801	764,546
Cash management account	1,444,047	-
Cash on hand	300	191
	1,466,148	764,737

b) Reconciliation of profit from ordinary activities after income tax to net cash provided by operating activities

Profit/(loss) from ordinary activities after income tax	142	10,899
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Add/(less) non-cash items:

Depreciation and amortisation	15,900	13,224
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Change in assets and liabilities, during the financial period:

(Increase)/decrease in receivables	5,916	(4,687)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	(18,974)	21,361
Increase/(decrease) in payables	72,867	(70,666)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	862,574	41,110
Increase/(decrease) in retained profits	(185,981)	-

Net cash provided by operating activities	752,444	11,241
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Note 14: Financial Instruments**a) Interest Rate Risk**

The company's exposure to interest rate risk, which is the risk that a financial instrument's value will fluctuate as a result of changes in market interest rates and the effective weighted average interest rates on those financial assets and financial liabilities is as follows: -

	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	
	2002	2001
Financial Assets	%	%
Cheque Account	-	3.6
Cash management account	3.2	-

b) Credit Risk

The maximum exposure to credit risk, excluding the value of any collateral or other security, at balance date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets, net of any provisions for doubtful debts, as disclosed in the statement of financial position and notes to the financial report.

The company does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single debtor or group of debtors under financial instruments entered into by the company.

c) Net Fair Values

The net fair values of listed investments have been valued at the quoted market bid price at balance date adjusted for transaction costs expected to be incurred. For other assets and other liabilities net fair value approximates their carrying value. No financial assets and financial liabilities are readily traded on organized markets in a standardized form other than listed investments. Financial assets where the carrying amount exceeds net fair values have not been written down as the company intends to hold these assets to maturity.

The aggregate net fair values and carrying amount of financial assets and financial liabilities are disclosed in the statement of financial position and in the notes to the financial statements.

Note 15: Events subsequent to balance date

There were no material events subsequent to the balance date, which were, not reflect in the statement of financial position or the statement of financial performance.

Directors' declaration

The directors of the company declare that:

1. the financial statements and notes, present fairly the company's financial position as at 31 December 2002 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
2. in the directors' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

14th April 2003

CHRIS DODDS LARRY PIERCE
Director Director

Independent Auditors Report**Scope**

We have audited the financial report of Council of Social Service of New South Wales for the financial year ended 31 December 2002 being the Statement by Directors, Statement of Financial Performance, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes

to the Financial Statements. The company's directors are responsible for the financial report. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the company.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination in a test basis of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory profession reporting requirements and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the company's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Qualification

As is common for organizations of this type, it is not practicable for the Council of Social Service of New South Wales to maintain an effective system of internal control

over membership fees, publication and conference income, until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to these items was limited to amounts recorded.

Qualified Audit Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed:

The financial report Council of Social Service of New South Wales is in accordance with:

- a) the Corporations Act 2001, including
 - i. giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 31 December 2002 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the account policies described in Note 1; and
 - ii. complying with Accounting Standards in Australia to the extent described in Note 1 and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
- b) other mandatory professional reporting requirements to the extent described in Note 1.

John G. Newton, ACA, Registered Company Auditor

Dated at Sydney, 7th day of April 2003

	TOTAL 2002	NCOSS Core	CSGP Funding	HACC	HACC Training	HACC GST & FBT	HACC Aboriginal Gathering 2003	Aged Care Alliance	Health Policy Officer	Management Support Unit	Other Health Projects	Emergency Relief Training	SAAP Peaks
Grant Received	984,880		482,212	127,981					89,249	54,701		44,444	10,012
Membership Fees	124,890	123,218						773					
Publishing Income	22,428	22,222											
Conference Income	64,877	64,877											
Management Services (Labour)	82,283	82,283											
Project Recoveries	54,486	54,486											
Other Recoveries	14,360	14,360											
Interest received	35,869	35,869											
Miscellaneous Income	10,919	4,403											
TOTAL INCOME	1,394,992	347,232	482,212	127,981	0	0	0	773	89,249	54,701	0	44,444	10,012
Salary costs	640,598	6,045	467,584	44,085					45,101	13,765		13,807	
Leave expenses	101,095	89,648	0	4,445					3,433	895		1,086	
Superannuation	57,033		43,188	4,563					4,243	972		1,198	
Workers Compensation	6,238	5,418		210					210	80		160	
Other staffing costs	104,961	15,108		1,014	1,979	2,042		329	769	2,137	55	644	
Administration	50,419	47,036								818	111	818	
Depreciation	15,900	14,900		500					500				
Equipment & Furniture	9,426	1,337								1,830		2,760	
Insurance	9,711	9,711											
Conference expenses	31,854	31,854											
Office Overheads	59,190	50,776		1,362				341	1,499	275	754	1,203	
Premises	28,434	26,985	1,440										
Activity Costs	31,602	28,007		575			86		813	283	64	217	282
Newsletter Expense	25,147	25,147											
Travel	39,344	22,662		1,472			1,868		847	131	379	86	8,233
Mgmt Services (Labour)	82,283			22,463					22,463	13,102		4,665	
Mgmt Services (Operations)	54,486			13,660					13,660	7,971	839	3,692	1,497
Other expenses	5,486	6,073											
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,353,205	380,707	512,211	94,349	1,979	2,042	1,954	670	93,539	42,259	2,202	30,335	10,012
Operating Surplus/Deficit	41,787	-33,474	-29,999	33,632	-1,979	-2,042	-1,954	103	-4,290	12,442	-2,202	14,110	0
plus Deferred Grants & Funds 1/1/02	185,981	13,420	0	0	1,979	2,042	13,269	1,223	0	125,148	3,162	0	0
less Deferred Grants & Funds 31/12/02	227,626	0	0	33,632	0	0	11,315	1,326	0	137,591	960	14,110	0
2002 Surplus/Deficit	143	-20,054	-29,999	0	0	0	0	0	-4,290	0	0	0	0
plus Accumulated Funds 1/1/02	371,006	226,196	0	-22,452	1,979	2,022	13,269	1,223	-22,382	125,148	3,162	0	0
less Accounting Correction	-185,981	-41,171		22,452	-1,979	-2,022	-13,269	-1,223	22,382	-125,148	-3,162		
Accumulated Funds 31/12/02	185,167	164,971	-29,999	0	0	0	0	0	-4,290	0	0	0	0

[illegible]

■ NCOSS members and affiliates

Organisational members as at 31 December 2002

Aboriginal Early Childhood Support Unit
ACT Eden Monaro Cancer Support Group Inc
Action For People With Disability
Action Respite
Aged and Community Services Association
of NSW & ACT
Aged and Disability Support Service
Aged Care Accommodation and Advisory Services
AIDS Council Of NSW
Albury Supported Accommodation Service Inc
Albury-Wodonga Womens Refuge Inc
Alices' Cottages Inc
Alzheimers Australia (NSW)
Anglicare
Anglicare Counselling Shoalhaven
Applied Scholastics ANZO Inc
ARAFMI
Asian Women At Work Inc
Association For Genetic Support Australasia Inc
Association For The Welfare Of Child Health
Association Of Children's Welfare Agencies
Association Of Civilian Widows
Association of Relatives & Friends of The Mentally Ill
Association of Relatives & Friends of the Mentally Ill -
Central Coast
Association of Self Help Organisations & Groups
Association To Resource Co-op Housing Ltd
Asthma NSW - Hunter Branch
Auburn Community Development Network
Australian Association Of Social Workers -
NSW Branch
Australian Huntington's Disease Association (NSW) Inc
Australian Quadriplegic Association
Autism Association Of NSW
B.Miles Womens Housing Scheme
Ballina Byron Family Centre Inc
Bankstown Area Multicultural Network
Bankstown Community Services Co-op Ltd
Bankstown Womens Refuge & Resource Centre
Bankstown-Auburn Home Support Inc.
Baptist Community Services - NSW & ACT
Barnardos Australia
Bay & Basin Community Resources Inc
Bay-Ami Accommodation Inc
Bega Valley Ageing & Disability Services
Bega Valley Meals On Wheels Co-operative
Bega Womens Refuge
Behha Enterprises Inc
Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre
Bingara HACC Inc
Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Blacktown Alcohol & Other Drugs Family Services Inc
Blacktown City Community Services Network
Blue Mountains Community Options
Blue Mountains Women's Health Centre Inc
Bobby Goldsmith Foundation
Bondi Beach Cottage - Family Centre
Bonnie Women's Refuge
Brain Injury Association NSW Inc

Bridge Youth Services Inc
Broken Hill Community Inc
Bulli Community Resource Centre
Burwood Community Welfare Services
Byron Bay Community Association Inc
Byron Emergency Accommodation Project
Byron Youth Service Inc
CAF Australia
Camarilla - Harbour Of Darkness
Camarilla - Sanguinis Noctem
Campbelltown Family Support Service Inc
Canterbury City Community Centre
Canterbury Community Options Project
Canterbury-Earlwood Caring Association Ltd
Carers NSW Inc
Caringbah Women's Health Information Centre
Casino Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Casino/Kyogle HACC Flexible Service
Cassia Community Inc
Cassie's Place
Centacare - Broken Bay
Centacare Catholic Community Services (Sydney)
Centacare Catholic Family Welfare Service
Central Coast Community Council
Central Coast Disability Network
Central Coast Emergency Accommodation Services
Central Coast Voluntary Treasurers Support
Service Inc
Central Illawarra Youth Services Inc
Central Sydney Community Transport Group Inc
Central West HACC Forum
Central West Women's Health Centre Inc.
Cessnock Community Transport Inc
Charmian Clift Cottages Inc
Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Children Of Prisoners Support Group
Chinese Parents Association - Children With
Disabilities Inc
Churches Community Housing Inc
Churches Of Christ
City Women's Hostel Inc
Clarence Family Day Care
Clarence Valley Community Options
Clarence Valley Community Programs Inc
Coalfields Community Options
Coastwide Community Transport Inc
Combined Community Legal Centres Group (NSW)
Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association
Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre
Community Activities Lake Macquarie Inc
Community Care Northern Beaches Inc
Community Child Care Co-operative Ltd
Community Connections Australia
Community Housing Advancement Society Inc
Community Options Program - Wallsend
Community Partnerships
Community Transport (Central Coast) Inc
Community Transport Group Of Port Stephens Inc
Community Transport Organisation
Community Youth Homes
Consumer Credit Legal Centre
Contact Inc



Contrary Mary Wimmings Refuge Inc
 Coolaburroo Neighbourhood Centre
 Coonamble Christian Centre
 Council Of Senior Citizens Associations
 Council On The Ageing (NSW) Inc
 Country Children's Services Association
 Cowra Information and Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 CRC Justice Support Inc
 Credit Line Financial Counselling Service
 Cystic Fibrosis NSW
 Dapto Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Delvena Women and Childrens Shelter
 Disability and Aged Information Service Inc
 Disability Advocacy Network Inc
 Disability Information and Referral Centre
 Disability Information Advocacy Service Inc
 Dolores Single Womens Refuge
 Domestic Violence Advocacy Service
 Drummoyn Community Centre Inc
 Dubbo Community Services and Information Centre
 Dubbo Welfare Interagency
 Dymrna House Child Sexual Assault Counselling Service
 Eastern Area Tenants Service Inc
 ECHO Bondi Junction Neighbourhood Centre
 Edgeworth Memorial Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Edmund Rice Community Services
 Elmore Vale Community Centre
 Ella Community Centre Haberfield
 Elsie Refuge For Women and Children Inc
 Engadine District Community Aid and Information Service
 Engadine District Youth Services Inc
 Erin's Place Inc
 Erskineville Youth Housing Inc
 Ethnic Communities Council Of Newcastle and Hunter Region Inc
 Eurobodalla Family Support Service Inc
 Evans Community Options Project
 Eva's Project Inc
 Everton Residential Services Inc
 Fairfield City Youth Refuge
 Fairfield East Community Organisation Inc
 Family Addiction Marriage and Individual Counselling
 Family Centre Community Projects Inc
 Family Support Service Cooma Inc
 Family Support Services Association of NSW Inc
 Financial Counsellors Association Of NSW Inc
 Forrest Centre
 Forster Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Foster Care Association (NSW) Inc
 Foundation For Disabled Sportsmen and Sportswomen
 FPA Health
 Fraternal Society Of Tripoli and Mena
 Freeman House - St Vincent De Paul Society
 Friends Of Pastoral Care Inc
 Friends Of Woodstock Disability Services Inc
 Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service NSW
 Georges River Community Service
 Gilgai Aboriginal Centre Inc
 Gladesville & District Community Aid and Info Service Inc
 Glen Innes and District Community Centre
 Glenmore Park Community Development Project
 Gosford City Community and Information Service
 Grafton Women's Refuge
 Great Lakes Community Resources Inc
 Great Lakes Meals On Wheels
 Great Lakes Neighbour Aid Inc
 Greek Welfare Centre
 Griffith Neighbourhood House
 Gunning District Community and Health Service Inc
 HACC Reform Project
 Handital NSW Inc
 Hawkesbury Womens' Housing and Information Service
 Hawks Inc
 Haymarket Foundation Ltd
 HeadEast Eastern Sydney Acquired Brain Injury Community Access Service Inc
 Hepatitis C Council Of NSW Inc
 Hewitt House Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Highlands Community Centres Inc
 Hills Community Aid and Information Service
 Holroyd Community Aid and Information Service
 Home Modification and Maintenance
 Homeshare NSW
 Hope Healthcare North
 Horizons Central Coast Family Services Inc
 Housing Connection NSW Inc
 Hume Community Housing Association Ltd
 Hunter and Central Coast HACC Training Project
 Hunter Community Council
 Hunter Community Legal Centre
 Hunter Integrated Care Incorporated
 Ideas Incorporated
 Illawarra Forum Inc
 Illawarra Legal Centre Inc
 Illawarra Migrant Resource Centre Inc
 Immigrant Women's Health Service
 Immigrant Women's Speakout Association NSW
 Independent Living Centre NSW (Inc)
 Information and Cultural Exchange Inc
 Inner City Legal Centre
 Inner South West Community Development Organisation
 Inner Sydney Regional Council For Social Development
 Inner West Community Transport Inc
 Inner West Cultural Services
 Inner West Neighbour Aid
 Innerskill
 Intellectual Disability Rights Service
 Interaction Disability Services
 Interchange Respite Care - Lismore
 Interchange Respite Care (NSW)
 International Social Service (Australia)
 Jannali Neighbour Aid (Nightingale) Inc
 Jean's Place / Marrickville Women's Refuge
 Jesmond Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Josephite Foundation No Interest Loans Scheme
 Kamira Farm Inc.
 Karabi Community and Development Services Inc
 Kariang Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Katakudu Women's Housing Inc
 Katoomba Neighbourhood Centre
 Kempsey Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Kent House
 Kiama/Shellharbour Community Options Project
 Kings Cross Community and Information Centre Inc
 Kingsford Legal Centre
 Kooloora Community Centre
 Koonawarra Area Residents Association
 KU Children's Services
 Kulkuna Cottage Women's Refuge
 Ku-Ring-Gai Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Kurri Kurri Community Centre



Lachlan Rural Advisory Group
 Lady Gowrie Child Centre
 Lake Macquarie Community Services Resource Centre Inc
 Lake Macquarie Neighbourhood Information Centre
 Lake Macquarie/Newcastle HACC Support Project
 Lane Cove Community Aid Service
 Langunyah House Youth Refuge Inc
 Law and Justice Foundation Of NSW
 Learning Links
 Life Education NSW
 Lifeline - Central West Inc
 Lifeline - South Coast
 Lismore and District Women's Health Centre Inc.
 Lismore Neighbourhood Centre
 Lismore Women's and Children's Refuge
 Lithgow Community Projects Inc
 Little Bay Coast Centre for Seniors Inc.
 Liverpool Districts Neighbourhood Centres Assn
 Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre
 Liverpool Womens Resource Centre
 Local Community Services Association
 Lotus House
 Lower North Shore Community Transport Inc
 Macarthur Community Forum
 Macarthur Disability Services Ltd
 Macarthur Home Modification Service
 Macarthur Legal Centre Inc
 Macedonian Welfare Association Inc
 MacKillop Rural Community Services
 Macquarie Legal Centre Inc
 Maitland Community Transport and Neighbour Aid Inc
 Maitland Palliative Care Volunteer Providers Inc
 Make Today Count Inc
 Manly Warringah Pittwater Community Aid Service Inc
 Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre
 Manning District Emergency Accommodation Inc
 Manning Valley Respite Care Service Inc
 Manning Valley Women's Group Inc.- CSA
 Margaret Jurd Learning Centre
 Marian Centre
 Marist Youth Care
 Marrickville Youth Resource Centre Inc
 ME Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Society (NSW)
 Mental Health Association NSW Inc
 Mental Health Co-ordinating Council Inc
 Mental Illness Education Australia (NSW) Inc
 Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre
 Mid North Coast RCSD
 Mid Richmond Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Midwest Community Care Inc
 Migrant Network Services
 Ministry to Solo Parents and Their Families - Parramatta Diocese
 Mission Australia
 Mission Australia - Punchbowl
 Mobile Childrens Services
 Molonglo Women's and Children's Services Ltd
 Monaro Crisis Accommodation Service
 Moree Women's Refuge Ngala House Inc
 Motor Neurone Disease Association Of NSW Inc
 Mountains Community Resource Network Inc
 Mountains Community Transport Inc
 Mullumbimby and District Neighbourhood Centre
 Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW
 Multicultural Home Respite Inc
 Multicultural Support Network of Randwick

Murwillumbah Community Support Centre
 Muscular Dystrophy Association of NSW
 Muswellbrook Neighbourhood Service
 Nagle Centre No Interest Loan Scheme
 Nambucca Valley Neighbourhood Centre
 Narrabri and District Community Aid Service Inc
 National Council of Women of NSW Inc
 Neighbourhood Development Team - Erskine Park Inc
 Neighbourhood House - Bayldon
 Nepean Volunteer Training
 Network of Alcohol and Other Drug Agencies
 Network of Community Activities
 Neurofibromatosis Association of Australia Inc
 New England HACC Development Inc
 Newcastle Family Support Service Inc
 Newcastle Youth Service
 Newlake Community Transport Group
 Newmacq Community Housing Co Ltd
 Newtown Neighbourhood Centre Co-op Ltd
 Ngambaga Bindarry Gurrwaa Community Service Inc
 Ngara Aboriginal Carers Project
 Nicholli Cottage Neighbourhood Centre
 Non English Speaking Housing
 North Ryde Community Aid and Information Centre
 North St Marys Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 North West Area Community Options
 NorthAIDS Inc
 Northcott Society
 Northern Area Tenants Service Inc
 Northern Beaches Neighbourhood Service Inc
 Northern Illawarra Family Support Service
 Northern Rivers Community Transport
 Northern Rivers Fellowship Inc
 Northern Rivers Social Development Council
 Northern Sydney Regional Community Forum Inc
 NSW Association for Adolescent Health
 NSW Association of Homeless Persons Services
 NSW Community Options Projects Inc
 NSW Council For Intellectual Disability
 NSW Federation of Housing Associations Inc
 NSW Meals On Wheels Association Inc
 NSW Migrant Resource Centres Association
 NSW Montessori Association Inc
 NSW Neighbour Aid Association Inc
 NSW Rape Crisis Centre
 NSW Retired Teachers Association
 NSW Womens Refuge Resource Centre
 NSW Working Women's Centre
 Odyssey House McGrath Foundation
 Older Women's Network NSW Inc
 Open House Youth Accommodation Services Inc
 Orange and District Youth Refuge
 Orange Community Resource Organisation
 Oxley Community Transport Service Inc
 Pacific Link Community Housing Association Ltd
 Pam's Place Crisis Accommodation Resource and Referral Service
 Pan Community Council
 Parkes Information and Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Parkes Shire Food Service Inc
 Parkes/Forbes Community Transport
 Parkinson's NSW Inc
 PATH Inc
 Peninsula Community Centre Inc
 Penrith Skills For Jobs Ltd
 People Living With HIV and AIDS (NSW)
 People With Disabilities (NSW) Inc

