

The Farm in Galong Annual Report

Welcome to the second Annual Report for the Farm in Galong and thanks once again to all those who have helped in the development of this important work.

The Program

Since opening in November 2019 we have welcomed 14 clients to the Farm. Of these, 5 completed treatment and returned home, 5 left treatment without completing and four are here currently doing well with courses completed and seeking work before they return home.

The program is being monitored by the Treatment and Ethics Committee and our psychologist Dr Lynne Magor-Blatch. We are finetuning as we go to provide a trauma informed environment that also challenges the clients to develop and redirect their lives for productive futures. A program of study, reflection and manual work in the grounds is proving to have the hoped- for therapeutic affect and the women are improving in physical, mental and spiritual well-being. These improvements will be measured over time and a body of evidence gathered with the help of the Treatment and Ethics Committee and Ms. Lynne Pezzullo.

With the assistance of Lynne Magor-Blatch we are consolidating our Therapeutic Community with a trauma informed focus. Lynne has also begun the parenting program Parents Under Pressure with the clients in time for the restoration of one of the client's children who will be living here fulltime by December.

We have begun the process accreditation and have become an affiliate member of the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association as the first step in becoming fully accredited. We have also begun the process of accreditation with QIC. Accreditation will be a major focus for the year 2020-2021 ensuring consolidation of the work through achievement of high standards and opening us up to the possibility of government funding.

Program elements that are proving most beneficial for clients include the outdoor work with the grounds and animals; the times for reflection; the real world study experience – clients are on a par with other students in their on-line forums and teachers are congratulating them for achievement of required standards - the nutrition and exercise sessions and the philosophy studies. They are also benefitting from the experience of living in a community with the accountability for behavior that this entails. The clients have all completed the first phase of the program and are in phase two where the focus is on increased study and the development of parenting skills in preparation for the return of their children.

Staffing

We have the following part-time/ contract staff now assisting: A House Care Supervisor 15.2 hours a week plus three overnight stays who looks after the cooking and cleaning and transfers the skills to clients; a case manager 22.8 hours per week plus 3-4 overnights stays; a groundsman 15.2 hour per week; a financial administrator 7.6 hours per week; an overnight supervisor once a fortnight; a psychologist 5 hours a week with extra time as required; and an on-call doctor.

Governance

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee continue to develop policies and procedures for this area of compliance. Our thanks to Phil Meredith and Tyson Lange who have developed a risk register, compiled a list of strategic and operational risks and are organizing all documentation. This work is an important part of the accreditation process and will contribute to the long- term sustainability of the Farm.

We are also very pleased to welcome Nyree Ashton as our financial administrator and the Board Treasurer who will assist with compliance by ensuring we meet our company reporting obligations.

Communications

We are delighted to welcome onto the Board David Pembroke founder and CEO of contentgroup communications agency. David brings immense skill and experience to the Board in the area of communications. He also makes his staff available to us for advice and assistance, improving our communications capability immensely. This year staff have designed the layout of the newsletters and enlisted the help of a group of students from Canberra University to research communications needs of the Farm and make suggestions about how to implement their findings. They are also helping with the publication of the Farm cookbook – designed by the clients from the recipes they have learned with the house care supervisor.

The agency is also liaising with Pursuit Technology – our website managers - on the ongoing maintenance and development of the website.

We were fortunate to interest ABC Newsreader Craig Allen in the Farm and a good piece was featured on the News last December. The filming was discrete and the pitch was uplifting and positive.

We were successful in our bid to be part of the Funding Network's fundraiser in Canberra in September last year which contributed not only funds for operations but also to the raising of our profile in the community. There was a great deal of feedback and interest aroused.

Building and Grounds

The Farm environment is also improving since the addition of a groundsman/caretaker 15.2 hours a week. The House Care supervisor is also assisting with this by developing a sense of pride in the environment among clients. Every day sees them attending to the animals and the gardens, using the produce for fresh food in the kitchen and also developing the use of flowers in the environment since their lessons on flower arrangement from a volunteer florist.

I am also delighted to report that the building renovations are almost complete thanks to the indefatigable Ron Natoli and his team and the generous support of the Snow Foundation. The family pods were recently done and now the focus is on the outside of the building. These works will begin in the second half of the year.

Funding

Without the generosity of many people none of this could have happened. We are grateful to all those who have supported us financially, the large and the small donors, who give out of the shared hope that the Farm can assist people who are among the most deprived in our community.

We continue to receive support from philanthropic groups and this year hope to start to enlist the help of government in funding.

Our deep thanks to our donors.

Kate Cleary

CEO

The Farm in Galong Ltd