



Towards Healthy Families

Spring 2016

*Ija Mulanggari, Goodtha Mulanggari
Thriving Mothers, Thriving Babies*



Canberra Mothercraft Society to celebrate 90 years

This year marks our 90th Anniversary supporting families in the Canberra and surrounding community. We will be proudly marking this very special milestone with a cocktail celebration following our Annual General Meeting next month.

We have a proud history and want to celebrate it with the many people who have helped to shape the Canberra Mothercraft Society into the organisation it is today.



Lady Butters, Vice Patron of the Canberra Mothercraft Society with the latest addition to the family.

The 90th Annual General Meeting of the Canberra Mothercraft Society Inc will be held on Wednesday, 16th November 2016, commencing at 5.30pm.

**The Drawing Room
University House
1 Balmain Crescent, Acton**

The cocktail celebration will follow, from 6pm.

From the President

I am very pleased to welcome you to the CMS Spring Newsletter for 2016. After what seems a protracted winter, it is a break to have a sense of the warmth of summer.

Over the winter period our services at QEII have been busy. We have now had a year of being open to full capacity and this has meant that we have been able to be very responsive to families and their wait to get into QEII has been reduced. Year to date at 30 September for 2016-2017 our occupancy rate was 92% and 36% of families admitted to QEII came from NSW.

The Board look forward to welcoming members and friends to the CMS 90th anniversary celebrations. Child and family health as well as



social services as we know them today were founded on services provided by CMS in what was then the new nations capital. As Canberra's second oldest community group and longest health services provider, we have much to celebrate and look forward to sharing the evening with you.

Prior to the 90th anniversary celebrations, the annual AGM will be held at University House. This is an important event where we demonstrate to members CMS achievements against the Strategic Plan as well as our current financial situation. This is also a great opportunity for members to meet our senior staff and other members of staff.

Viola Kalokerinos, President

Clinical programs

Counselling at QEII

Clients at QEII who are not currently engaged with psychological or mental health providers in their community are eligible to access primary health counselling services during their stay at QEII.

The arrival of a new baby into a couple or family has been identified as one of the biggest challenges faced by families of all sizes. For some, the struggle is greater than others. Common issues identified by families accessing our service include: stress and anxiety; sleep deprivation; loss of energy and motivation; increased irritability and arguing; difficulty negotiating roles and responsibilities; a sense of incompetence; isolation; and loneliness.



Counselling assessment and parenting skills development supports families to strengthen resilience and enhance the family functioning and enjoyment at this important time.

A critical aspect of our work is to ensure clients receive appropriate referral to ongoing support following discharge from our parenting education and support program. We keep a comprehensive database of professional psychosocial support services and providers in the ACT and surrounding NSW regions and make referrals, as appropriate, to practitioners in both government and non-government sectors.

Counselling at QEII provides essential support and contributes to the ongoing outcomes for families who access our service.

Introducing... Emma Monagle - Registered Nurse



My name is Emma Monagle and I have recently started working part-time at QEII as a registered nurse. Prior to starting at QEII, I have worked in many different clinical areas, primarily the emergency department in the A.C.T., and in general medicine while living in Melbourne.

I have a strong interest in primary health care, in particular the health of mothers and babies and the way they are cared for in the community. The use of research or evidence to inform program development and public health policy is also of interest to me. These interests led me to completing a Masters in Public Health in 2011, which helped me to understand many of the complexities of primary health care, but most importantly how essential it is to improving the health of those we care for.

In 2014, I completed a graduate certificate in child and family health. I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to join the team at QEII family centre, and am looking forward to gaining hands on experience working with mothers (and fathers) and their loved ones. I hope to use what I have learnt in my studies to inform my practice.

When I am not working at QEII I care for my daughters Alexandria (aged 4) and Edith (14 months).

The spirit of community development thrives in Thursday Friendship Group

By Toni Hackett

As Community Development Officer for Canberra Mothercraft Society, I was delighted to attend the 'handover of quilts' from the Thursday Friendship Group.