Phoenix House Youth Services
Physical Disability Council NSW
Picton Neighbour Aid
Playgroup Association Of NSW
Pole Depot Neighbourhood Centre
Port Kembla Community Outreach Project Inc
Port Macquarie Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Positive Ageing Foundation Of Australia
Positive Support Network Incorporated
Post-Polio Network (NSW) Inc
Prisoners Aid Association of NSW
Protective Behaviours Nsw
Public and Community Housing Access And Support
Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Quakers Hill Community Project
Quality Management Services
Randwick Information and Community Centre
Randwick-Waverley Community Transport
Raymond Terrace Neighbourhood Centre
Redfern Foundation Ltd
Redfern Legal Centre
Redfern Legal Centre Publishing
Regional Extended Family Services Inc
Regional Youth Support Services
Relationships Australia (NSW)
Retirement Village Residents Association Inc
Riverlink Interchange Inc
Riverwood Community Centre
Rockdale Community Services Inc
Rosebank Child Sexual Abuse Service Inc
Rosemount Youth and Family Services Inc
RPR Consulting Pty Ltd
Ryde Hunters Hill Home Modification and
Maintenance Service
SaintsCare
Salvation Army - Recovery Services Command
Samaritans Foundation Wyong
Save the Children of Iraq
SDN Children's Services Inc
Search Foundation
Self Help Information Network
Settlement Services Coalition of NSW
Shelter NSW Co-op Inc
Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre
Shopfront Youth Legal Centre
Sisters of Charity Outreach
South East Neighbourhood Centre
South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc
South Sydney Community Aid Co-op
South West Alternative Program
South West Child Adolescent and Family Services
South West Inner Sydney Housing Co-op Ltd
South West Womens Housing Inc
Southern Highlands Bereavement Care Service
Southern Riverina Rural Advisory Service
Southern Youth and Family Services Association Inc
Spastic Centre of NSW
St Clair Youth and Neighbourhood Team Inc
St George Accommodation for Youth
St George Community Services Inc
St George Migrant Resource Centre
St George Womens Housing Inc
St George Youth Workers Network
St Vincent de Paul Society
St Vincent de Paul Society - Campbelltown
St Vincent de Paul Welfare Unit
Stanford House Inc

Stepping Out Housing Program
Sutherland Shire Community Care Network
Sutherland Shire Family Support
Sutherland Shire Home Modification and
Maintenance Service Inc
Sydney Counselling Centre
Sydney Legacy
Sydney Rescue Work Society
Tablelands Community Options
Tamil Senior Citizens Association
Technical Aid To The Disabled
Ted Noffs Foundation
Temora HACC Centre
Tenants Union Of NSW Co-op Ltd
The Benevolent Society
The Crows Nest Centre
The Gender Centre
The Mercury Centre
The Mercy Foundation
The Parks Community Network Inc
The Shop Women's and Children's Centre
The Smith Family
The Station Drop-In Centre
Theba Young Women's Support Service Inc
Thubbo Aboriginal Medical Cooperative
Toukley Women's Refuge
Town And Country MIA Gay And Lesbian Support
Group Inc
TRI Community Exchange
Tumut and District Women's Support And Housing
TURSA Employment and Training
Tweed Training and Enterprise Co Ltd
Tweed Valley Early Childhood Intervention Service Inc
Tweed Valley Respite Service
Twenty Ten Association
United Way Sydney
Uniting Care Children's Services Forum
Uniting Care NSWACT
UnitingCare Burnside
Upper Hunter Community Care
Uralla Neighbourhood and Day Care Centre - HACC
Wagga Womens Health Centre Inc
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Co-op
Walla Mulla Family and Community Support
War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW Ltd
Warlga Ngurra Women and Children's Refuge
Warrawong Community Development Project
Waverley Action for Youth Services
Wayback Committee Ltd
We Help Ourselves
Wee Waa and District Home and Community
Care Association
Welfare Rights Centre
Werrington Community Project Inc
Wesley Mission
West Dapto Neighbourhood Centre
West Wyalong Neighbour Aid
Western NSW Community Legal Service
Western Riverina/Murray Carer Respite Centre
Western Sydney Community Forum
Western Sydney Drug and Alcohol Resource Centre
Western Sydney Sole Women's Accommodation
Service Inc
WESTHIRN
Westir Ltd
Westlakes Macquarie Family Support Service Inc
Wilma Women's Health Centre

Wimlah Refuge
 Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre
 Wollondilly Camden Family Support Service Inc
 Wollongong Community Options
 Wollongong Crisis Centre
 Wollongong West Street Centre
 Wollongong Women's Centre
 Women's Activities and Self Help House
 Women's Electoral Lobby NSW Inc
 Women's Health NSW
 Women's Incest Survivors Network
 Women's Legal Resources Centre
 Women's Shelter Armidale Inc
 Woodbine Neighbourhood Centre
 Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre
 Woollahra Waverley Home Maintenance
 Workers Health Centre
 Wyoming Community Centre Inc
 Wyong Neighbourhood Centre Inc
 Yarrabin Outreach Inc
 Young Neighbourhood Centre
 Youth Accommodation Association
 Youth Action and Policy Association NSW Inc
 Youth Off The Streets
 YWCA of Sydney

**Affiliated organisations as at
 31 December 2002**

ACT Government and Assembly Library
 Age Communications
 Ashfield Municipal Council
 Australian Services Union (NSW)
 Baulkham Hills Shire Council
 Bicycle NSW
 Blacktown City Council - Community and
 Recreation Development
 Bland Shire Council
 Blue Mountains City Council
 Broken Hill City Council
 Burwood Council
 Camden Municipal Council
 Campbelltown City Council
 Campbelltown College of TAFE
 Canterbury City Council
 Catholic Commission For Employment Relations
 Cessnock City Council
 Charles Sturt University
 City of Canada Bay Council
 Community Welfare Advisory Council
 Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
 Department of Community Services
 Department of Fair Trading
 Department of Family and Community Services
 Department of Gaming and Racing
 Department of Juvenile Justice
 Department of Local Government
 Disability Council of NSW
 Dubbo City Council
 Energy And Water Ombudsman NSW
 Eurobodalla Shire Council
 Fairfield City Council
 Family Advocacy
 Gosford City Council
 Gosford Veterans' Affairs Network
 Grafton City Council

Great Lakes Council
 Hastings Council
 Hawkesbury City Council
 Holroyd City Council
 Home Care Service Parramatta
 Hurstville City Council
 Illawarra Institute of Technology
 Illawarra Institute Of Technology - Wollongong College
 Kogarah Municipal Council
 Koorana Child and Family Centre
 Ku-Ring-Gai Municipal Council
 La Trobe University
 Lake Macquarie City Council
 Lgov NSW
 Lismore City Council
 Local Government Community Services Association
 Maitland City Council
 Marrickville Council
 Marrickville Greens
 Mosman Municipal Council
 Multicultural Access Centre Library
 Muswellbrook Shire Council
 Nexus
 North Sydney Council
 Northern Sydney Health Promotion
 NSW Ombudsman Community Services Division
 NSW Teachers Federation
 Orange City Council
 Pacific Islanders Resource Centre Inc
 Parramatta City Council
 Parramatta Veterans' Affairs Network
 Penrith City Council
 Pittwater Council
 Port Macquarie College of TAFE
 Premier's Department
 Randwick City Council
 Rockdale City Council
 Ryde City Council
 Serial Section - Parliamentary Library
 Shellharbour City Council
 South Sydney City Council
 Students' Representative Council
 Sutherland College of TAFE
 Sutherland Shire Council
 Sydney Institute of Technology Ultimo TAFE
 Sydney Veterans' Affairs Network
 Tamworth City Council
 The Greens NSW
 University of Newcastle
 University of NSW - Social Sciences Library
 University of Technology Sydney
 University of Technology Sydney - Child Care Inc
 University of Western Sydney
 Wagga Wagga City Council
 Warringah Council
 Waverley Council
 Waverley Municipal Library
 Wentworth Area Health Service
 Western Sydney ROC
 Westmead Hospital
 Willoughby City Council
 Wollondilly Shire Council
 Wollongong City Council
 Wyong Shire Council



Election 2003: Looking ahead

by Alan Kirkland

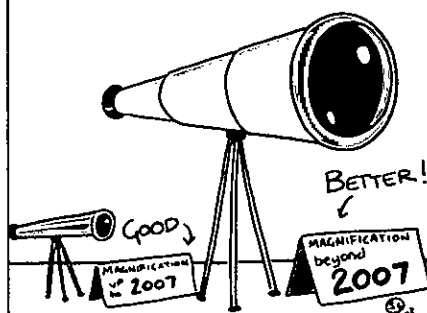
The re-election of the Carr Government provides certainty in relation to many promises that had been welcomed by the non-government sector. At the same time, it helps to define the challenges that face us over the next four years.

One of the most important issues for NCOSS members will be the certainty that the DoCS funding package, announced in December 2002, will proceed. It was a shock in the last days of the election campaign to learn that the Coalition, if elected, intended to use these funds to cover promises in other areas. Although we had not necessarily expected that a Coalition government would allocate these funds in the same way within DoCS, there had been no warning that they would in fact be withdrawn.

Other processes commenced in the Government's last term that remain to be completed include the Review of Grants Administration and the development of the Compact, or NGO Relationships Policy. These two processes have the potential to achieve fundamental changes in the relationship between non-government organisations and the Government.

Within the Government, the moves towards greater decision making at the regional level and greater integration of services have enormous potential for disadvantaged people and communities, although the complexity of these tasks means that it will be some time before we see substantial outcomes.

SCOPING NSW NEEDS POST ELECTION...



"One of these issues, which NCOSS sought to highlight... is the affordability of transport for people on low incomes."

The re-election of the Government for a third term does, however, draw attention to other social justice issues on which little or no progress has been made in the past 8 years.

One of these issues, which NCOSS sought to highlight during the election campaign, is

the affordability of transport for people on low incomes. The current system of transport concessions should be an embarrassment to the Government. It has not been updated for several decades and has failed to keep up with changes in transport needs or the Centrelink payment system. The net effect of this neglect is a system that fails to benefit many people on extremely low incomes, such as many young unemployed people. The other key failing of the system is that it provides inferior assistance to people reliant on privately-operated transport, which is the only form of transport in large areas of Sydney and in most of the rest of the State. Although the

Government instigated a review of transport concessions in 1999, no report has been released and no changes have been made.

Another issue that received considerable attention during the election campaign was preschools. Although both the Government announced some additional funding this will have limited impact on the problems of affordability for parents on low incomes. The simple fact is that New South Wales has been slow to accept what other State governments accepted some years ago – that preschool education is the responsibility of the State. While the continued rollout of State-run preschools linked to the public education system is positive, the overwhelming majority of preschools in New South Wales are community-based and until they receive serious attention from government, far too many children will miss out on preschool education.

continued on page 3

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A vision for family services
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Building a better health system?
Page 9

Re-inserting advocacy into social capital debates
Page 11

From the MSU desk: Valuing you volunteers
Pages 13



NCOSS

The Council of Social Service of New South Wales represents more than 7000 service delivery and consumer groups through its organisational membership.

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NCOSS News

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Stephen Crowley

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Get the word out! NCOSS News is delivered to over 850 members and community sector and government organisations throughout NSW every month. Call the Publications Officer to discuss rates and specifications.

There are special rates for NCOSS members.

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NCOSS staff

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Peter Samsa

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BSDP Project Support Officer: Victoria Jones

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Better Service Delivery Project support

Librarian: Bill Pope

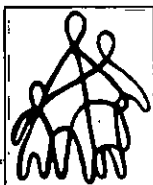
ext 103, email: billpope@ncoss.org.au

library, corrective services

Communications Officer: Stephen Crowley

ext 115 email: stephen@ncoss.org.au

newsletter, publications and brochure production, NCOSS website, IT support



Rethink on public-private partnerships needed

On 18 March NCOSS and the NSW Teachers Federation launched a call for the major parties to rethink their policies on public-private partnerships. This was the first step in an alliance that is intended to provoke critical analysis of public-private partnerships areas of State Government responsibility.

For some time, the private sector has had opportunities to participate in areas such as the construction of roads and public transport, the prison system (at Junee) and the health system (at Port Macquarie Hospital). This role has broadened in recent years to include the construction of public schools and the operation of children's services on privately developed public school sites.

Both the Government and Opposition approached the election with policies of continuing, if not expanding, these types of arrangements.

NCOSS and the Teachers Federation launched this alliance out of a fear that current approaches to public-private partnerships fail to adequately measure the costs and benefits in both economic and social terms. The relative failure of the Airport rail link demonstrates the long-term costs of projects that go wrong.

NCOSS and the Teachers Federation intend to increase our joint work in this area through and beyond 2003. We hope to make links with a group of unions at the national level that have commissioned research in this area. NCOSS is also hoping to develop relationships with academics to promote further research on the longer term costs of private involvement in the development and management of core public infrastructure.

Protecting community organisations

A report launched by NCOSS and the Local Community Services Association (LCSA) on 14 March called for the major parties to commit to additional funding to prevent cuts in essential community services in NSW.

The report *Alive & Well? Ensuring the viability of community-based organisations in NSW* draws upon a survey of over 500 community-based organisations conducted by the Australian Council of Social Service.

Key findings include that:

- there was a 14% increase in the number of people assisted between 2000-01 and 2001-02;
- there was an 18% increase in the number of people turned away;

- the costs of insurance had risen by 34%, with no corresponding increase in government funding.

The organisations reflected in the report are essential components of healthy communities. Funding needs to increase if we are to keep such organisations alive and well.

They are dependent on government funding to do their work. Without increases in funding to meet increased costs, they are being forced to cut services to clients.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the NCOSS website: www.ncoss.org.au/bookshelf

Election 2003: Looking ahead

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While there were some election funding announcements for disability services, mostly arising from the Spinal Injury Forum, these in no way approached the level of additional funding announced in other human service portfolios. Although there were increases in disability funding early in the last term of the Government, the benefits of those increases will be lost unless funding is able to keep pace with changes in demand. In addition, those increases tended to be directed at the crisis end of the spectrum. Just as the Government made a strategic decision to devote substantial new resources to early intervention and prevention in DoCs, it is time to start thinking about building a stronger base of early intervention services for people with disabilities. This will require a substantial injection of funds into disability services over the next few years.

Another very big issue for the Government is the future of social housing in New South Wales. The Commonwealth's determination to

reduce its funding commitment – despite clear evidence of growing need for affordable housing – combined with declining rental income as the public housing system has become increasingly targeted at people on Centrelink payments – creates some enormous financial challenges. Additional State Government funding will undoubtedly be required. As ACOSS and housing peaks have identified, there is also a need to attract greater private sector contributions to affordable housing. The reaction against plans for the redevelopment of the Erskineville estate last year suggests that the Department has not quite struck the right balance between private and community interests but finding this balance in the next few years will be crucial to the viability of social housing in New South Wales.

The certainty provided by fixed, four-year terms of government is intended to provide the space to take on difficult issues. Hopefully the Government will use this to advantage to achieve substantial progress on these issues over the next four years.

To keep up to date with NCOSS work on the election and responses received from parties, check the NCOSS website – www.ncoss.org.au/election2003

NCOSS Updates



Proclamation of Care and Protection legislation

On 28 February, the Minister announced that the Government would proclaim significant sections of Chapters 8 and 10 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*. These include sections concerning the definition of out of home care, who may provide care and the role of non-government agencies in the provision of care. The Act will be amended to provide expanded audit and review powers for the Children's Guardian. Several issues will be subject to further consultation, then a recommendation to the Minister concerning amendment and/or proclamation. These include the rights of children, parents and carers in relation to disclosure of information and the inclusion of disability services and youth SAAP services in the definition of out of home care..



Social Housing Reforms

The Minister has advised NCOSS that market rent bonds will be introduced for all new public housing tenants. They will be capped at \$800 per household and \$700 for a single person household. NCOSS, the Tenants Union and ShelterNSW have provided a joint response to the Department's draft operational guidelines for renewable tenancies. In summary it argues that the 'appropriate criteria and process for determining whether a tenancy should be terminated on grounds of breach already exist in the Residential Tenancies Act... Renewable tenancies try to circumvent this process'.



DoCS Funding Package

Peak organisations are meeting to organise a sector wide forum to look at strategies for our input into how the new funding rolls out, including appropriate consultation and monitoring mechanisms. The first meeting was held March 5.



Health Related Transport

NSW Health is developing its draft Transport for Health policy in consultation with the Health Related Transport Implementation Reference Group, before the paper is available for general comment. While the majority of the draft policy has been written two key areas have been left blank for the

Implementation Group to develop – these are Fees and Charges, and Destinations.



People with a longstanding Disability who are Ageing

NCOSS is presently involved with ACROD and Aged & Community Services in the production of industry response for appropriate services to people with a longstanding disability who are ageing. A very successful consultation with aged, disability and community care industry groups was held on 10 February. At present a draft position paper is being prepared, to be distributed for feedback at a consumer consultation workshop planned for May.



Children's Services Regulations

The private sector has been lobbying hard against the new staff:child ratio of 1:4 for children under two. NCOSS and the Children's Services Forum support the new ratio. NCOSS has organised for a number of service providers to comment favourably on this part of the regulations but it has been difficult to attract media attention to this point of view.



Aboriginal Health Worker's Award

Employees under this Award are facing similar issues to the SACS Award. A letter has been written to NSW Health and further information is being sought.



Review of Pricing Arrangements in Residential Aged Care

The Commonwealth has announced a review of pricing arrangements for residential aged care and requested

submissions by 28 March 2003. The Review provides an opportunity to comment on the approaches by which residential aged care is funded, and the relative accessibility and affordability of aged care facilities. NCOSS, through the NSW Aged Care Alliance, made a submission.



Commonwealth – State HACC Agreement

The NSW Government is due to negotiate a new HACC agreement sometime this year. A working party of the NSW HACC Issues forum is currently finalising some comments from a consumer perspective on the HACC Agreement to inform negotiations over a new agreement.



Oral Health Promotion

The Oral Health Branch has released its draft background paper on Oral Health Promotion in NSW. Information gathered in a report from a student placement at NCOSS has proved invaluable in providing feedback on the background paper especially around the oral health needs of disadvantaged groups. This information has been received very positively by the Oral Health Branch who are following up on some of the papers mentioned in the report.



Young People in Nursing Homes

NCOSS has been involved with the Young People out of Nursing Homes Campaign, which produced a discussion paper on the issue last year. The group met with the Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care last month, who have agreed to organise a Round Table with NSW Health and industry representatives. The Round Table is planned for April.

NCOSS HAS MEETING ROOMS FOR HIRE!

