



The Farm

IN GALONG

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



CEO'S REPORT

This year's 2021 Annual Report features the achievements of our staff, volunteers, and stakeholders to deliver services to the women and children at the Farm. These great efforts were recognised in October this year when the Farm received accreditation with QIP against the QIC Health and Community Standards. The assessors commended the people involved in the establishment of the Farm and complimented us on the great progress made in such a short time. The assessors observations that will resonate throughout this report:

A strength of The Farm is the people involved, including the Board, the CEO, volunteers and staff. This includes having people in relevant roles who also have a passion for the vision of The Farm.

Consumers stated that they were treated with respect, had positive outcomes (including reunification with children) and felt that they were valued while at the farm.

This unified passion for the vision of the Farm is I believe, the reason we have come so far in such a short time. Feedback from clients that they feel respected and valued is proof that this commitment to the vision is bearing fruit

CEO'S REPORT

Embedded in our report this year is our new Strategic Plan outlining the Farm's focus for the next three years. As you read over this report - reflecting on the stories, the vision and focus as set down in our new strategic plan - I invite you to consider your role in working with us to keep the momentum going. The vision of the Farm is consistent with that laid down at the outset in response to real needs of real people. Let us always keep that in mind and be inspired by the clients themselves to continue to build the momentum for the renewal of the lives of the people we serve here at the Farm.



Kate Cleary
Chief Executive Officer





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

ACCREDITATION

We are pleased to announce the achievement of accreditation with QIP against the QIC health and community standards. This is a milestone in the history of the Farm and reflects the commitment of the Board, Committees, Staff, Volunteers and Stakeholders.

Our application for membership of NADA the peak body in the sector was also accepted so it has been a year of strengthening our reputation among stakeholders

NEW CLIENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IMPROVES TREATMENT

A new data base client management system is improving treatment for participants in our program. Case managers have been training in the use of it and are now proficient. The new system, called MIMASO, will help integrate treatment and result in greater efficiency. Of particular benefit is the fact that the system provides a single point of data entry and can be used to provide data for research and funding purposes.



SUBMISSION TO SENATE INQUIRY

The CEO Kate Cleary and Board member, Emeritus Professor Toni Makkai, made a submission to the Inquiry into Community Corrections. We hope that our experience of women coming out of Corrections and accessing our service will be informative for the Inquiry. Our essential message to the Inquiry is that the process of releasing women prisoners back into the community needs to improve to reduce recidivism. Given the complexity of the women's needs an environment is required that addresses the problems of trauma, lack of education and social isolation. While in prison these problems are generally not addressed and on exit no effective interventions are arranged for them. We suggested that a program like that provided by the Farm, designed to address the severe deprivation the women experience, was exactly the type of intervention required and that funds should be allocated to this sort of intervention. We also suggested that women prisoners would benefit from transition programs before release to programs like the Farm to help orientate them safely back into the community.



WEBSITE REFRESH AND COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY

The Farm website has had a beautiful refresh from chillibeau media. The improvements include giving applicants a user-friendly way to access the Farm as well as fantastic original photos of the surroundings. Please have a look at www.thefarmingalong.com.au

COOKBOOK PUBLICATION

Chillibeau media has also taken on the job of producing and publishing the Farm cookbook which is available for sale. This is a compilation of recipes and collected wisdom of the clients under the care of the House Care Supervisor and gives a good picture of life at the Farm. It is very attractively done.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY LUNCHEON HOSTED BY CPA

This year we were selected as the charity chosen by CPA for their International Women's Day luncheon. Two of our clients came and were introduced by Giulia Jones to attendees as they gathered before the addresses. They were a little nervous at first but warmed to the experience and chatted confidently about the Farm and the great need it was filling - a lesson in working the room!



PARENTS' WEEKEND

In July we welcomed the families of clients as well as other interested people to a family weekend facilitated by Family Drug Support. The speakers were Toni Trimingham and Amy Steven. It was an opportunity for parents and carers to get together and share their experiences as well as to tap into the wisdom of the facilitators on this difficult and heart wrenching subject. Feedback was very good with comments such as “I wish I had known of this before”, “I thought I was alone in this and it’s great to know I am not”. “the session helped me to see that I was not totally to blame in this and that it can happen to anyone.”



PROPERTY & GROUNDS UPDATE

The major work of maintenance and repairs to the building has been finalized this year and no more work is scheduled for the time being. In order to accommodate new staff in a comfortable manner, rooms were renovated in the family wing to provide 4 bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, a kitchenette, dining room, Breakout room and laundry. This means the staff now have a quiet and private space to retreat to at the end of the day and during breaks ensuring they get the necessary refreshment and recharging required to do their job well.

The grounds were made more interesting and attractive by the addition of a well-constructed coop for the guinea fowl and a greenhouse which will be useful in training clients in seed propagation. The orchard is also progressing well with a watering drip system installed and an animal-proof enclosure to be built next year.

Rooftop solar panels will be installed next week, and this will make a big difference to electricity costs.

Improvements to security is the next major project and we are awaiting news on an application for funding for this. If granted, this will provide for security fencing and gates, and the installation of crim safe security windows and door screens to the remaining wing of the building.



THE BOARD

The Farm Board of Directors are all volunteers who receive no remuneration for their service. The Board comprises experts drawn from a range of backgrounds including business, finance, law, communications, and criminology. We are grateful for the time and effort they devote to the governance of The Farm.

This year we said farewell to David Pembroke who has been leading Communications on the Board, and Philip Meredith who has helped in the Risk Management of the Farm including developing the Risk Matrix. Thanks are due to both these Directors for giving of their talents so generously.

We welcomed to the Board Jane Brookes and Carlos Aguilera. Jane has extensive skills and experience in Finance and Governance and assisted us as Chief Operations Officer in the start-up phase of the Farm. Carlos Aguilera is the CEO of chillibeans media and brings to the Board his talents in Communications.



BUILDING A CAPABLE TEAM

Our focus this year was on hiring people with the skills and knowledge to respond effectively to our clients' complexities and co-occurring problems.

Kate Cleary, CEO, gave a lecture to the criminology students at ANU which resulted in some students applying to do internships at the Farm. Three of these were employed and two have chosen to continue on next year as case managers. They have made significant inroads into consolidating processes at the Farm including developing handbooks and statements of procedures documents. An Arts student from ANU was also employed as a tutor and has written the handbook for the vocational element of the program.

DONORS

This year we have had support from a number of people and we thank them for their generosity.

Thanks to the Snow Foundation for their donation for operational funds; to the John James Foundation for their assistance with grounds improvements; to Hands Across Canberra for the tutor's salary; Thanks to the Powering Communities Program and to Michael McKinnon (our local Riverina electorate MP).). Thanks also to St Vincent de Paul who assist us with utility bills. Our thanks again this year to Clayton Utz and Proximity for their assistance with legal matters; to Deloitte for their assistance with HR matters; to content group for assistance with the newsletter publication.