As I stepped into the warm, lively shop out of the wet, chilly outdoors, I was greeted by a group of friendly, cheerful faces. The women I was meeting with happily give their time, energy and enthusiasm to design, sew and make quilts to gift to others.

On this day, a colourful array of quilts is draped over the tables. Usually, this space hums with the sound of sewing machines and chatter, while hands busily work away crafting these exquisite quilts.

Midway during my visit, an order of batting arrives, used in the quilting and financed by Canberra Mothercraft Society. Addicted to Fabric at Phillip provide the space for the group to meet and work, and various textile suppliers donate samples to the group. These remarkable ladies work away at crafting a range of spectacular quilts and, once completed, they are gifted back to Canberra Mothercraft Society for distribution. What an effective system!

As cups of tea are fetched and homemade cakes are sliced and handed around, Anne, a longstanding member of the group tells me how it all started.

"Ten years ago some of the ladies in our group met while doing the beginners patchwork class at Addicted to Fabric. Wendy Saclier, who is on the board of Canberra Mothercraft Society, was our teacher. Jenny Adams, the owner of Addicted to Fabric, asked us at the end of our lessons if we would like to form a

friendship group. Some of the ladies from the next beginners group also joined us. One of our members joined later, when she moved to Canberra from Sydney. Jenny then asked if we would like to make some charity quilts to be given to the Grandparents Program at QEII. This was the beginning of a wonderful group of ladies who enjoy meeting and supporting each other in our hobby," said Anne.

When I ask how many quilts have been made over the years, I am astounded by the answer.



"During the ten years we have been together we have donated over 1,000 quilts," said Anne.

These quilts have gone far and wide across Canberra and the surrounding region.

"Most of the quilts go to QEII and are distributed

from there. There is one of our quilts on every bed at the new Ronald McDonald House at The Canberra Hospital. We have donated quilts to various community causes, including Dragons Abreast, Juvenile Diabetes, Down Syndrome, National Council of Women and Rotary House. Through Canberra Mothercraft Society, we also provide quilts for the Mother's and Father's day stalls held annually at the Curtin Shops," explained Anne.

Bonding and attachment is the core of our work at QEII and Canberra Mothercraft Society. Being wrapped up in one of the quilts made by these talented ladies is a sure way to warm hearts.

The Hydrangeas

On Thursday July 7th the Hydrangeas group met at Floresco at the Botanic Gardens on a good old fashioned cold winter's day.

The sun was shining, the air was crisp and some of us had a very brisk walk to get there – most of the parking at the Gardens was full and nearby carparks had to be used.

It was fun though chatting to parents waiting alongside at the parking pay stations – we learned that it was Dinosaur day at the Gardens



and hundreds of children were there to enjoy it.

Good fun all round. We welcomed Denise, a recently retired member of staff at QEII as well as those pictured who have joined us before. Jean Daley was also there but needed to leave for an appointment before the photograph was taken.

Our next get together will be on **Thursday 3rd November at 10.30am** and we hope to see many of you make it along.

CMS wants to hear from grandparents

CMS acknowledges the vital role grandparents play in caring for their grandchildren and contributing to family life. For years we funded the Grand Jugglers program to support healthy relationships, stronger bonds and social networks for grandparents and grandchildren in their care. The Community Development & Health Promotions Officer is in the process of reviewing our programs and would like to hear directly from grandparents about the kind of support and help they want.

Please follow the below link to complete this very fast 2 question survey. Your input is needed and greatly appreciated.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CMS-wants-to-hear-from-grandparents>

STAY CONNECTED

For inclusions in upcoming editions of the newsletter (photos and articles are welcomed for consideration), to opt out of the newsletter mailing list, or to **SAVE PAPER** by receiving this newsletter electronically, contact Colleen at Colleen.Josifovski@act.gov.au or phone (02) 6205-2322.

BURRA OPEN GARDENS

CMS is having a stall at the Burra Open Gardens on Sunday 30th October 2016 from 10am to 5pm. The stall will be providing Devonshire tea and selling knitted goods, cakes, jams and chutneys at:

LAVENDER HILL

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Towards Healthy Families

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Thriving Mothers, Thriving babies
[Ngunnawal meaning]

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