Convenient and reasonably priced, they are available seven days and evenings a week. We are at the corner of Albion and Commonwealth Streets (66 Albion St) in Surry Hills, only a ten minute walk from Central Station. Also, several buses which can be joined at Eddy Avenue stop right at the door.

There are two large meeting rooms, one up and one down, each seating 50 to 70 people. There is a kitchen on both floors, with refrigerator and microwave in the upstairs kitchen. There are heaters, fans and toilets. There is wheelchair access to rooms and toilets. The crowning glory is our lovely courtyard.

For further information, phone reception: (02) 9211-2599



Tax breaks fuel executive payouts: Keep 15% Super surcharge

ACOSS has identified three tax loopholes that are fuelling an explosion in executive payments and called on the Federal Government to maintain the superannuation surcharge at 15% and implement other curbs to fix the problem.

The community is rightly appalled by huge executive payments that beam the highest earners onto a different planet to the one inhabited by ordinary people. What the public does not know is that high-flyers receive unfair tax breaks as generous as the payments themselves and that companies can reduce their tax bill by offering them. Cutting the super surcharge would also make matters worse. The loopholes are:

- **Golden handshakes and redundancies taxed less than ordinary income**
Most redundancy payments are taxed at a maximum of 30%. If the super industry has its way and the 15% Superannuation Surcharge is abolished, the rate of tax on separation payments (golden handshakes) would also be capped at 30% for many top earners. This means both types of payouts would be taxed at rates much lower than the 48.5% (including Medicare Levy) that ordinarily applies to people earning over \$60,000 a year.
- **Companies can deduct executive payments from their tax bill**
Companies can claim excessive payments to senior employees and directors as a business expense, reducing their own tax liability. This has greatly contributed to Australian companies making excessive payments to executives.
- **Executive packages including shares and options taxed less than ordinary wages**
Many executives receive half of their income as shares and options. One reason for this is their generous tax treatment. They can defer paying any tax on these shares and options

for up to 10 years, and they are also exempt from Fringe Benefits Tax.

Recent Government support for greater disclosure to shareholders of executive payouts is welcome, but the Government should also stop fuelling the fire by curbing these unfair tax breaks and maintaining the Superannuation Surcharge at 15%. This would send a clear message to companies that over-the-top payments are not acceptable and bring their tax treatment into line with the income of ordinary Australians. We propose the following measures:

- Keep the 15% superannuation surcharge for people earning more than about \$100,000 rather than cut it back as the Government and the superannuation industry propose. ACOSS also proposes taxing

separation payments (apart from genuine redundancy payments) as ordinary income unless they are paid immediately into a complying retirement fund or account. The 30% cap on redundancy payment taxes should be replaced by a more equitable rebate scheme.

- Cap corporate tax deductions for salary packages and other payments as is done in the US. For example, the deductions for payments made to each employee or director in each financial year could be limited to no more than 10 times average earnings (about \$450,000).
- Income in shares or options valued at more than \$1,000 a year should be subject to Fringe Benefits Tax. Now that executive options are to be included in a company's books, this can readily be done.

End bulk-billing crisis: New plan for universal health care

On 10 March, the National Medicare Alliance - a coalition of peak community and health groups - launched a new plan to restore universal access to primary health care. This action comes in light of new figures which show that, at current rates of decline, bulk-billing will entirely die out in less than 14 years. There is also concern that the Government's current approach will lead to lower quality health services for low-income Australians.

Key aspects of the Alliance's plan are greater public investment in community health care especially through direct government funding of a new style of multidisciplinary medical centre, an increase in the numbers of GPs, and more support for doctors who bulk bill.

Bulk-billing is more than a safety net for Australians on low incomes. It is an essential part of our universal health care

system and we call on the Prime Minister to adopt the Alliance's plan and commit to restoring the level of bulk-billing. Quality health care must be available regardless of income. For example, it is unacceptable that in some areas bulk-billed patients are required to wait for a GP while others receive immediate treatment.

In many areas, the shortage of GPs results in a lack of competition and a complete absence of bulk billing. Patients in these areas not only face a \$30 or \$50 fee up front when visiting a GP but are then often unable to afford specialist health services like physio-therapy, podiatry, and counselling.

A universal health system which treats everyone the same no matter what their income, which is supported by everyone, is the cheapest and fairest way to deliver health care.

Housing issues: Where to from here?

by Catherine Mahony

A substantial increase in social housing was an election priority for NCOSS and other peak agencies including ShelterNSW, the Tenants Union of NSW and the NSW Federation of Housing Associations. Housing affordability, legislative protection for tenants and services for homeless people were also promoted as key issues.

ShelterNSW surveyed all the parties on its major housing recommendations and a full analysis of responses is located on its website: www.shelternsw.org.au. In summary the ALP (Government) responses were as follows:

- Does not commit itself to a *State Housing Plan*. It notes that it supports a strong whole-of-government approach to housing, and also notes that cross-departmental processes already take place.
- Does not commit to *doubling public housing stock in the next decade*. Also comments that despite Commonwealth cutbacks it has increased funding for social housing by more than \$170m over the next three financial years.
- Notes that it already uses state taxes (including *land tax and stamp duty*) for social housing, though does not indicate whether it would be prepared to substantially increase this.
- Does not engage with the issue of *broadening eligibility for public housing*, stating only that this would require the support of the federal government.
- Remains committed to the *introduction of renewable tenancies and bonds in social housing*.
- Points to its record in areas like low to moderate-income home ownership opportunities through LandCom, and *affordable housing* components of projects like Victoria Park, Zetland, Stanhope Gardens and Rouse Hill Regional Centre. Also notes that it has provided substantial stamp duty concessions, and that it is working on a number of individual affordable housing schemes.

- Does not support *mandatory affordable housing provision in new developments and planning policies*. Indicates that there is already provision for voluntary policies, and that it will continue to "explore all opportunities to increase the stock of affordable housing".
- Does not accept the invitation to *legislate for just-cause eviction for private tenants*, or to give even *basic legislative protection for boarders and lodgers*.
- On homelessness issues, points to the government's record on *increased funding for SAAP* projects, and the range of programs it has introduced. Refuses to be drawn on setting targets to reduce the numbers of homeless people, on the rationale that "the homeless population is not a static group and there are no

"(the ALP did not)... accept the invitation to legislate for just-cause eviction for private tenants"

reliable statistics on the number of homeless people".

In the last edition of *NCOSS News* we provided a table detailing the number of applicants on the Department of Housing waiting list. The Department has since drawn our attention to its more recent figures. These are included in the table below:

Number of applicants on the Public Housing Waiting List

Year	Number on waiting list
1996-97	94,797
1997-98	96,906
1998-99	97,037
1999-00	98,337
2000-01	96,075 *
2001-02	90,926

All figures provided by the Department of Housing

* In the table provided in the last edition of *NCOSS News*, the figure for this period was 101,561. This figure was sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare: *Housing Assistance Data Briefing No. 1*, Feb 2002. The variation in these figures may partly be explained by the time of the year at which the figures were calculated.

Emergency Relief Discussion Paper

by Linda Frow

Ross Cameron, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Family and Community Services, has released a discussion paper on the emergency relief program.

This follows on from the Emergency Relief Conference held late last year at which Mr. Cameron expressed some concerns about the effectiveness of the program and what he called its "institutional inertia". The paper seeks a response to questions concerning the objective of the program, ways of maximising community linkages, innovative ways of working, data collection and accountability, service standards, and any other issues agencies wish to raise.

As is often the case with the Commonwealth, there is insufficient consultation built into the timeframe for the paper with responses due by 18 April. While NCOSS raised objections to this at the State Advisory Committee meeting held on 19 March, we do not anticipate that the timeframe will change.

In order to facilitate debate on the issues raised by the paper for emergency relief providers, a special meeting of the Emergency Relief Forum will be held on 8 April, 10-12 noon, at NCOSS. This replaces the previously advertised forum on 1 May.

One of the major concerns we have at this stage is that there seem to be high expectations around accountability and outcomes for services that receive no funding for actual service provision in a program that largely depends on volunteers for its existence. We will certainly be arguing that more effective service provision requires greater input from the Department of Family and Community Services than is currently the case, and that ongoing training and professional development is one area that could make a difference.

Beyond hospitals: Services for people with a chronic illness

by Ros Bragg

The Chronic Illness Alliance of NSW prepared its first election statement in the lead-up to the State election. The statement, *Beyond hospitals: caring for people with a chronic illness*, was distributed to major and minor parties, with a request for a response to the twelve recommendations. The Greens provided a detailed response. The Minister for Health provided a brief response on behalf of the ALP which listed strategies from the Chronic and Complex Care Implementation and Coordination Group, and attached additional information about these initiatives. No response was received from the Coalition.

In its election statement, the Alliance recommended improvements to the network of services which support people living in the community and between these services and the hospital system. The Alliance noted that the health system in NSW has not responded well to the needs of people with a chronic illness. While services for acute illness and for people with a disability are well established, chronic illness falls between these two categories.

People with a chronic illness are often more frequent users of the health system, they often require a more coordinated response from a range of health services and other human services agencies. Living with a chronic illness can be expensive, with additional costs including prescriptions, over the counter medicines, special foods, medical consultations, complementary therapies, special equipment and additional transport costs.

The Alliance identified insufficient community care services as a key concern. It recommended that people with a chronic illness be provided with ready access to community care services to support them to live in the community. The Alliance also recommended that NSW Health and DADHC develop a statewide plan for community care which clearly delineates each agency's responsibility in relation

"The Alliance identified insufficient community care services as a key concern."

to people with a chronic illness and ensures that gaps in services are addressed.

Effectively responding to the needs of a person with a chronic illness often requires coordination across a range of Government agencies. To facilitate this, the Alliance recommended that the

NSW Government develop a whole of Government action plan for people with a chronic illness.

People with a chronic illness often require access to equipment to assist them to live in the community. The Alliance often hears of long waiting lists for essential equipment through the

Program of Appliances for Disabled People (PADP) Program, and recommended a substantial injection of funds into this program.

The Alliance also recommended a substantial injection of funds into respite care, and for a comprehensive system of health-related transport services to be made available to people with a chronic illness.

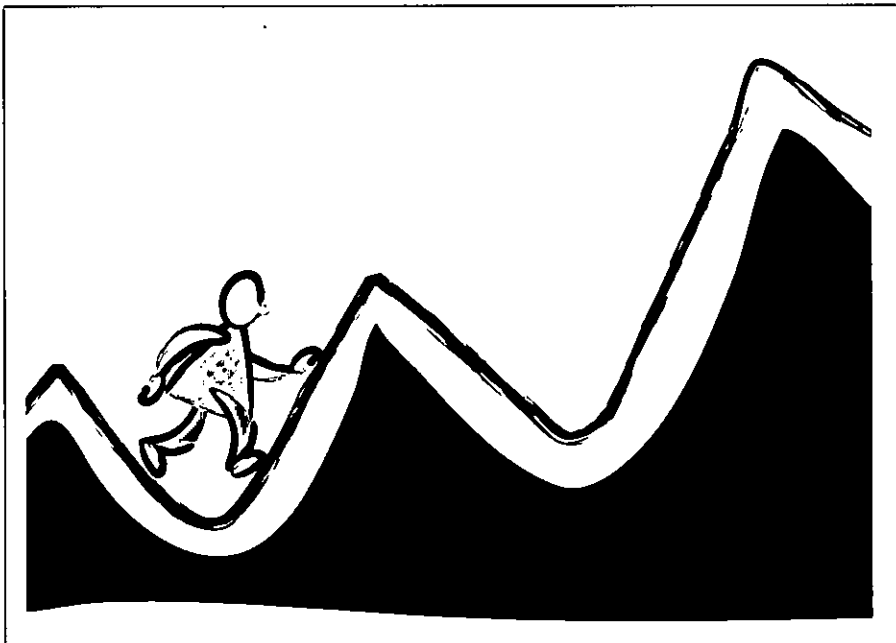
In relation to the health system, the Alliance argued that initiatives which target people with a chronic illness

should take as their starting point that they are to improve the health outcomes and quality of life of people with a chronic illness and of their carers. The Alliance considers that this is best shown through effective, statewide data collections which measure these outcomes, rather than focusing on reductions in hospital usage. This is a key concern in relation to the NSW Health initiatives through the Chronic and Complex Care Implementation and Coordination Group.

The Alliance emphasised the importance of improved consumer participation in health decision making, and recommended that Area Health Service planning and statewide policy development have the benefit of participation from community organisations which represent people with a chronic illness. This requires a significant shift in practice within NSW Health.

Adequate resourcing for community organisations working on chronic illness was also recommended. An immediate allocation of \$3m was sought.

The Alliance expressed concern about the growing emphasis on private health insurance and private provision of health care. It recommended that people with a chronic illness should have access



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Beyond hospitals: Services for people with a chronic illness

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to a comprehensive range of health services through the private system, and that health service development take into account the substantial number of people with a chronic illness who do not have private health insurance.

The Alliance has received numerous reports of people with a chronic illness having difficulty accessing allied health services. This is an important means to improve the health of people with a chronic illness, and can also impact on access to other services, such as community care. The Alliance recommended that NSW Health develop a range of strategies to improve access to allied health services for people with a chronic illness, and that additional resources be allocated.

The final Alliance recommendation was for appropriate accommodation for young and middle-aged people who require a high level of care. The Alliance noted that aged care facilities are not focused on the needs of younger people, and offer poor quality of life for this client group.

The response from the Government did not provide the Alliance with commitments for action on any of the listed recommendations. The Alliance will, however, be meeting soon after the election to discuss how to take this set of recommendations forward during the next few years.

For more information contact:

Ros Bragg, Chairperson, Chronic Illness Alliance of NSW: rosbragg@ncoss.org.au
A copy of the Chronic Illness Alliance election statement is on the NCOSS website: www.ncoss.org.au/election2003

A vision for family services

by Linda Frow

A coalition of organisations – NCOSS, ACWA, FSSA, YAA, the Women's Refuge Movement and Uniting Care Burnside - have combined to present a forum to discuss and promote a vision for family services that can be effective for families at risk in NSW.

The Forum seeks to follow up on the findings of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Child Protection Services and the announcement at the end of last year of a \$1b funding package for the Department of Community Services and non-government services for families. It will provide an opportunity for the community sector to discuss a range of issues and put forward recommendations in relation to service planning. The areas identified for detailed examination are:

- Effective service models for families with complex problems;
- Organisational capacity, viability and other conditions necessary for effective service delivery;
- Service location and distribution;
- Inter-agency collaboration and links between different government programs.

The coalition believes that it is crucial for the non-government agencies involved in providing services to families to develop their own vision for family services rather than simply respond to the Inquiry recommendations or to proposals put forward from the Department of Community Services. We will be better placed to

influence what happens if we know the outcomes we are seeking for families and can suggest ways to achieve them. To assist in the development of a vision, those participating in the forum will be encouraged to read the position paper developed for ACWA and FSSA by Uniting Care Burnside – *Investing in Services for Families in NSW*. The paper is available on the ACWA website at www.acwa.asn.au/acwa/news/News.html.

Keynote speaker at the Forum will be Dr Dorothy Scott, well known for work in the child and family service field and whose most recent book, *Confronting Cruelty – Historical Perspectives on Child Protection in Australia*, was used to inform a number of submissions to the Inquiry into Child Protection Services, including our own. There will also be a panel chaired by returning NCOSS Director, Gary Moore, to respond to both the speaker and the day's discussion and recommendations. The panel includes Jan Burnswoods, Chairperson of the Upper House Standing Committee on Social Issues, Jenny McDonald, Director of the Office of Children and Young People and Jane Allen, President of the Family Support Services Association, with senior DoCS representation to be confirmed.

The Forum will be held on April 30 at the Masonic Centre in the city, from 9:30am until 3:30 pm. Costs have been kept to a minimum (\$44 incl GST) and registration is essential. If you wish to attend, please contact Linda Frow at NCOSS or ACWA for the registration form.

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Building a better health system?

by Samantha Edmonds

The Government was relatively silent on health policy issues in the lead up to the State election and only released two broad policy papers on health - 'Building a better health system: Labor's plans for better cancer care' and 'Building a better health system: better rural health'. While these two documents and the plans that they contain are welcomed, other health issues such as chronic illness (mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter), mental health and oral health received little or no attention.

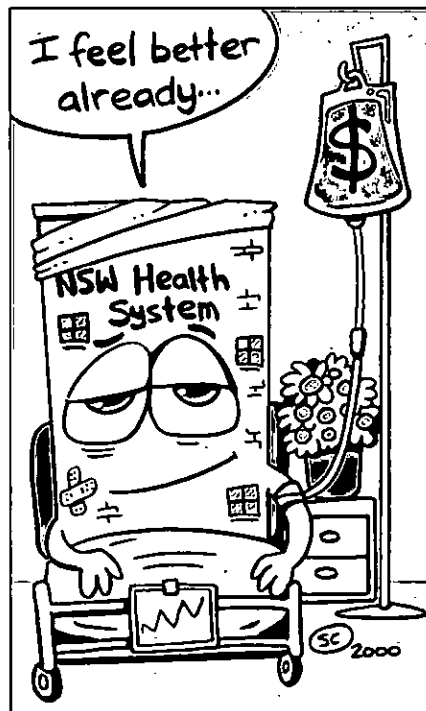
The Coalition released policies and promises around increased funding to reduce waiting lists, to address the nursing shortage and increase services. This included an additional \$206m four year plan, which covered such things as a \$117m Demand Plan for 60,000 extra bed days per year, \$50m elective surgery centre, \$23m over four years for summer surgery clinics and employing an additional 2,400 nurses.

Labor also discussed hospitals, waiting lists and the number of nurses in the media. A fairer allocation of resources across the state will be made via the doctor, nurse and consumer created \$64m Greater Metropolitan Transitional Taskforce that has been set up to ensure that people are treated more efficiently and to look at structural change. Approximately \$800m will be spent to upgrade emergency departments including \$124m on initiatives such as emergency response triage teams and extra beds and a further \$12.8m to go on a statewide program to develop 18 stroke units.

These are all essential improvements however this shows a marked focus on the medical model of health and a disregard for the important role that the non-government sector plays in prevention, early intervention and maintenance of health.

Mental Health

While mental health services have improved markedly over the years, the recent Legislative Council inquiry into mental health services in NSW revealed a number of areas where current services are failing to meet the needs of people with a mental illness.



NCOSS, in conjunction with the Mental Health Association NSW Inc and the Mental Health Coordinating Council released a mental health election statement, identifying eight key areas from the inquiry and listing a number of recommendations that it asked the major political parties to commit to. The Coalition, Greens and Democrats all responded to the statement in a positive way. Labor made no response although NCOSS acknowledges that the statement was sent relatively late in the campaign.

The Coalition made promises of additional funding for mental health services. This included \$34m to extend community based mental health crisis teams; \$10m to better resource non-government organisations; \$1m to establish a chair of Adolescent Mental Health at Sydney University and a review of legislation to ensure that people with a mental health issue receive the care that they need.

Labor was relatively silent in the media on mental health issues, (and even in its rural health policy paper), and reiterated its allocation of funds to mental health in 2000 of \$107.5m over three years and its

commitment to an additional \$20m to open more hospital beds in mental health facilities. The announcement of an additional \$107.5m, when it was made in April 2000, was hailed as bringing NSW almost in line with the national average for spending on mental health. However little of this funding has flowed through to the non-government sector, even though this was an area highlighted by the then Health Minister as requiring more funding and development. The additional \$20m is a welcome addition yet there is more to mental health than being in hospital - rehabilitation, housing and community support remain high on the agenda as needing additional resources.

Labor mentioned people with a mental health issue in its policy on 'Targeting repeat offenders', which included the construction of a 40-bed health unit at the metropolitan remand and reception centre; a 10 bed mental health unit at Mulawa and a half-way house at Long Bay for women with mental illness and alcohol and other drug problems. However the recommendations in the Legislative Council inquiry, and as supported by the community, clearly stated the need for these types of units to be fully community based and, along with the implementation of a number of other recommendations, designed to

decriminalise mental illness.

NCOSS supports the view that the better funded and resourced the mental health services are in the community, the better the detection of mental illness and the less likely it is for people with a mental health issue to end up in the criminal justice system.

"... health issues such as chronic illness, mental health and oral health received little or no attention."

NCOSS will continue to work with mental health peaks to seek the implementation of the recommendations from its mental health election statement and to ensure mental health stays as a priority on the health policy agenda.

Oral Health

Apart from the Democrats no political party responded to the NCOSS election statement on oral health and yet, like mental health, oral health is an integral part of a person's wellbeing.

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Farewell

by Alan Kirkland

This issue of *NCOSS News* is the final edition in my time as Director. As most members will know, I have had a two-year temporary appointment while Gary Moore has been on leave without pay.

Although the past few years have passed very quickly, an awful lot has happened in that time. It could be dangerous to start listing the issues that I have enjoyed working on – for fear of leaving something out – but I would have to highlight the joint NCOSS/Australian Services Union campaign for funding of the SACS award, which culminated in an enormous boost in funding from the State Government. While that outcome was fantastic, what I really enjoyed was the vigour with which people from community-based organisations across the state took to the campaign, haranguing local members, organising street stalls and coordinating local media coverage. If there is one regret that I have from my time at NCOSS it is probably not to

have used these campaign techniques more extensively, particularly in areas with a more direct impact on disadvantaged people.

Within the organisation, I have been pleased to be able to work with the Board, the President, Chris Dodds, the Deputy Directors, Maz Thomson and Ros Bragg, and other staff, to improve our infrastructure and procedures. Together we have managed to improve planning processes, improve workplace health and safety, finalise our enterprise agreement, provide a substantial salary increase to staff, upgrade the computer system, improve our financial systems and achieve a substantial increase in funding. This degree of change is not possible unless you have a group of people with strong working relationships who are committed to continuous improvement.

Any job in our sector has its challenges, but the greatest challenge at NCOSS lies

in finding a way to voice the views and frustrations of our membership while managing our relationship with government. Sometimes this is easy but it often requires sharp judgement. Undoubtedly there have been times where my judgement could have been better. Thanks to those in our sector and in government who have appreciated the complexity of this task and provided support and assistance.

"I really enjoyed the vigour with which people from community-based organisations took to the SACS campaign"

Finally, I would like to thank NCOSS for providing this opportunity. Being Director of NCOSS was something that I thought I would ideally like to do at some stage in my working life. Being able to do it at this age was something I would never really entertained as a possibility.

Thanks to the Board for being prepared to give me a chance.

I know that NCOSS has a long, strong future ahead, just as it has a long and successful past. I wish Gary, the Board and staff the best for the years to come.

Building a better health system?

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There is wide spread concern over soaring dental waiting lists and delays in treatment and/or decreased access to services for disadvantaged people. Research has shown a link between oral health and medical conditions, and that access to dental services can alleviate the development of costly medical conditions.

Dental diseases are a substantial burden not only for the individual concerned but also for the whole community, costing millions of dollars in lost productivity, and adding to health and welfare budgets. However dental diseases (especially periodontal disease) are preventable and treatable.

The emerging patterns of the psychosocial consequences of poor oral health and its resulting effect on quality of life, especially in the elderly, signifies the need for a new public policy that places a focus on oral health needs. New policies should be aimed at wider accessibility to public dental health services and should address the broader medical, personal and social consequences of oral health in line with contemporary concepts of health care. NCOSS, in conjunction with the Oral Health Alliance, will continue to advocate for oral health issues to be addressed.

For more information contact
Samantha Edmonds at NCOSS
phone: (02) 9211 2599 ext 116
email: samantha@ncoss.org.au

NCOSS News

Notice of AGM

The 66th Annual General Meeting of the Council of Social Service of New South Wales (NCOSS) will be held at 4.30pm on Wednesday, 28 May 2003, at Level 1, Citigate Sebel Sydney Hotel, 28 Albion Street, Surry Hills.

Members may lodge matters (including resolutions and special resolutions) for the agenda of the AGM. The company must send out notice of those matters to all members with the official notice of the AGM.

A lodgement of matters (including resolutions and special resolutions) for the agenda of the AGM may be made by any ten members, at any time, by notice in writing lodged with the Secretary.

Any members wishing to exercise this right are requested to indicate the proposer and seconder of the matters (including resolutions and special resolutions), and to lodge them with the Secretary, NCOSS, 66 Albion Street, Surry Hills 2010, by 5pm on Tuesday, 15 April 2003.

Union elections

by Fran Teirney, President, SACS Division, ASU

The Australian Services Union (ASU) is having elections over April-May. Members in the Social & Community Services Division (SACS) have always been active and participated in the union. The ASU has actively worked to achieve better working lives for its members.

Have your say over who will lead the union. Voting starts on 23 April. Make sure the community sector continues to have a strong voice.





NCOSS Advocacy! Conference

Seeking changes to the policies and practices of Government is a fundamental role for community welfare organisations. This systemic advocacy role is increasingly under threat through funding pressures, economic rationalism, and changing relationships between community organisations and Government agencies.

This conference re-examined why community organisations engages in systemic advocacy, and investigated some recent union and community sector campaigns, both the wins and the ongoing battles. It considered the place of systemic advocacy in social capital debates, and whether contemporary advocacy is undertaken 'with' or 'for' consumers. It debated the role of unions in community advocacy, and whether the growth in community participation processes is helping or hindering advocacy work. It also included practical discussions about using the media, developing strategies, and managing relationships with politicians.

The Advocacy conference, held on 12 March 2003, was well attended and well received by delegates. The following paper is just one of the many presented on the day. Other papers can be downloaded from the Conference Papers section at www.ncoss.org.au/bookshelf

Re-inserting advocacy into social capital debates

by Jenny Onyx, UTS

Systemic Advocacy is a core and essential aspect of social capital. I am puzzled as to why this is not generally seen to be the case. So I guess there are two questions to be answered:

- What are the key ingredients of social capital and how does systemic advocacy fit in?
- Why is it that social capital has been identified and used without the advocacy?

What is social capital?

There are of course many debates about what it is and is not, and I must say a lot of misuse of the concept to suit particular agendas. There is in fact quite a lot of agreement among academics about what it is and is not.

Social capital can be developed and used wherever humans gather together for a common purpose. It is primarily associated with civil society, with that space that lies outside the state and the market. Social capital is the key ingredient in civil society. The definition most often used is that of Putnam as "those features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putnam, 1993).

If you do not like formal definitions, think about your own life. Think about where you live, or work, and the networks you have formed there. Think about a problem that came up. Maybe you were in trouble and needed some

help to solve the problem. Maybe the community had a problem, that could only be solved by people coming together to deal with it. Our recent bush fires come to mind for me. I am not talking about calling in the professionals, but using the informal networks to make things happen. That is social capital. At one level it is obvious. At another level it is new and has never been formally recognized or accounted.

Let me summarise a few basic propositions. There is some debate around each proposition, but together they are starting to add up to some very powerful ideas.

1. Social capital, like other forms of capital, like money, is an essential ingredient in social action. Social capital does not refer to the social action itself but to the essential prerequisite of social action. If you want something done, you need more or less financial capital, natural capital, cultural or human capital, and social capital.
2. Any community of people who form networks of common interest can generate social capital. Social capital is not something that anyone can possess as an individual, although individuals may make use of it. Essentially social capital resides in the connection between people.
3. However, unlike other forms of capital, you do not need to be rich to acquire social capital. There is little or no correlation between material well-being and social capital except

for the extremely poor and disadvantaged.

4. Like other forms of social capital, whether it is used for good or evil is up to those who use it. It is always used for the common good, but that leaves open the question of "whose common good" and "who decides". It is the case that there are nearly always winners and losers in the use of social capital, as with any other form of human activity.
5. Communities appear to be remarkably resilient. The denser the networks of connection and participation, the more resilient the community. The key always is in the relationships. In general, rural communities tend to have higher levels of social capital, at least bonding social capital.
6. There are two levels of social capital (at least). One concerns the bonding networks *within* communities, and the other concerns bridging links *between* different groups. The first is marked by what is termed "thick trust", the mutual support of insiders, the thing that holds a small community together in the face of fire or the loss of banking services for instance. Bridging social capital is not about social support, but about drawing on resources from other networks. It also requires trust, but of a different kind. While bonding is important for mutual survival, bridging is important for getting ahead, for creating new opportunities, new growth. We need both.

continued on page 12

7. An essential feature of social capital is *social agency*: the capacity of people working together to take the initiative. It is about people as active participants, not as passive victims or even as "customers" or "clients".

Can we measure social capital?

Social capital has a number of elements; it is not a unitary concept. With a colleague, Paul Bullen, I was able to demonstrate that you can measure social capital quite easily, and you can measure the different aspects of it, if you ask the right questions. We found eight elements of social capital, including four "building blocks" referring to 'trust', 'social agency', 'tolerance of diversity' and 'value of life'. Underlying all these factors is the common or core ingredient of social connectedness. The other four factors referred to four distinct social arenas: 'participation in the local community' (formal engagement with local community organisations), 'neighbourhood connections', 'family and friends connections', and 'work connections'. This suggests that social capital may be generated in a variety of arenas, and that people may have access to, or be involved in the production of social capital in different ways. [To access the scale go to Paul's website: www.mapl.com.au]

So, to summarize what I have been saying so far, social capital is about active citizenship, about people coming together to find solutions and co-ordinate their own actions. Social capital is a necessary pre-requisite for social action. But also social capital is one by-product of social action. It is both cause and effect.

Why has social capital got bad press?

That is the other big question here. I think there are two problems here.

Firstly, governments do now fund organisations to generate social capital (that is itself problematic). But they do not fund for advocacy. In fact, conservative governments (and even Labour) do not want advocacy. Advocacy is disruptive, usually critical of government policy, potentially dangerous. Governments that are driven by fear, do not want to hear the voice of criticism. Let alone fund it.

On the other hand governments of all persuasions have recognized that economic rationalist policies have produced serious negative impacts. One of the most serious critiques of economic rationalism is that it systematically undermines the values of community and the capacity to develop community. In particular, economic rationalist policies have the effect of drawing on existing stocks of social capital, without providing the conditions for its replenishment or growth. In the long term this is a recipe for disaster. Government programs are now in place to reverse this process. In general these programs are about trying to assist community capacity building by promoting social capital.

But of course they want a docile social capital. What they want to promote is a kind of self-help, cheap, obliging, *nice* sort of social capital that is about communities helping themselves within the existing system. They want community development without the sting. Status quo not social change. I have been intrigued by the fact that government policy documents relating to social capital talk about networks and trust and mutual helping (and mutual obligation) but they never talk about the community taking the initiative. Clearly governments are trying to use social capital as a tool of social control, not an agent of change.

The second problem concerns the attitude of community sector people. This goes back to what you mean by

"...governments do now fund organisations to generate social capital... but they do not fund for advocacy."

Systemic Advocacy. In old welfare state terms, advocacy really meant *Lobbying the state*. It really meant "*somebody should do something*". That is actually a very passive position to take. It is actually saying this problem is someone else's problem, probably the state's responsibility.

That engenders a form of passive citizenship in which we are all recipients or victims of state policy. Having lobbied the state there is nothing else to be done.

What I am arguing for is a form of Active Citizenship. This is not about letting the state off the hook. But it is about taking a much more active role in the process. The community identifies a problem and uses its social capital to deal with the problem. The solution is almost certainly going to be complex and multi-level, just as the problem is. Social action of this sort almost

certainly involves the following:

- Mobilizing existing community resources what ever they may be;
- Involving local businesses to contribute their resources;
- Developing bridging networks to reach outside the community to access information and external resources;
- Accessing financial and other resources of the state;
- Lobbying where necessary for changes to the existing legislation or administrative policy or funding priorities;
- Developing pilots or innovative approaches.

In short, social capital is the key resource that a community can mobilize. It is quite simply "people power". That power can be used for whatever the community decides needs to be done. Part of that action is almost certainly going to involve systemic advocacy. But the advocacy occurs in the context of broader community action. And leadership remains within the community.

Jenny Onyx (PhD) is Associate Professor in the School of Management at University Technology Sydney (UTS), Director of the Centre for Australian Community Organisations and their Management (CACOM) and Editor of *Third Sector Review*.

Community harmony helplines

The Community Relations Commission For a Multicultural NSW has established telephone and email helplines to record reports of abuse, insult or discrimination suffered by anyone in the community as a result of the Iraq situation.

There are many communities who could be affected by the events in the Gulf including Australians of American background. The Commission is there to assist all Australians. Through both of these emergency services the Commission will be ready to provide referral and information in a variety of community languages.

email helpline: help@crc.nsw.gov.au
telephone hotline: 1800 80 41 41

The hotline will be complemented by dedicated lines to record calls in:

Arabic: 02 8255 6830
Turkish: 02 8255 6828
Indonesian: 02 8255 6829

Valuing your volunteers

by Liz Priestly

There is no doubting the value of volunteers within the health and community not-for-profit sector. These volunteers are involved with a myriad of tasks and responsibilities, from board level to office support.

A recent US study undertaken by the *Independent Sector*, has identified the dollar value of volunteering at an hourly rate. They have estimated the value at \$16.54 per hour. This is in \$US which, at current rates, equates to \$27.36 per hour.* A most valuable commodity.

As such, this asset needs regular feeding. When volunteers join an organisation, they bring with them a variety of skills. Good volunteer management involves a commitment to both enhance those skills and develop new ones that will not only benefit the organisation, but also the individual.

This can be done by making use of relevant courses currently on offer. These range from one day short courses to longer accredited courses in various formats. This can mean traditional classroom learning, open learning via the internet or correspondence, or a mixture of both.

An example of a course that will stimulate your volunteers as well as prove beneficial to the organisation, is *Strategic Planning* offered by the School of Volunteer Management. This is a one day course with topics that cover challenge and change, client expectations, strategic objectives, action plans and measuring performance. Another course is *Introduction to Project Management* at the Workers Education Association (WEA). This is a practical one-day workshop for people who need to get a project up and running. These courses cost \$110 and \$91 respectively. It is a small price to pay when you consider the potential benefits.

For information on management and governance courses seek out our website www.ncoss.org.au/msu or phone Liz on 9211 2599 ext 123

*from Pro Bono Australia Newsletter Volume 7, edition 4-3/3/03

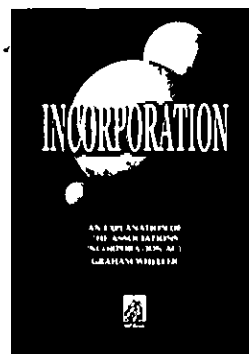
Supervision in the Helping Professions – A practical approach

The MSU has recently dealt with enquiries on the topic of professional supervision. This form of supervision is intended as an aid for senior management who may benefit from discussing management issues and tactics with a person outside the organisation and with similar experiences. It is more a form of mentoring than traditional supervision and is becoming very popular within the non-government sector.

As a result, the MSU Library has purchased a book titled *Supervision in the Helping Professions – A practical approach*. The book was written by Michael Carroll, Mary McMahon and Wendy Patton and published in 2002. As well as exploring supervision in the more traditional areas of practice-based psychology, the book covers professions not previously connected to supervision. It has fresh and interesting ideas covering viewpoints that include the area of professional supervision, exploring supervision in a variety of settings and exploring the differences between peer support and peer supervision.

If you would like to know more about this management tool, the book is available to be borrowed from the MSU library. You can access it via our website on www.ncoss.org.au/msu and then click on MSU library, or by phoning Liz on 9211 2599 ext 123

Incorporation



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p: (02) 9211 2599

w: www.ncoss.org.au/publications



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CLUBSINC: Special April offer

CLUBSINC, a computer software company has developed specialised compliance software for incorporated associations.

The software provides solutions to association governance and risk management issues. It assists with the day-to-day running of organisations' affairs such as tasks and events, contacts, membership and committee matters, association meetings, asset and insurance management, policies, common seal, and rosters and also provides checklists, frequently asked questions and reminders.



As a special deal for NCOSS, the software developers, Scolari Software has offered 12 months user support valued at \$110.00 for no charge to organizations who purchase and pay for the software by 30 April 2003. The software and 12 months support normally costs \$621.50, but with this special offer it will cost \$511.50 inc GST and delivery is by registered post.

Further details, a demonstration, order forms and on-line ordering are available: www.clubsinc.com

Contact

Michael Duffy, Scolari Software
phone: 1800 33 44 34

Energy and Water Ombudsman hosts residential park forum

On 26 February the Energy and Water Ombudsman (EWON) hosted a forum, which brought together for the first time key residential park stakeholders to discuss the major electricity issues affecting residents.

Representing the residential park operators, the Camping and Caravan Association of NSW and the Department of Land and Water Conservation met with spokespeople from the Parks and Village Service, the Affiliated Park Residents' Association, the Northern Alliance of Park Residents Association and the Western Sydney and Hawkesbury Park Residents Association to discuss electricity provision issues. Also participating were representatives from the Department of Fair Trading, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, the Council on the Aging, the Department of Community Services, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, the Ministry of Energy and Utilities, and a range of electricity providers throughout the State.

EWON is uniquely placed to bring the major parties together to listen to each other's viewpoints. Many of the participants indicated that they have never had the opportunity to do this before, and they appreciated the opportunity to share opinions in an open and independent forum.

At the forum, the following electricity issues affecting residential park residents were raised:

- Problems accessing the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance Scheme (EAPA)
- Resident access to pensioner rebates and concessions
- The quality of electricity supply in some residential parks
- Service access fees charged by operators

Forum participants also resolved the issue of the application of 'green' or 'pure' energy tariffs to residents. Although some residential parks had signed up for green energy, it was generally agreed that this higher tariff

could not be passed on to park residents. EWON agreed to continue to provide information to both park operators and residents on the application of tariffs and charges.

The range of complaints EWON has received has shown that people living in residential parks can face many difficulties in accessing the same services and protections that other electricity consumers enjoy. Our aim is to work together with providers, residents, government, and industry to improve standards for all electricity consumers.

The Energy & Water Ombudsman (EWON) provides an independent way of resolving complaints for residential park and boarding house residents about the provision of electricity. Consumers with enquiries or complaints about the supply of electricity can contact EWON on Freecall 1800 246 545. EWON is independent of the industry and the service is free to consumers.



NCOSS

POSITION VACANT ?

Use NCOSS Community Jobs!

To get the word out about your job vacancy, list it on the NCOSS web site! **Community Jobs** assists community and welfare sector organisations find quality staff and is the #1 destination for the many people who visit our site every week. **Community Jobs** is available to all organisations in the community sector, as well as all levels of government.

- Advertisements can be as detailed or brief as you prefer - you can also supply selection criteria and job descriptions
- Listings are placed on-line within one working day of NCOSS receiving the details and remain on-line until applications close
- Send in your listing using the form on our website at: www.ncoss.org.au/jobs
- **Great rates** (includes GST) We will invoice you once the ad is on-line:
 - Community sector & non-profit**
 - NCOSS member - \$33
 - Non-member - \$44
 - Government & Corporate**
 - NCOSS affiliate - \$55
 - Non-affiliate - \$66

For more info call Stephen - (02) 9211 2599 ext 115 or email <webjobs@ncoss.org.au>

http://

www.ncoss.org.au/jobs

Conferences and seminars

Strengthening Communities

People Place Partnerships 2

- 29-30 April 2003
- Wesley Conference Centre, Sydney

People Place Partnerships 2 is about strengthening communities and focuses on people, where they live and how they relate with each other. The conference will offer a valuable opportunity to exchange information and ideas on key initiatives and successes, and explore the lessons learnt about working in partnership with communities in community renewal and capacity building.

Registration info:

visit PPP2: www.hotelpp2.com

More info:

email: ppp2@hotelpp2.com
phone: (02) 9411 4666

Just and Vibrant Communities

LGCSAA National Conference

- 28-30 July 2003
- Townsville, Queensland

This conference is about community cultural development and planning that helps to create sustainable communities that are just, fair, vibrant and creative.

Five themes have been identified as core to the Conference:

- Is integrated community planning a foundation for sustainable communities?
- Social Capital - What are the benefits for local communities?
- How does the contribution of arts, culture and diversity assist in building vibrant communities?
- How can local communities strengthen just outcomes and human rights?
- Is the emphasis on efficiency and corporatisation impacting on local democracy, community development and community services?

Call for Papers, sponsorship opportunities, important dates and accommodation options

More info:

Marie Noy
phone: 07 3000 2258
email: events@lgaq.asn.au
web: www.lgcsaa.org.au

Unemployment

Call for papers - 2003 National Conference on Unemployment

- 10-12 December 2003
- University of Newcastle

A number of themes have been identified for the conference including: welfare to work issues; macroeconomic policy; regional and environmental issues; the future of work; and globalisation. A call for papers is now underway. Abstracts should be submitted by 30th May to coffee@newcastle.edu.au

More info:

web: e1.newcastle.edu.au/coffee/conferences/2003/index

Housing

Enhancing tenancy outcomes and strengthening communities: Redevelopment of public housing estates

- 17 June 2003
- Sydney University

Shelter NSW is holding a 1-day seminar on community renewal and redevelopment of public housing estates. The venue is the Architecture Lecture Theatre 1, Wilkinson Building, Sydney University, 148 City Road, Darlingtown, Sydney. The seminar is sponsored by the Ian Buchan Fell Housing Research Centre of the University of Sydney.

More info:

web: www.sheltersnsw.org.au
Craig Johnston or Flora Armaghanian
phone: (02) 93675733.

Families

A strengths based approach to working with families

- 17 May 2003
- Macquarie University Sydney

This conference is based on the "Seeing is Believing" program which has been developed for Australian use by Dr. Catherine McMahon and Dr. Cathrine Fowler.

The strengths Based Approach to working with families is introduced followed by a session on developing observational skills when working with families.

Video case studies are central to the workshops where participants develop and practise skills in applying the strengths based approach.

More info:

Marina Harvey
phone: (02) 9850 9852
email: mharvey@aces1.aces.mq.edu.au
web: www.aces.mq.edu.au/cfce

Disability

LifeActivities International Conference on Disability

- 21-24 September 2003
- Newcastle NSW Australia

Topics will include:

- Creativity in Service Design
- Building Community Capacity
- Creative Caring / Supporting Families as Primary Carers
- Initiatives in Training and professional Development
- Beyond Disability/ Living and Dreaming

Keynote speakers will include:

- Dr Patricia A Morrissey, Commissioner for the US Department of Health & Human Sciences
- Dr Colleen Wieck, Executive Director for the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities.

More info:

web: www.lifeactivities.org.au/conference

Sustainability

In Search of Sustainability Internet Conference

- February - October 2003

A progressive internet conference from February to October 2003 which is open to Australians from all walks of life and which aims to stimulate wide public discussion on Australia's search for sustainability by tackling a different theme each month.

The conference is a series of internet meetings and discussions that will take place over nine months, followed by a face-to-face conference in Canberra in November 2003. A keynote address will set the scene for each month's topic and can be downloaded free from the conference site.

Conference Topics are:

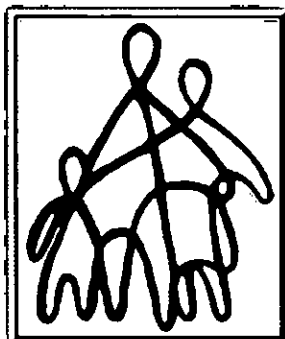
- April: Land Use and Natural Resources
- May: Energy
- June: Equity and Peace
- July: Economic Systems
- August: Climate
- September: Labour Force and Work
- October: Transportation and Urban Design

More info:

phone: 02 6288 0823
email: office@isosconference.org.au
web: www.isosconference.org.au

If you have a conference to advertise, please contact Stephen at NCOSS:
tel: 9211 2599 ext 115
fax: (02) 9281 1968
email: stephen@ncoss.org.au

Visit the NCOSS Website!



The NCOSS Website is updated regularly making relevant information available through the Internet to NCOSS members and anyone else interested in social policy and community development. There are plenty of reasons to visit often...

Media Releases

Media Releases: up-to-date releases, plus an archive, sorted by subject.

Jobs

Community Jobs: Find jobs in the NSW community sector - over 400 listings in 2001!

Hot Issues

Hot issues: information and updates on, and resources for, important community sector issues.

Bookshelf

Bookshelf: archive of submissions, articles, conference papers, speeches and library info.

Links

Links: extensive and up-to-date list of links to community and welfare organisations' websites.

Conferences

Conferences: details, programs and registrations for upcoming NCOSS conferences.

Membership

Membership: information on, and application for, NCOSS membership is available on our site.

Publications

Publications: order NCOSS publications through our website.

Social Policy

Social Policy: Social policy development of issues in NSW is a crucial part of NCOSS's work.

About NCOSS

About NCOSS: the vision, goals and strategic plan of NCOSS, the NCOSS Board and staff.

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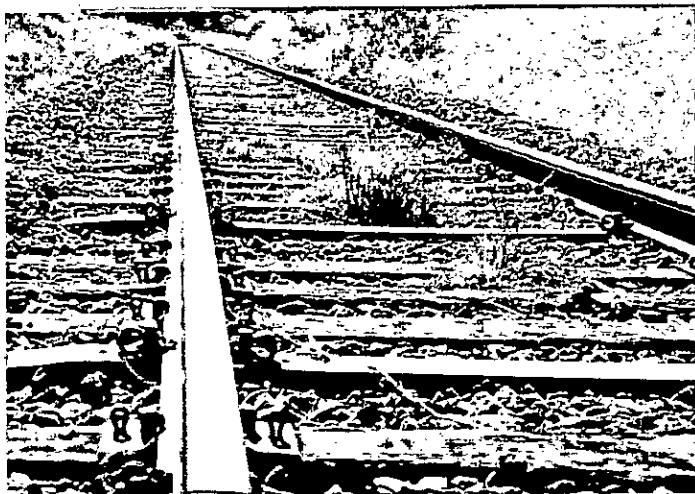
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WWW.NCOSS.ORG.AU

just

POLICY

A Journal of Australian Social Policy
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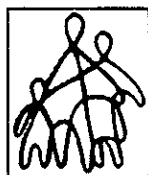
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**'When I feed the poor, they call me a saint.
When I ask why the poor are hungry they
call me a communist.'**

Bishop Dom Helder Camara

Poverty can be eliminated

**There are no simple solutions to poverty in
Australia. It is a complex problem with many
interrelated causes and effects.**

**However, there is much that we, as a society, can
do to eliminate poverty.**

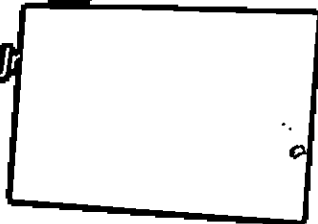
**If you are concerned about inequality and
disadvantage, there are a number of things you
can do.**

**Some ideas for actions are outlined on page 4.
Send the message to our elected representatives
that you want to live in a society where every
effort is made to eliminate poverty.**

**It is vital that we act now to create a fair and just
society with equal opportunities.**

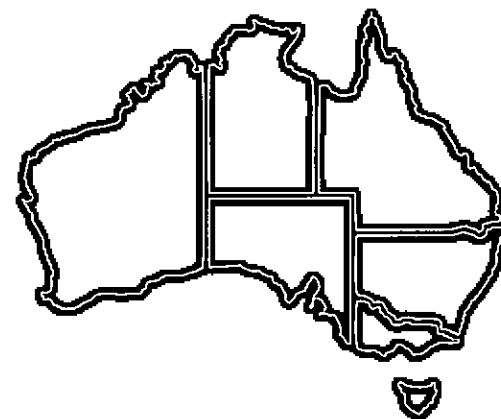
**'True compassion is more than flinging a
coin at a beggar; it comes to see that an
edifice which produces beggars needs
restructuring.'**

Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr



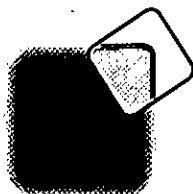
NCAP supporting organisations include:

Adelaide Central Mission; Anglicare Australia; Anglicare Brisbane; Anglicare Victoria;
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Religious Institutes; Australian Consumers' Association; Australian Council of
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Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations; Australian National
Association for Mental Health; Australian National Organisation of the
Unemployed; Australian Pensioners and Superannuants Federation; Australian
Services Union North Queensland; Australian Services Union, NSW & ACT
(Services) Branch; Baptist Union of Australia; Bear in Mind; Berry Street Victoria;
Blind Citizens Australia; Borderlands Co-operative; Brimbank Community
Initiatives Inc; Brotherhood of St Laurence; Carers Victoria; Catholic Commission
for Justice, Development and Peace Melbourne (JDP); Catholic Social Services;
Centre on Housing Rights and Eviction; Children's Welfare Association of
Victoria Inc; Colony 47 Inc; Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association
of NSW; Commission for Mission, Uniting Church in Australia (Victoria);
Community Advocacy Unit; Consumer Law Centre Victoria; Council of Single
Mothers and Their Children, Victoria; Council to Homeless Persons; Darebin City
Council; Disability Employment Action Centre; Dominican Sisters of North
Adelaide; Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria; Fairwear (Victoria); Federation
of Community Legal Centres; Financial and Consumer Rights Council Inc; Fitzroy
Legal Service; Footscray Youth Housing Group; Forster Neighbourhood Centre;
Good Shepherd Social Justice Network; Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service;
Hanover Welfare Services; Head Injury Council of Australia; Indo-China Refugee
Association; Islamic Council of Victoria; James Cook University (Cairns) Student
Association; Jesuit Social Services; Justice and Peace Promoter;
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney; MacKillop Family Services; Melbourne Anglican
Social Responsibilities Committee; Melbourne Citymission; Melbourne Unitarian
Peace Memorial Church; Missionaries of the Sacred Heart Justice and Peace
Office; Missionary Sisters of Service; Moreland City Council; National Association
of Community Legal Centres; National Council of Single Mothers and their
Children; National League for Democracy (Liberated Area) Australia; National
Shelter; National Social Responsibility and Justice, Uniting Church in Australia;
National Union of Students; NetAct; Newcastle University Student Association;
Northern Territory University Students' Union; Notre Dame University Student
Government; NSW Association for Mental Health; NSW Council of Social Service;
NSW Teachers Federation; Older Persons Action Centre; Over 50's Association;
Pax Christi Australia (NSW); Pax Christi Australia (Victoria); People Living with
HIV/AIDS; People with Disabilities; Presentation Sisters and Christian Brothers
for Justice; Preston Reservoir Progress Association; Prosper Australia; Public
Interest Advocacy Centre; Queensland Council of Unions; Reach Out For Kids
Foundation; Ross House Association; Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology;
Northern Campus Student Union; Salvation Army (Victoria); Salvation Army
Australia Eastern Territory; SANE Australia; Shelter NSW; Shelter Victoria;
Shepparton and Benalla; Regional Financial Counselling Service; Sisters of Charity;
Sisters of Mercy, Townsville Congregation; Sisters of St Joseph Australia; Social
Action Office; Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes Queensland; Social
Policy and Advocacy Research Centre; Australian Catholic University; South
Australian Anti Poverty Working Group; South Australian Council of Social Service;
St Mary's House of Welcome; St Vincent de Paul Society; Tasmania University Union;
Tasmanian Council of Social Service; Tenants' Union of NSW; Tenants' Union of
Victoria; The Body Shop; The Mercy Foundation; Transport Workers' Union
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Women's Rights Action Network Australia; Youth Projects Inc.
www.bsl.org.au/ncapwebsite



**Poverty isn't
a crime
Ignoring it is**

The National Coalition Against Poverty
www.bsl.org.au/ncapwebsite



Expanded role for the NSW Ombudsman in community services

From 1 December 2002, the Community Services Commission will be amalgamating with the NSW Ombudsman, which is an independent and impartial watchdog body. This means an expanded role for the Ombudsman in relation to community services in NSW.

The new arrangements offer a strong foundation for —

- promoting and protecting the rights and best interests of consumers of community services in NSW;
- assisting service providers to meet their obligations under the community welfare legislation;

The Ombudsman will carry out his new role under the *Community Services (Complaints, Reviews & Monitoring) Act* and the *Ombudsman Act*, as amended by the *Community Services Legislation Amendment Act 2002*.

A new statutory division known as the Community Services Division will be established to carry out these functions for the Ombudsman. The Division will be headed by the Community and Disability Services Commissioner as Deputy Ombudsman.

What community services will the Ombudsman cover?

Any services provided by —

- the Department of Community Services (DoCS)
- the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC)
- Organisations that are funded, licensed or authorised by the Minister for Community Services, Ageing and Disability Services.

Services include the exercising of statutory or other functions by service providers — such as child protection or out-of-home-care decision making.

Services that are covered include licensed boarding houses; disability day, support, respite and accommodation services; children's services; early intervention; child protection and out of home care services; homeless persons accommodation; ageing and home and community care services; neighbourhood and family support services.

What can the Ombudsman do?

- **Deal with oral and written complaints** about the conduct of a community service provider or an employee of such a service. The Ombudsman will deal with each complaint objectively but with a strong emphasis on local resolution where possible.
- **Review complaints handling systems** within services or in program areas and make recommendations for improvements.
- **Inquire into major issues** affecting consumers and services. This can be about a single service or across a program.
- **Review the situation of people in care.** A review looks into the circumstances of a child or group of children in care; or a person or group of people with disabilities in care. The Ombudsman will report to the relevant Minister, service provider and other appropriate persons on the results of the review, and can also make recommendations to improve the welfare and interests of the person or group of people.



- **Review the deaths of certain children and people with a disability in care**, including residents of licensed boarding houses, looking at the causes and patterns of death and recommending ways to improve services to reduce early or preventable deaths.
- **Coordinate Community Visitors** in their visits to licensed boarding houses, residential services for children and young people in care and accommodation services for people with a disability in full-time care. Visitors try to resolve residents' concerns at the local level, observe the conduct of the services and report to the Ombudsman and Minister.
- **Monitor, review and set standards** for the delivery of community services.
- **Educate and inform** service providers about how to improve their services to consumers, and inform consumers about their rights.
- **Promote access to advocacy support** for consumers of community services and ensure that services enable consumers to participate in decisions that affect them.

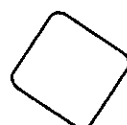
How will the Ombudsman assess standards of services and conduct?

The primary criteria are -

- the best interests of the consumer; and
- compliance with the objects, principles and provisions of the community welfare legislation.

The Ombudsman is not an advocate for individual consumers, but promotes improvements in the delivery of community services and the rights and best interests of consumers through its recommendations.

If you have any queries or comments, please call on the numbers provided below.



Contact details

Level 24 580 George Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Inquiries 9-4 Monday to Friday
or at other times by appointment

General inquiries: 02 9286 1000

Toll free (outside Sydney metro): 1800 451 524

Tel. typewriter (TTY): 02 9264 8050

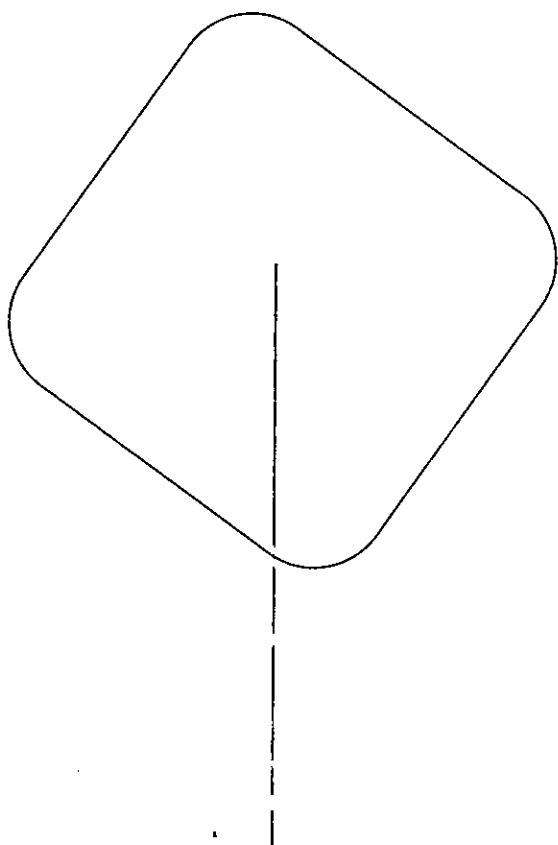
Facsimile: 02 9283 2911

Email: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Telephone Interpreter Service (TIS): 131 450
We can arrange an interpreter through TIS or you can contact TIS yourself before speaking to us.

This brochure is one of a series of information brochures produced by the NSW Ombudsman. For more information, contact the Publications Officer on 9286 1000. Feedback is welcome. Printed November 2002.



APPLICATIONS INVITED

NSW HUMAN SERVICES BETTER SERVICE DELIVERY PROGRAM

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION PARTICIATION

Non-government human service organisations are invited to participate in the Better Service Delivery Program, and to apply for resources to assist their participation.

The Better Service Delivery Program is designed to enable human services to use modern technologies to support their work. It will assist clients to gain access to the services that they require. Agencies will potentially save significant time and money by gaining accurate and timely information about services and making appropriate client referrals.

The Program is being led by the NSW Office of Information Technology, Department of Information Technology and Management in partnership with the Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS). 8 other NSW Government Human Service Departments are involved.

A new referral system, ReferralLink, will provide a secure electronic system to send client information to agencies after the client has provided consent. It will be supported by ServiceLink – a directory of human services across New South Wales, and HS Net – a web-based communications network for all NSW human service agencies.

The Program is able to support the participation of non-government organisations by providing a limited volume of training, support and computers. If your non-government organisation provides a human service and sends and/or receives client referrals, your organisation may benefit from participating in the Program and should consider making an application.

Applications for participation are being invited for Stage 1 follows. [Applications for Stages 2 and 3 will be invited early in 2003].

Stage	Regions	Applications available	Closing Date for Applications
1	Hunter, Central Coast, Northern Rivers, North Coast, Illawarra, Southern NSW,	9 December 2002	7 Feb 2003

A briefing about the application process will be held in each region in the next few weeks.

To request an Application Kit, contact:

BSDP Applications, Phone: (02) 9463 3240

For enquiries about the application process & briefings, please contact:

Peter Samsa, Council of Social Service NSW, Phone: (02) 9211 2599 extension 124, or 0407 937 823, e-mail: peters@ncoss.org.au



Council of Social Service of New South Wales

The Management Support Unit (MSU)

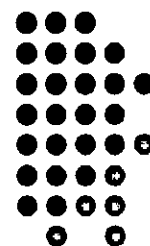
has been established to facilitate access to training and resources on management and governance for non-government organisations funded by NSW Health.

Information can be found on the NCOSS website: www.ncoss.org.au/msu

For information tailored to your own needs, contact the

Management Support Unit (MSU) at NCOSS on (02) 9211 2599 ext 123

or email liz@ncoss.org.au



NCOSS
66 Albion Street,
Surry Hills 2010
Phone: 02 9211 2599
Fax: 02 9281 1968
Email: info@ncoss.org.au

The Management Support Unit is funded by NSW Health



Ticked off: Regional research on tenancy data bases and homelessness

by Catherine Mahony

For a number of years now the existence of tenancy database services or blacklists has been identified as a barrier for disadvantaged people trying to access the private rental market.

In the NCOSS publication *Cash and Cowboys*, (Johnston, 1999) tenancy database services are defined as:

"formalised databases on tenants' histories beyond the records that would be kept in any one provider's databases, where information on tenants is exchanged between providers. The use of these databases could prohibit a tenant's re-entry into the rental market where information in them is used to refuse an application for a tenancy."

These blacklists have raised specific concerns about privacy and the 'factual' nature of the data held about tenants.

Tenancy database services began to emerge in response to the *Privacy Act of 1988* (Commonwealth) in 1991. The Act limited restricted access to credit reports to credit providers, thus preventing real estate agents from using these databases to access information about a prospective tenants credit history. One of the largest tenancy database services is the Tenancy Information Centre Australasian Holdings Ltd or TICA. According to its website, the TICA System will enable real estates to 'enquire if a tenancy applicant has previously defaulted prior to placing them into your property'. However the term 'default' is not restricted to Tribunal orders and can be a subjective opinion of the real estate or owner.

Where tenants breach agreements landlords and real estate agents have



"There are very limited opportunities for tenants to rectify incorrect information about them."

access to remedies under the Residential Tenancies Act and the Landlord and Tenant (Rental Bonds) Act. Listing tenants with a tenancy database is basically a punitive measure. According to the federal privacy commissioner, Malcolm Compton, these 'listings often follow an argument

with an estate agent, and were insidious because they occur without the knowledge of the consumer who suddenly found him or herself unable to rent' (SMH, 11/11/02).

Some of the key consumer issues relating to tenancy database services include:

- Tenants usually don't know they are on a database or will be placed on one. There is even less opportunity for them to know *why* they are listed
- Information supplied by agents and landlords is usually taken at face value rather than obtained from the Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal. This increases the likelihood of the spread of *disinformation* about tenants
- There are very limited opportunities for tenants to rectify incorrect information about them. -

Consequently data may not be corrected or updated.

- A tenant may remain listed for unacceptably long periods of time. It is common practice for tenant records involving debt to remain on a database for another five years after the debt has been cleared.
- All these factors have the potential to adversely impact on a tenant's capacity to access housing in the private rental market.

Research undertaken in the Tweed Valley area will provide very useful data on the relationship between tenant databases on homelessness. Leone Crayden from the Tweed River Valley Fellowship has undertaken research in this area as part of a Graduate Diploma in Social Sciences. This has included interviewing 150 people seeking emergency housing assistance in a six-month period. Initial analysis indicates that at least 65% of these people were listed on the TICA database. The research has also included interviews with 20 real estate agents and will be available early next year.

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NCOSS

The Council of Social Service of New South Wales represents more than 7000 service delivery and consumer groups through its organisational membership.

For information about membership call NCOSS on (02) 9211 2599.

66 Albion Street
Surry Hills NSW 2010
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web: www.ncoss.org.au

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NCOSS News

NCOSS News is published eleven times each year.

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Stephen Crowley

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Get the word out! NCOSS News is delivered to over 850 members and community sector and government organisations throughout NSW every month. Call the Publications Officer to discuss rates and specifications.

There are special rates for NCOSS members.

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When calling NCOSS, once you hear the auto-prompt, simply dial the extension number for the staff member you require. This will save you time as you will by-pass Reception.

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newsletter, publications and brochure production, NCOSS website, IT support

Visit the NCOSS website at www.ncoss.org.au

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presents

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About

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Com•Management was established to support people working in the Community Service Sector at a most crucial stage in the sector's history. Committee members, managers and co-ordinators are having to deal with the increased needs of government employment and tax legislation, technological change, agency requirements, and community and government expectations against a background of difficult inadequate funding, increased competitive pressures and ever-growing demand.

The staff and associates of Com•Management, who between them have considerable community service and private sector management and consulting experience, are aligned with the needs of the sector and through careful research and discussions with practitioners are able to develop and present relevant and easily accessed resources to assist the community service organisation.

Australian Community Management Magazine

Com•Management publishes the sector magazine, **Australian Community Management** five times per year. This informative guide is a reliable, up-to-date source of information for Managers in the Australian Community Services Sector. Subscribe today to receive the latest updates, sector specific supplements and discounts on training courses, events and books.

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FEES

- \$198.00 (includes GST) per person, per workshop.
- \$187.00 (includes GST) per person, per workshop. For registration and payment 3 weeks prior to beginning of workshop.
- \$170.50 (includes GST) per person, per workshop for Community Management subscribers.
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- \$98.00 (includes GST & postage) One Year Subscription to Australian Community Management Magazine.

For any enquiries please call **(02) 9818 1709**.

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Workshops start with arrival coffee at 8.30am for a 9am start, finish at 4.30pm and include morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Please note: We cannot refund workshop fees unless you give 14 days notice prior to the workshop commencing.

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If registering for a workshop please tick the workshop/s you wish to attend.

LOCATION	MANAGING STAFF	IMPROVING STAFF PERFORMANCE
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Melbourne	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 February 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 February 03
Brisbane	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 February 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 February 03
Hobart	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 March 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 March 03
Adelaide	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 March 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 21 March 03
Perth	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 March 03	<input type="checkbox"/> 25 March 03
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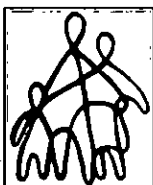
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What is NCOSS doing about the election?

A number of organisations have inquired recently about what NCOSS is planning in the lead-up to the State election. The answer is that our strategies are already well underway!

As much of the policy announced in the election campaign will form the basis for the next State budget, NCOSS has been focusing on lobbying related to the Budget. The timing of this work is important because most Budget decisions will be finalised before the end of the year. While the full printed version of our Pre-Budget Submission will not be launched until next year, we have sent our recommendations to all Ministers and Shadow Ministers and sought meetings to discuss what we see as the priorities for social justice. On 8 November we joined representatives of the Council on the Ageing and the Ethnic Communities Council in a meeting with the Treasurer, Michael Egan MLC.

NCOSS is now gearing up for the election campaign itself. Priorities for disadvantaged people and community welfare organisations were identified through our regional consultations in June-July and the *State We're In* conference in August. Building upon this work, we are working with peak organisations and other interested groups to develop a series of campaigns targeting specific issues.

Already, the Beyond Bars Alliance, supported by NCOSS, has drawn significant media attention to the destructive nature of the law and order debate and some of the myths that underpin it. NCOSS will also be supporting the NSW Disability Action Alliance, which recently held an election forum at Parliament House. Our campaign for fair and equitable transport concessions is well underway (see the box at left for more detail) and

the Aged Care Alliance, supported by NCOSS, has recently finalised its state election kit.

NCOSS will be following similar strategies in relation to each of the key policy areas in which we are involved. Where possible, we will be supporting collaborative efforts with other peak organisations. Where there is no peak

"Where possible, we will be supporting collaborative efforts with other peak organisations."

organisation able to take on this role – as was the case with transport concessions – NCOSS will play a coordination role.

If you have any ideas about strategies or policy issues that should be highlighted, or if you are planning an event and would like NCOSS support, please contact the relevant NCOSS policy officer – see the inside front cover of *NCOSS News* for details. The best way to stay in touch with our work is through the Hot Issues section of our website (www.ncoss.org.au/hot).

Campaign for fair and equitable transport concessions

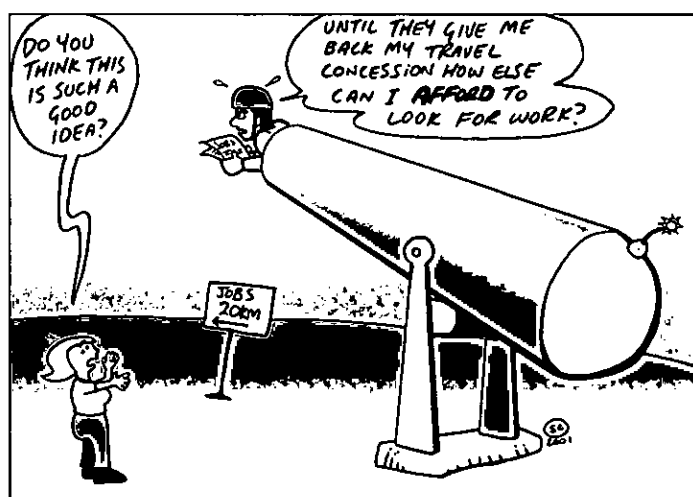
NCOSS has launched a campaign for fair and equitable transport concessions. While a review of transport concessions has been underway since 1999, the results have not been published and no reforms have been implemented.

Meanwhile

many disadvantaged people are forced to pay full fares for transport, making it unaffordable in many cases.

To raise the profile of this issue, NCOSS has developed a campaign kit that includes a statement of principles, a fact sheet and campaign tips. We encourage you to obtain this campaign kit from the Hot Issues section of the NCOSS website (www.ncoss.org.au/hot), distribute the materials as widely as possible and use them in your own campaign.

In particular, we encourage you to endorse and return the **Statement of Principles** so that we can demonstrate broad community support for reform of transport concessions. Inquiries about the campaign can be directed to me at NCOSS – phone 9211 2599 or email alan@ncoss.org.au.



NCOSS Updates



Proclamation of Care and Protection legislation

NCOSS has continued to work with the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies to push for proclamation of the Children's Guardian's powers. NCOSS will be represented on a new committee, established by the Minister for Community Services, which will provide advice on issues including options for proclamation.



Social Housing Reforms

The Department of Housing intends to introduce renewable tenancies in late November. The introduction of bonds will not occur until next year and the level of bond required from tenants has yet to be finalised. If the introduction of bonds is to proceed, the level required should not exceed the amount of rent (rebated for 90% of tenants) x 4 weeks; this is consistent with private rental practice. A letter to this effect has been sent to the Minister/Director General.



Pre-School Campaign

A strategic Planning Day was held to map out future action. A decision has been made to produce an election kit and to seek further meetings with cross benches and other interested parties. NCOSS and Country Children's recently appeared on a panel at a public meeting on the Central Coast organised by concerned parents. We are also assisting them to prepare newspaper articles/opinion pieces. The Macquarie University students at NCOSS have completed their project and a few case studies will be used as part of the kit.



Commonwealth State Housing Agreement

The proposed new CSHA was tabled at the Housing Ministers meeting on 25 October. It is a five-year agreement that cuts the base rate from \$805m to \$725m a year (nationally) because of withdrawal of GST compensation and the 'efficiency dividend'.

The positives are that there will be another CSHA, for a slightly longer term and thus a degree of security for state/territory housing authorities. However, the reduced contribution from the Commonwealth (although expected) will create added pressures for all jurisdictions.



RentStart

NCOSS met with the Department of Housing recently to discuss the impact of *RentStart* no longer providing assistance with removalist costs or utility bonds on clients. The Department agreed to liaise directly with the utility providers on this issue. The Department also indicated it was willing to consider a new needs-based criteria for some form of removalist assistance. Case studies of the impact of the changes to the scheme are being collected from a range of agencies including MRCs.



Asylum seekers

NCOSS has completed a submission to the DIMIA review of Settlement Services. The submission emphasised the importance of extending settlement services to TPV holders, even though this issue was technically outside the scope of the review. The submission also discussed how to improve the relationship between funder and community agencies; issues in the present funding arrangements; the role of Migrant Resource Centres; improving access to English classes for all migrants; and expanding services provided under the Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Scheme.



Health-related transport

NCOSS is organising a forum on health related transport in conjunction with Mountains Community Transport. This is scheduled for December 6. The Department of Health has agreed to provide funding to cover the cost of the venue.



Participation in Health

NCOSS presented a paper on community participation in the Government Action Plan for Health at the IAP2 Conference: *Building democracy or manufacturing compliance*. NCOSS also presented a paper on community participation in the development of the Hospital Discharge Framework at the NSW Health Consumer Forum.



Chronic illness

NCOSS has signed a joint statement on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) which was developed through the NSW Cancer

Council. This statement addresses issues of cost, consumer participation in decisions about the PBS, and strategies to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the PBS. The statement was developed with full participation by ACOSS.



Children's Services Framework

NCOSS will co-sponsor, with the Department of Community Services, the development of a children's services framework. The process will be similar to that used in CSGP, although hopefully somewhat shorter given processes now clarified. Children's services peaks will be invited to participate.



Association of Homeless Persons Services

NCOSS has been assisting this Association in its attempts to secure funding. Established for over 17 years, the Association represents most SAAP services that are not members of the Women's Refuge Movement or the Youth Accommodation Association, including family services, generalist services and former proclaimed places.

Shifting Ground



An NCOSS book for community organisations who need assistance in dealing with the application of competition policy and competitive tendering.

Available from NCOSS:

p: (02) 9211 2599

w: www.ncoss.org.au/publications



\$25.30

\$21.45 (members)



Wasteful \$200m super tax cut for the rich

On 18 November, the Senate considered the Federal Government's bill to reduce the Superannuation Surcharge for contributions made on behalf of income-earners on more than \$90,000 per year from a maximum of 15% down to 10.5% over the next three years

ACOSS urged the Senate to oppose the Government's proposal to lower the Superannuation Surcharge Tax which is nothing more than a windfall for the top 5% income earners in the country.

The proposal is an unnecessary and wasteful tax cut for high income-earners.

It will also come at a cost to revenue of \$200 million annually by 2005-06 - a sum that could be used to improve services for low and middle income earners.

It would be a travesty to introduce this giveaway to the highest income earners when the budget is already under strain.

Why should families who need support wait for improvements in benefits and services while the people who least need it wallow in a windfall?

The proposal does nothing to resolve the inequities of the current flat 15% tax regime for employer super contributions where:

- a worker on \$15,000 saves just two cents per dollar off the income they would normally pay on their wage;
- a worker earning \$30,000 saves just 17 cents;
- in contrast a worker on \$80,000 saves 34 cents; and
- someone earning \$100,000 saves 19 cents despite the surcharge.

The proposed wasteful windfall for high income earners should not be implemented.

Housing bubble shows the folly of capital gains tax cuts

ACOSS has called on the Federal Government to curb negative gearing and revisit the Capital Gains Tax cuts to end an economically dangerous housing "bubble".

The recent interest rate cuts in the US show that the US economy is in danger of falling back into recession.

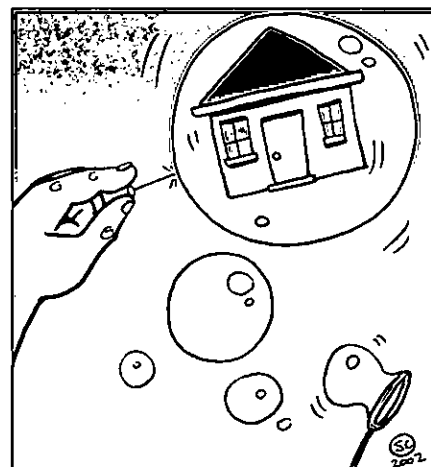
One lesson from the US experience is that speculative investment bubbles leave a nasty hangover. They should be stopped before they do too much damage. The best way to stop our own housing bubble is to go to the source of the problem and curb negative gearing.

The alternative - higher interest rates - would be too painful and too dangerous in today's uncertain times.

Australia is awash with speculative investment in housing, funded by unprecedented levels of borrowing. Borrowing to buy investment properties doubled over the past four years and is now worth \$4 to \$5 billion every month. Negative gearing schemes are now being marketed aggressively to low and middle income earners who are unaware of the risks.

This has done little to resolve the housing crisis for people on the lowest incomes. Instead it has made buying a home more than 20% costlier than a year ago. The housing bubble also worries the Reserve Bank. That means interest rates are probably higher than they need to be, given the precarious state of the international economy.

When the housing boom subsides, the promoters of negative gearing schemes will move on to the next asset boom, possibly inner city offices. When the bubble finally bursts, people will be saddled with high debt levels. Many jobs will be lost and the economy will take years to recover.



Three years ago, the Government trumpeted its Capital Gains tax cuts as a spur to investment, especially in new technology. It has indeed boosted

"The negative gearing tax rort is not just costly and unfair - it is economically dangerous."

investment - but of the wrong kind. Australia avoided the worst excesses of the international boom in IT shares. But the Capital Gains Tax cuts have fuelled a typically Australian boom in negatively-g geared property investment. Instead of spurring Australia's economic development, the gains tax cuts have left a legacy of

thousands of empty inner city apartments.

The negative gearing tax rort is not just costly and unfair - it is economically dangerous. Too many people were led to believe that the fast road to wealth was to borrow massively to invest in assets like shares and property whose prices seemed to defy gravity.

As ACOSS argued at the time, Capital Gains Tax should not have been cut, especially without curbs on negative gearing.

Unless action is taken now, the Australian economy, workers, and homebuyers are going to pay a very high price.

Earlier discharge – monitoring the outcomes of hospital discharge

by Ros Bragg

NSW Health is currently finalising a new policy on hospital discharge. Following NCOSS's work on earlier discharge, a key concern is the effective monitoring of outcomes of hospital discharge. NCOSS is currently working with a group of community organisations to develop strategies to contribute to effective monitoring processes.

NSW Health is currently preparing a revised policy on hospital discharge. The Hospital Discharge Framework is in draft form, with a final document due out early in the new year. It is anticipated that the policy will be implemented from March next year, probably through a 'Breakthrough series' rather than rolling out on a state-wide basis immediately.

A key concern for NCOSS has been the lack of effective monitoring of the outcomes of hospital discharge. NCOSS has received consistent reports of consumers being discharged home without adequate community care services available. NCOSS has also received regular reports of community care services receiving referrals which they are unable to meet, whether because they are made at short notice, are outside their target group, or because the agency has already closed its books.

NCOSS is represented on the Models of Care Implementation Working Group which is developing the Hospital Discharge Framework and overseeing its implementation. NCOSS sought community input into the process of implementation and monitoring of the framework. With the support of the committee co-chair, Judy Lumby, NCOSS has convened meetings of key community agencies with an interest in effective hospital discharge.

This group, the Forum on the Hospital Discharge Framework, has met twice. Approximately forty organisations are participating in this process, including community care peaks and networks,

HACC DOs, chronic illness organisations, population peak bodies, a Division of General Practice, and others.

The Forum has identified as a key task the development of a form to capture any problems with the process of hospital discharge. A working group has been established to prepare a form and it has produced a preliminary draft of a form for community care service providers. A separate form is being drafted for consumer advocacy organisations. Judy Lumby and NSW Health policy staff are participating in the working group process.

The issues identified for inclusion on the service provider form include:

- Whether services were notified that the consumer had gone into hospital, and whether they were contacted to resume services.
- Whether the referral was timely.
- Whether they were able to meet the referral.
- Whether they had a hospital contact person and whether liaison worked well.
- Whether they had the information they needed to provide the service appropriately.
- Whether the service or the consumer experienced any other problems.

The current thinking is to pilot the forms with some organisations in December/January, and plan for data collection in February/March to establish baseline data, with a follow-up process after the Hospital Discharge Framework has been implemented. This may be twelve months later. The community organisations involved in the process have agreed to collate the data and to feed it back into local Area Health Service, NSW Health, DADHC and other agency

planning processes. It is unlikely that the initial data will be collated prior to May 2003.

For further information:

Ros Bragg
email: rosbragg@ncoss.org.au
phone: (02) 9211 2599 ext 112

Chronic Illness Alliance of NSW

The Chronic Illness Alliance of NSW is a network of community organisations working to improve the quality of life of people with a chronic illness.

The role of the Alliance is to:

- advocate for changes which would assist people with a chronic illness, both in Government policies and in the private sector
- promote information exchange between individuals and organisations with an interest in chronic illness
- promote coordination between the different services working to assist people with a chronic illness

Organisations involved in the Alliance include self help groups, advocacy organisations, charitable organisations, and other community based agencies. Many of the organisations involved in the Alliance are focused on a specific illness or a group of similar conditions.

Some of the issues the Alliance has pursued are:

- costs of medication;
- ensuring private health insurance meets the needs of people with a chronic illness;
- community care for people with a chronic illness, including the Commonwealth Enhanced Primary Care Medicare item numbers;
- adequacy of funding for equipment through the PADP scheme.

The Alliance keeps its network informed through an e-forum and mailouts. The Alliance also runs forums on burning issues for people with a chronic illness.

The Alliance has no membership criteria and does not charge fees to participate (although we would appreciate a donation to help cover costs). We would welcome participation from organisations working with people with a chronic illness or their carers.

As at July 2002, the Alliance management committee consisted of representatives from: Alzheimers Association; Arthritis Foundation of NSW; Australian Kidney Foundation; Carers NSW; NCOSS; Cystic Fibrosis NSW; Diabetes NSW; Epilepsy Association; Hepatitis C Council; Huntington's Disease Association; Motor Neurone Disease Association; MS Society; Parkinson's NSW.

For further information:

Ros Bragg (Chairperson)
email: cia@ncoss.org.au
phone: (02) 9211 2599 ext 112
web: www.ncoss.org.au/cia

Erskineville Estate Saved

by Catherine Mahony

Residents of the Erskineville estate and community have won their campaign to save the housing estate from the governments proposed redevelopment.

This project, referred to as the "Erskineville Regeneration Project" would have resulted in the construction of an additional 450 units of housing on the site. In total the plan consisted of the demolition and replacement of the existing 140 public housing units, with an additional 450 private dwellings. This plan was to be achieved through a partnership with the private sector whereby the Department of Housing would gain improved housing stock from the developer who would, in turn, receive public land to develop for private housing. To enable the project to proceed, the residents of the estate would have been required to relocate, with the assistance of the Department, for up to two years.

Some of the key concerns of those opposed to the proposal included:

- No net increase in public housing stock to meet the high demand. There are over 100,000 people on the Department of Housing's waiting list;
- At best, the existing public tenants will be squeezed into about a third of the current land mass;
- The proposal would have resulted in a substantial increase in development of the site (an increase

of approximately 1,200 residents), resulting in real strains on existing infrastructure;

- The loss of green space and the much higher population density on the site would substantially reduce the social amenity of the estate;
- The estate is a very cohesive, well functioning community. Far from regenerating the estate, the disruption via relocation and much higher density, was likely to severely undermine the community;
- Many resent the use of the rhetoric of 'public housing ghettos' being used in relation to their estate, which they regard as a desirable place to live;
- The public housing on this estate is in good condition and should not be demolished. Considerable maintenance upgrading has been undertaken in the last two years including new roofs and ceilings, new kitchens, stoves and windows.

"The proposal would have resulted in a substantial increase in development of the site"

The Save Erko Estate group and their supporters have effectively stopped this proposal by consistently raising legitimate concerns about the impact of the redevelopment on existing and future tenants, as well as the surrounding community. The Erskineville estate example also alerts us to the need to address the broader policy

issues regarding the appropriate role of private public partnerships in the provision of social housing. This should include minimum requirements that address the needs of existing and future tenants, as well as the financial viability of the Department of Housing.

Ticked off: Regional research on tenancy data bases and homelessness

continued from page 7

Leone's research is generally concerned with tenancy databases, but the focus of her work has been specifically focused on the TICA database. From her research it appears that TICA has the most influence on the market in northern NSW. Although the research is not yet completed, it is clear from the work to date that inclusion on the TICA database, at least in northern NSW, has a strong relationship to the incidence of homelessness.

Through her work with the Tweed River Valley Fellowship, which provides support and accommodation for people with a mental illness, Leone found that a major obstacle in obtaining rental accommodation was an intangible thing called 'the black list'. In the process of assisting hundreds of homeless people to access their TICA status, Leone found that 70% were unaware they were listed on this database.

As of 20 December, tenancy database services will come under federal privacy legislation, giving tenants the right to correct information held about them. While this is an improvement on the current situation, it will not go far enough. Tenants will still incur a cost to access their files and the criteria for inclusion will not be restricted to a proven breach or default. Within this context, the research on the nexus between TICA and homelessness in the Tweed Valley area has the potential to provide evidenced based data to support increased regulation of tenancy blacklists.

"... inclusion on the TICA database... has a strong relationship to the incidence of homelessness."

"The private rental market is characterized both by a high degree of housing stress for consumers and by endemic market failures which reinforce the powerless of disadvantaged people (Johnson, p 67)." In this context the operation of tenancy database services only exacerbates this disadvantage and undermines the consumer rights of tenants.

NCOSS HAS MEETING ROOMS FOR HIRE!

Convenient and reasonably priced, they are available seven days and evenings a week. We are at the corner of Albion and Commonwealth Streets (66 Albion St) in Surry Hills, only a ten minute walk from Central Station. Also, several buses which can be joined at Eddy Avenue stop right at the door.

There are two large meeting rooms, one up and one down, each seating 50 to 70 people. There is a kitchen on both floors, with refrigerator and microwave in the upstairs kitchen. There are heaters, fans and toilets. There is wheelchair access to rooms and toilets.

The crowning glory is our lovely courtyard. In fine weather it is a delight to hold meetings there or to have refreshments served from the many folding tables we have available.

For further information, phone reception: (02) 9211-2599

Choice and equity demanded by pre-school parents

by Linda Frow

On 12 November, I had the privilege of attending and speaking at a Public Meeting on the issue of pre-school funding, held on the Central Coast. Organised by a steering committee, led by parent Melisa Mehan, this would have to have been one of the best-organised and well run public meetings I have ever attended.

Over 200 parents, staff and interested citizens (including two prospective candidates for the 2003 election) crowded in to the Niagra Park Community Centre to listen to a panel of speakers, including the parent perspective (Melisa Mehan), the Department of Community Services perspective (Mary-Jane Clarke), the peaks perspective (myself and Judy Kynaston from the Country Children's Services Association) and the Director's perspective (Joanne Merrick).

Once the meeting was opened up to the floor, the questions were politely but firmly and often passionately, directed to the DoCS' representatives, asking them to explain why parents were unable to equitably access fee relief for low income families; why parents were being forced to choose a service for their children on the basis of cost (other service types are cheaper for low income families) rather than the service they feel is best suited to the child's needs; why services were being forced to make what they considered to be ethically difficult decisions regarding which children could access fee relief; why NSW has the most expensive pre-schools in the country and why there is no commitment to the value of early childhood education.

It was interesting to note that whilst DoCS had announced increases in funding to many of the Central Coast pre-schools in the days leading up to the meeting (a redistribution of funding from services that had closed in the area some time previously!), participants in the meeting were not deflected from the central issue that pre-schools across the State are facing a funding crisis and that a more appropriate policy solution must be found – one that includes substantial funding increases.

The following resolutions were passed:

We call on the State Government to:

1. Act immediately to ensure the future of all community based pre-schools, by assessing the operational needs of centres and providing adequate recurrent funding with which to meet these needs;
2. Act immediately to ensure that families are able to choose the preschool service they desire for their children, whether that choice be the free State Department of Education pre-schools, Federal Government subsidised Long Day Care Centres or Community Based pre-schools, and further to ensure that these

choices are not dictated by cost; and

3. Act immediately to ensure that community-based pre-schools are provided with sufficient funding to meet the conditions of their funding agreements with the Department of Community Services, and to ensure that all families in NSW who are entitled to fee subsidies are able to receive them.

If you would like to find out more about the Central Coast campaign, the creative parents involved have established a website at ccccbps.nelfirms.com.



NCOSS
Insurance

Insurance update

by Sandra Handley

Are you included?

NCOSS Insurance has developed its draft eligibility criteria for the bulk-buying scheme.

When the project commenced, the aim was to obtain cover for government funded non government organisations. However many critical services were excluded with this criteria which has been broadened to state:

"NCOSS Insurance provides cover for non government, not for profit organisations based in NSW, delivering human services, or involved in community development, policy or advocacy."



To give you an indication of the level of coverage, the following organisations/groups would be included under this definition:

- Youth Services
- Community Centres
- Womens Health Centres
- Self help groups
- Accommodation services
- Out of School Hours Care
- Disability Services

Organisations that would not be able to obtain cover under this definition include:

- Hospitals
- Museums
- Libraries
- Community radio stations
- Emergency services
- Sporting and Recreational clubs
- Political parties

If you are aware of any services that would not fit into this criteria and you feel they need to be covered or if you would like to provide feedback email sandra@ncoss.org.au or phone 9211 2599, ext 104. Do not forget, if you are interested in being part of the NCOSS Insurance Scheme, please register your interest online at: www.ncoss.org.au/insurance or ring the office and we can send you a registration form.



**NCOSS
Insurance**

Do you use your car for work?

by Sandra Handley

Are you aware that if a worker uses their own car for work purposes, they may not be covered under their normal comprehensive insurance?

Below are excerpts from a letter written by Jim Piotrowski and Greg Turner from the ASU who have been investigating this issue in relation to disability services. The advice they received from insurance companies was based on whether a worker was using their car to transport clients:

The ASU has contacted the three major car companies to clarify if you would be covered by your personal comprehensive car insurance policy in the event of an accident while using your car at work. The NRMA, GIO and AAMI insurance companies all say that if you are using your car for work purposes and you want comprehensive insurance cover, it must be under a Business

Comprehensive insurance policyLiability would be denied on a personal comprehensive insurance policy if you had an accident while using your car for work related purposes. Our strong advice to members is not to use your personal car for work, particularly if you only have a personal comprehensive insurance policy ... ASU lawyers Slater & Gordon say "...that for an employer to require than an employee have their vehicle comprehensively insured is at odds with employment law that dictates that an employee should not be out of pocket when carrying out their duties on behalf of the employer..."

NCOSS Insurance also contacted these three companies using the example of a worker using their personal car to attend meetings. This time the responses were different with one company declaring business cover would be needed if the use was regular which was described as more than once a day, a second company stated that business cover would only be needed if the vehicle was being operated as a business or claimed as a tax deduction, while the third company felt that if the car was being used more than three times a week or if there was income being derived from the use business cover would be needed.

Given this conflicting environment, we recommend that anyone using their car for work purposes contact their insurance company to obtain a definition as to what constitutes business cover. If told they do not need to insure their car for business cover, it is important to get the answer in writing or alternatively write a letter to the insurance company confirming the contents of the conversation and outlining the level the car is used for work purposes. This should be reconfirmed whenever insurance is up for renewal.

Registration and CTP insurances have also been investigated. The RTA states that if a car is *primarily* used for business use (ie more than 50% of its use) it needs to be registered under business registration. The Motor Accidents Authority states that CTP insurance would be valid on a car registered for personal use being used

"We recommend anyone using their car for work purposes contact their insurance company..."

for work purposes. We will be corresponding further with both these authorities to obtain written confirmation of their responses.

What else can be done?
There are currently Non-owned Vehicle insurance

policies available that cover worker's or volunteer's excess and loss of no claims bonus. It has been suggested that brokers may be able to organise a policy that would cover workers in the event that an insurance claim fails as a result of using a personal car for work purposes. We are currently seeking more information on this.

In the meantime, NCOSS Insurance recommends not for profits ensure their workplace policies cover the use of private vehicles for work, including sections on the organisation's policy on a) refunding worker's expenses, for example if they need to upgrade to business comprehensive insurance or if there is an accident; b) a worker's insurance claim being refused on business use grounds; and c) compensation in case of an accident where a worker's vehicle does not have comprehensive insurance. More information will be provided in the next edition of *NCOSS News*.

Community groups, markets, entertainers and insurance...

... an unlikely combination, however these three areas have a lot in common in the current public liability insurance market.

Several community groups using local halls or community rooms have approached us as they are now required to obtain public liability insurance to continue using these premises. These groups include senior citizens, social, gardening and dance clubs and the quoted premiums are just not affordable. At the same time, NCOSS Insurance has received calls from community markets and events where stallholders and entertainers are now required to show their own public liability insurance which is unaffordable for casuals in particular. We are concerned that these essential community activities may cease if individuals and groups cannot afford to purchase public liability insurance. A solution proposed in many circles is incorporation.

Incorporating smaller community groups could bring together, for example, several senior citizens groups operating in an area under one body which could then purchase an insurance policy to cover its members leading to a reduction in premiums for each group. In one case, three senior citizens groups were incorporated as one body which then obtained public liability insurance for \$1,200 compared to the previous quoted figure of \$1,200 for each group. Alternatively, several different types of community groups in a suburb or Council area could incorporate, although this alternative may have more difficulties obtaining reduced public liability insurance due to the wider variety of activities and therefore risk.

In the same way, community markets and events could incorporate their stallholders or entertainers, or a group of community markets could create a stallholders association that provides insurance cover for stallholders using any of the markets.

These options have been successfully used in the community; however we recommend organisations talk to their broker before commencing any of these incorporation options to ensure that their specific situation will produce the required reduced premiums.

If you want to obtain more information about Incorporation and how to do it, you can purchase the latest edition of *Incorporation* which has just been published by NCOSS.

Government Response to Charities Definition Inquiry - 2002

Summary of Key Points

[Refer to article on page 11 opposite, for issues relating to this response]

The Government will:

- Enact a legislative definition of charity for the purpose of the administration of Commonwealth laws and adopt a majority of the Inquiry's recommendations for the definition. The definition will closely follow the current definition. It will explicitly allow not-for-profit child care available to the public, self-help bodies that have open and non-discriminatory membership and closed or contemplative religious orders that offer prayerful intervention for the public, to be charities. (see proposed definitions below)
- Write to each of the State and Territory Treasurers to gauge their interest in achieving harmonisation of laws defining charity.
- Ask the Board of Taxation to consult widely with the charitable sector on an exposure draft of the legislation. The legislation is expected to begin on 1 July 2004.
- Establish a new category of deductible gift recipient for charities whose principal activities promote the prevention and control of harmful and abusive behaviour among humans.
- Continue to exempt fringe benefits provided to employees whose duties are exclusively performed in, or in connection with, a public hospital from the \$17,000 capped fringe benefits tax (FBT) exemption, whether or not those hospitals are public benevolent institutions.
- Require from 1 July 2004, charities, public benevolent institutions and health promotion charities to be endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office in order to access all relevant taxation concessions, including income tax exemption as a charity, refundable imputation credits, deductible gift recipient status, the FBT rebate, the \$30,000 capped FBT exemption and GST concessions.
- Ensure an organisation endorsed to access tax concessions has its status attached to its ABN and be able to be publicly accessed through the Australian Business Register.
- Amend the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 to allow future additions to the list of organisations specifically named as deductible gift recipients to be prescribed by regulation.
- Allow entities established in perpetuity by the Parliament to be endorsed as deductible gift recipients from 1 July 2003.
- Amend the GST law to ensure that current GST concessions for gift deductible entities apply only to

deductible gift recipients and not to larger, non-charitable entities that operates the deductible gift recipient.

Proposed new definitions

- (1) A charity is an entity (other than an entity excluded by paragraph 9) that is not-for-profit and has a dominant purpose or purposes that are charitable and, subject to paragraph 7, for the public benefit.
- (2) In addition:
 - (a) where the entity has other purposes, those purposes must further, or be in aid of, the dominant purpose or purposes, or be ancillary or incidental to the dominant purpose or purposes; and
 - (b) the entity must have activities that further, or be in aid of, its charitable purpose or purposes; and
 - (c) the entity must not have purposes, or engage in activities, that are illegal; and
 - (d) the entity must not have a dominant purpose that is:
 - (i) advocating a political party or cause; or
 - (ii) supporting a candidate for political office; or
 - (iii) attempting to change the law or government policy.

Charitable purposes

- (3) Charitable purposes means the following:
 - (a) the advancement of health;
 - (b) the advancement of education;
 - (c) the advancement of social and community welfare, including without limitation, the care, support and protection of children and young people, including the provision of child care services;
 - (d) the advancement of religion;
 - (e) the advancement of culture;
 - (f) the advancement of the natural environment;
 - (g) other purposes beneficial to the community.
- (4) Advancement is taken to include protection, maintenance, support, research, improvement or enhancement.
- (5) In determining whether an entity has the purpose of the advancement of religion, regard is to be had to the principles established by the High Court in *Church of New Faith v Commissioner of Pay-Roll Tax* (1983) 154 CLR 120.

Public benefit

- (6) To be for the public benefit, a purpose must:
 - (a) be aimed at achieving a universal or common good; and
 - (b) have practical utility; and
 - (c) be directed to the benefit of the

general community or a sufficient section of the community.

- (7) The following entities do not have to have a dominant purpose or purposes that are for the public benefit:
 - (a) open and non-discriminatory self-help groups that have open and non-discriminatory membership;
 - (b) closed or contemplative religious orders that regularly undertake prayerful intervention at the request of the public.

Open and non-discriminatory self-help group

- (8) An open and non-discriminatory self-help group is a group of individuals where:
 - (a) the group is established for the purpose of assisting individuals affected by a particular disadvantage, discrimination or need that is not being met; and
 - (b) the group is made up of, and controlled by, individuals affected by the particular disadvantage, discrimination or need that is not being met; and
 - (c) any membership criteria relate to the purpose of the group; and
 - (d) membership of the group is open to any individual who satisfies criteria referred to in paragraph (c).

Entities

- (9) The following are excluded from being charities:
 - (a) an individual;
 - (b) a partnership;
 - (c) a political party;
 - (d) a superannuation fund;
 - (e) the Commonwealth, a State or Territory or a body controlled by the Commonwealth or a State or Territory;
 - (f) a foreign government or a body controlled by a foreign government.
- (10) For the purposes of paragraph 1, entity includes:
 - (a) a body corporate; and
 - (b) a corporation sole; and
 - (c) any association or body of persons whether incorporated or not; and
 - (c) a trust.

Not-for-profit

- (11) An entity is taken to be not-for-profit if and only if:
 - (a) it is not carried on for the profit or gain of particular persons; and
 - (b) it is prevented, either by its constituent documents or by operation of law, from distributing its assets for the benefit of particular persons either while it is operating or upon winding up.

Government response to Charities Definition

by Megan Mitchell, ACOSS

In September this year the federal Government responded to the Charity Definitions Inquiry (see attached) which reported in late 2001. After 400 years of struggling with out-of-date laws, administrative complexity and anomaly, a set of sensible reforms were highly anticipated.

The Government has indicated that it will seek to legislate to update the common law definition of charity, based on the Inquiry's recommendations. This is not a problem in itself.

However, three aspects should be of particular concern for charities:

1. The Government has failed to address the problems with the current anomalies and inconsistencies associated with Public Benevolent Institution (BPI) status.

There was a broad cross sector consensus during the conduct of the Inquiry that the definitions applying to tax incentive for charitable giving - gift deductibility - are in urgent need of modernisation. Many organisations that would be widely considered worthy of this status are denied Public Benevolent Institution status on the grounds that they are not involved in direct service delivery.

The solution put by the Inquiry was to replace PBI status with a new classification of "Benevolent Charity" comprising charities whose dominant purpose is to assist the most disadvantaged in society. The government's proposals to leave the current arrangements intact and provide exemptions for some health and harm prevention services will not address this problem.

2. The Government is seeking to exclude policy and advocacy bodies from charitable status.

Contrary to the Inquiry's recommendation, the government proposes to exclude from charitable status organisations that have as a dominant purpose "attempting to change the law or government policy".

Social research, policy development, public education and reasoned advocacy by charities is critical to improving the quality of life of much larger numbers of people than those they can help directly and it is appropriate for Governments to recognise and support these efforts.

A growing number of charities across the community, health, education and other sectors are engaged in this work. Many are already recognised by the Australian Taxation Office as charities.

It could lead to the removal of a significant number of charities from the register, and the loss of income tax and GST exemption status.

3. The Government is not proceeding with the Inquiry's proposed reform of administrative arrangements for the registration of charities.

Currently, the Taxation Office decides which organisations qualify as charities for tax purposes. The Inquiry proposed this role be handled by a separate body whose purpose is identifying charities rather than raising public revenue. One model is the Charities Commission of England and Wales. Such a body would be able to keep abreast of trends in service delivery and community expectations. It would also help with the "bedding down" of the new legislative definition, develop administrative guidelines and help avoid litigation and

inconsistent application of the new definition.

4. The Government has signalled it is again reviewing the tax treatment of the 'commercial activities' of charities.

Charities are generally exempt from income tax, including for their 'commercial activities'. The Government believes this may unfairly disadvantage for profit enterprises. The GST exemption for charities already excludes 'commercial activities.' This requires often complex calculations to separately identify and price 'commercial' transactions.

The Board of Taxation has been asked to consult widely on the government's response to the charities definition inquiry, submissions will be call soon. In the meantime agencies may write directly to:

The Hon. Peter Costello,
Treasurer
c/- Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600.



POSITION VACANT ?

Use NCOSS Community Jobs!

If you need to get the word out about your job vacancy list it on the NCOSS web site! **Community Jobs** has been set up to assist community and welfare sector organisations find quality staff and is the #1 destination for the many people who visit our site every week. **Community Jobs** is available to all organisations in the community sector, as well as all levels of government.

- Advertisements can be as detailed or brief as you prefer - you can also supply selection criteria and job descriptions
- Listings are placed on-line within one working day of NCOSS receiving the details and remain on-line until applications close
- Send in your listing using the form on our website at: www.ncoss.org.au/jobs
- **Great rates (includes GST):**
 - Community sector & non-profit**
 - NCOSS member - \$33
 - Non-member - \$44
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 - Non-affiliate - \$66
- We will invoice you once the ad is on-line

For more info call Stephen - (02) 9211 2599 ext 115 or email <webjobs@ncoss.org.au>



www.ncoss.org.au/jobs

The NSW Hep C Helpline and Prisons Hep C Helpline

It is estimated that 210,000 people in Australia have the hepatitis C virus, with an estimated 16,000 new infections a year. Up to 80% of people will develop a chronic (long term) hepatitis C infection.

The virus is transmitted via blood-to-blood contact, the highest risk being when equipment used to inject drugs is shared. Moderate to low risk modes of transmission include unsterile tattooing and body piercing, needle stick injuries, blood product transfusions in Australia prior to 1990 and transmission from mother to baby.

Most people with chronic hepatitis C will develop some symptoms, ranging from mild to severe, after approximately 10 to 15 years. Symptoms most often present as fatigue, nausea, muscle aches and pains, abdominal pain and loss of appetite. For some people these symptoms are debilitating and can result in serious personal distress. Problems arising from the symptoms, such as an inability to work, can place a great deal of stress on those infected with the virus, and their families and friends.

The Hepatitis C Council of NSW is a community organisation primarily funded by the NSW Health Department. The Council's *Hep C Helpline* and *Prisons Hep C Helpline* telephone information, support and referral services provide callers with a confidential and non-judgemental setting to discuss hepatitis C, its possible effects on health and the everyday worry of living with a chronic condition. The *Helplines* also provide detailed information for health care workers and correctional staff seeking clarification about hepatitis C issues.

In July 2001 the Hepatitis C Council, in collaboration with the NSW Department of Corrective Services and NSW Corrections Health Service, opened the world's first *Prisons Hep C*

Helpline, for prisoners, their families and correctional staff in NSW.

A wide selection of written resources is available from the *Helpline*, details of which can be obtained by visiting the Council's web site www.hepatitisc.org.au or by calling the *Helpline*. All callers are offered a free hepatitis C information pack. In addition we also offer a free video, cassette tape and book library loan service.

The *Helpline* may also be closed during specific holiday periods. Outside of these hours an up-to-date recorded information service is available. *Helpline* workers can return your call if requested, however this option is not available to prison inmates.

Hep C Helpline

A free and confidential service providing information, support and referrals for people affected by hepatitis C and for health care professionals

Sydney metropolitan area

02 9332 1599

Other NSW callers

1800 803 990

Monday 9am - 8pm

Tues - Thurs 9am - 5pm

Friday 10am - 5pm

Recorded information and message service available outside these hours.

The Prisons Hep C Helpline is available in NSW prisons

A service of the Hepatitis C Council of NSW
www.hepatitisc.org.au

Shopping Centre Protocol Project

by Garner Clancey

Increasingly, shopping centres include entertainment complexes (theatres, games arcades, ice rinks), food outlets and services (banks, Medicare, post offices). These attractions draw many people, particularly young people. Many young people will get their first job in a shopping centre. For others, shopping centres will be where they meet friends, where they hang out and where they spend much of the leisure time.

For some, the presence of young people in shopping centres will be unwanted. Large groups of young people can scare and intimidate other shoppers. Boisterous behaviour will be unacceptable to some shoppers, retailers and centre managers. The banning of young people from shopping centres and the charging of young people for trespass, due to breaching banning notices, are not uncommon practices in some areas.

Numerous projects in recent years have evolved to tackle these issues. Frequently, these projects have involved working with local young people, security personnel and shopping centre management, to develop practices and strategies to promote harmony rather than conflict. These local initiatives have often been very successful. However, these initiatives often only apply to individual centres, where changes in staff can affect success.

The Youth Justice Coalition and the Youth Action Policy Association successfully applied to the NSW Attorney General's Department Crime Prevention Division for funding to develop a statewide shopping centre protocol. A team from the University of Western Sydney has recently commenced work on this project. They will be visiting numerous shopping centres across NSW and will be talking with young people, youth workers, shopping centre managers, security personnel and other key people. With the support of the Shopping Centre Council of Australia, the team hopes to develop a valuable protocol that will have a positive impact on public space issues across NSW.

The project team is interested in hearing from people who have been involved in local public space projects involving shopping centres or from shopping centre managers willing to contribute to this project. For further information about the project or to discuss relevant initiatives, contact Garner Clancey on 0425 231 825 or garner@hn.ozemail.com.au.



NCOSS News - Welcome to Peter and Samantha

We'd like to welcome Peter Samsa and Samantha Edmonds to the NCOSS team.

Peter has commenced as a Project Officer on the Better Service Delivery Project. Peter also works for the Illawarra Forum.

Samantha has just commenced as a Senior Policy Officer, replacing Tim Goodwin.

Balancing the Books

A series of articles from Matrix On Board to assist community-based organisations with their financial management - by Nonie Wales

Managing your Assets

Ever panicked when your Auditor has asked for a look at your Asset Register? It conjures up images of dusty leather-bound books that, when opened, reveal pages of hand-written columns itemising ancient furniture and equipment, as well as the odd recent purchase. In reality, an Asset Register does not need to be so reified – it really is just a matter of keeping good records.

What is an Assets Register?

An Asset Register is a record of all the physical property (equipment including things such as software) your organisation has purchased in order to do your business. These items are referred to as 'fixed assets' because, while they are owned by your organisation, they cannot be immediately turned into cash, as compared to say, the money in your organisation's cheque account. The money in your cheque account is referred to as 'current assets'.

Depending on the size of your organisation, your Asset Register may only need to be as simple as a manila folder with a table at the front listing certain information and sitting behind it are all the original invoices of the assets you have purchased. For larger

organisations, the Asset Register may be maintained electronically, using spreadsheets and keeping original invoices filed according to cost centres.

The kinds of items your Assets Register should contain include:

- computer equipment and software (including licenses)
- motor vehicles
- office equipment and furniture
- kitchen equipment
- items such as beds and blankets

Is there a difference between an Asset Register and a Depreciation Schedule?

Yes and maybe not. Firstly, the Asset Register is most importantly the place where you keep all the original invoices of your organisation's assets. Refer to Diagram 1 for other information that might be recorded in the Asset Register.

An Asset Register records important information about the asset but it does not necessarily 'capture' information about the 'current value' of the asset, whereas a depreciation schedule summarises the current value for each fixed asset of your organisation. Some organisations put all this information into the one file or spreadsheet, so effectively their Asset Register and

Depreciation Schedule are the same thing.

What is a Depreciation Schedule?

The logic behind depreciation is that when you buy a piece of equipment, its value gradually reduces over time as the asset approaches the end of its effective life ("the estimated useful life"). Depreciating your assets means you are spreading the cost of the asset across those years, and taking account of its gradual reduction in value, rather than paying for the asset all in the one year.

Some organisations have a policy that they will purchase equipment 'outright' that is less than \$1000, for other organisations, the policy is less than \$300 because this used to be the Australian Tax Office (ATO) cap. The ATO now allow equipment costing less than \$1000 to be written off within the first year.

Refer to Diagram 2 for information included in the Depreciation Schedule.

Note that if you purchase an asset mid-way through the financial year, the annual depreciation amount is apportioned accordingly, to reflect part-year use.

Why do we need an Assets Register and Depreciation Schedule?

It is important for any organisation to know exactly what assets it has, when they were purchased, the price and where they are located. An Assets Register is used for this purpose and can be invaluable:

- if you are burgled or fire damaged and need to make an insurance claim;
- if you want to estimate maintenance costs on equipment;
- if you want to estimate how much to put aside for the replacement of equipment.

Additionally, you need to provide your auditor with an up-to-date list of assets each year.



Unique Asset No.	Asset Description	Serial no.	Date of purchase and price	Supplier and contact	Warranty period	Insurer and Policy No.	Location of asset in your organisation

Diagram 1: information that might be recorded in the Asset Register

Unique Asset No.	Asset Type	Date of purchase and price*	Rate of Depreciation [#]	Opening Written Down Value	Accumulated Depreciation	Current Period Depreciation	Written Down Value [~]

* Price is exclusive of GST
[#] The ATO has a Depreciation Schedule for Tax purposes, and this relates to the expected life of the asset
[^] The OWD is the Closing Written Down Value from the previous period
[~] The Closing Written Down Value is the Original Cost of the Asset less the Depreciation to date.

Diagram 2: information included in the Depreciation Schedule

Matrix on Board - web: www.mob.com.au email: info@mob.com.au

Community 21: Progress in the Bank

[Extract from the Century 21 Newsletter for Shareholders]

Now that Community Sector Banking has been launched – the hard work really begins!

Negotiations with Bendigo Bank around the development of a cash management account have recently been completed. This is an all important development because it will enable *Community Sector Banking* to develop products that can be tailored to the needs of different community sector organisations.

The time invested in developing the business approach has meant that it has taken longer than expected to have banking services up and running at full capacity. However, the value of the approach that has been developed will pay off soon. The sorts of banking relationships that *Community Sector Banking* will be able to develop with its customers will be significantly different to the mainstream banks. Customers will be able to make informed choices about the types of products they use and the way in which fees and charges are applied.

Interest in the bank has been huge. The number of organisations who have expressed an interest in *Community Sector Banking* is growing every day as word gets out. This is great news

because it shows our market research was on the right track.

Shareholders

Founding shareholders of Community 21:

- ACOSS
- Access Community Group
- Anglicare Tasmania
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
- Business Enterprise Centres, Mersey Inc
- The Deaf-Blind Association
- Enterprise and Training Centre
- Foresters ANA Friendly Society
- Gympie Skills Centre
- Charities Aid Foundation
- Jobs Australia
- NCOSS
- Newtrain
- NSW federation of Housing Associations
- Orana Education and Training Co-operative Ltd
- Oz Child
- Scope (Vic) Limited
- St. Lukes Anglicare
- Youth Accommodation Association

Community 21 Board Members

Election of Directors was held on the day of the launch of Community Sector Banking. The Directors are: David Thomson (Chair), Jobs Australia; Victoria Funnell, Scope (Vic) Ltd; Peter Quarmby, Access Community

Group; Ian McHutchinson, Brotherhood of St Laurence; Eleri Morgan-Thomas, NSW Federation of Housing Associations; Maz Thomson, NCOSS; Greg Watt, Enterprise Training Company.

The Board has two priorities in the next 12 months. The first is to support the development of its joint venture with Bendigo Bank – *Community Sector Banking*. The second is to move to a broader share issue of Community 21.

C21 Initiatives

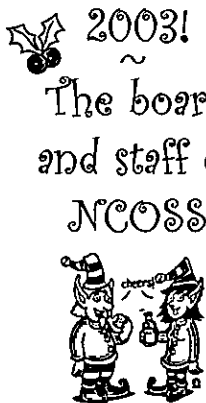
Apart from the important business of establishing the bank, C21 board has been considering other useful areas that we can get involved in and provide real benefit to community sector organisations.

Some of the ideas that have come up from the sector and are being considered include involvement in the NCOSS bulk buying public liability insurance scheme; the development of a telecommunications company; and working with housing associations to investigate possible funding to purchase their own assets.

How to contact C21

100 Railway Street,
Corrimal NSW 2518;
phone: (02) 4255 8400;
fax: (02) 4255 8420
email: wayne.trotman@csbanking.com.au

Wishing our
members a
happy Festive
Season
and a
peaceful and
prosperous
2003!
The board
and staff of
NCOSS



cartoon: Stephen Crowley

Conferences and seminars

Education and Social Action

Education and Social Action 2002

- 11 - 13 December 2002
- Centre for Popular Education, city campus of University of Technology, Sydney

Bringing people engaged in different fields of social action and education together

Themes

- Community Capacity Building and Cultural Development
- Facilitating Change for Healthy Environments
- School - Community Relationship Building
- Celebrations for Change and Development
- Health Education and Community Development
- Popular Education and Advocacy: Refugees and Asylum Seekers

More info:

Centre for Popular Education, UTS
PO Box 123,
Broadway 2007
fax: 9514 3939
email: cpe@uts.edu.au

Creative partnerships

Salzburg Seminar

- 26 Feb - 5 March 2003

The Role of NGOs in the Health of Communities: Creative Partnerships.

This conference will focus on creative NGO-led partnerships that promote various characteristics of "healthy" communities. These organizations strive to meet the basic needs of all community members by, for instance, ensuring access to health services, creating a clean and safe physical environment, and promoting public participation and the celebration of historical and cultural heritage. Through the examination of a wide range of partnerships that are dedicated to improving the health of communities, participants will share and identify successful strategies used by NGOs to overcome barriers and challenges in creating truly "healthy" communities.

More info:

Cheryl Van Emburg,
Administrative Director and
Recruiting Coordinator
email: cvanemburg@salzburgseminar.org

Safe Communities in NSW

Building a Stronger Foundation

- 25-26 March 2003
- Citygate Sebel, Sydney

This symposium, organised by NSW SafeComm, is for anyone with an interest in safety promotion and injury prevention, including community and road safety officers, local government, health, fire, education and police services, local business and community members.

The symposium will:

- Provide a forum for sharing ideas and practical solutions to building and maintaining safe communities in NSW
- Highlight progress, innovation and opportunities for Safe Communities including 'Safety by Design', suicide prevention, hearing local governments' perspective and plans for a Foundation.
- Showcase and workshop the evaluation of the NSW Safe Comm Pilot Program, sponsored by NSW Health and the RTA.
- Stimulate and renew delegates' energy for building a Safe Communities coalition in their community.

More info:

Joanne Karcz
phone: 02 9858 7737
fax: 02 9858 7963
email: jkarcz@doh.health.nsw.gov.au
web: www.nsh.nsw.gov.au/safecomm.htm

Disability

Life Activities International Conference on Disability

- 21-24 September 2003
- Newcastle NSW Australia

Topics will include:

- Creativity in Service Design
- Building Community Capacity
- Creative Caring / Supporting Families as Primary Carers
- Initiatives in Training and professional Development
- Beyond Disability/ Living and Dreaming

Keynote speakers will include:

- Dr Patricia A Morrissey, Commissioner for the US Department of Health & Human Sciences
- Dr Colleen Wieck, Executive Director for the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities.

More info:

web: www.lifeactivities.org.au/conference

NCOSS

Advocacy Conference

- 12 March 2003
- Masonic Centre, Sydney

More info:

web: www.ncoss.org.au/conferences
More information, including a registration form will be available in early 2003.

Ageing with disability

Cross-Sector Discussion Workshop for Community, Aged Care and Disability Services NSW Industry Group on People Ageing with Disability

- 10 February 2003, 9.00am - 1.00pm
- Masonic Centre

The purpose of this workshop is to follow up the NSW Industry Group issues paper "People with a longstanding disability who are ageing" (Oct 2001). Key aims of the paper and workshop are to:

- 1 Raise awareness of the challenges posed to services by the increasing numbers of people with disability who are ageing; and
- 2 Provide an opportunity for the industry to discuss the development of responsive models of care for people with longstanding disability who are ageing.

Recommendations from the discussions will be used to inform government about current opportunities, challenges, future directions and solutions identified by the service delivery sector.

This workshop is for staff at all levels of community, aged care and disability services. Registration is free of charge with thanks to funding from the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care.

More info:

Gabrielle Jones,
ACROD Network Development
Officer
phone: 9554 3666
email: gabe@acrodns.net
web: www.acrodns.net

If you have a conference to advertise, please contact Stephen at NCOSS:
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