

**Community Networks Wanaka Managers Report
Alpine Community Development Trust AGM, June 2020
Kate Murray**

This AGM report offers an overview of the services provided by the team at Community Networks throughout the 2019 year.

Social Well-being Hub

The primary focus of Community Networks is to provide a resource hub for social wellbeing services. Nova Knippers, Arda Booiman and our team of front reception volunteers connect people to support and coordinate a range of community services. The diversity of support offered and the immediate face to face nature is unique and valued by many.

Throughout 2019, 3,421 people came into Community Networks to seek support– their needs are wide and varied. The following table provides statistics by year for the total number of enquires by phone and visits received in our social wellbeing hub. This offers a general overview as our collection methods are dependent on staff and volunteers manually recording this information and includes other variables such as changes to our opening hours and government agencies asking clients to access forms online.

Agency	2016	2017	2018	2019
Immigration	308	270	93	117
IRD	391	307	270	189
Work & Income	493	434	441	365
Community Law	128	172	184	183
Government Agencies other	206	151	152	33
Budget Advice	50	23	22	10
Employment related	216	220	127	102
Non-Government Agencies	251	262	402	621
JP Services	1070	1043	1458	1530
Wheels to Dunstan	849	880	744	760
Meals on Wheels	80	126	207	115
Total Mobility	97	71	59	49
Counsellors/Social Workers	75	89	147	340
Food parcels out	248	209	186	269
General	157	195	290	386
Social Support	83	47	122	104
Reception contacts - totals	5201	4847	5214	5508

Some of the trends noted;

- An increased need for JP services and referrals to counsellors and social workers. We have close working relationships with social workers and financial mentors and meet weekly to discuss referrals to ensure we refer families on the best pathway

- An increase in people arriving in an emotional and distressed state. Nova and I work alongside these people to connect them to support
- Data gathering – we have endeavoured to update our archaic diary system to a more streamlined system of capturing data at our front reception using survey monkey. This has provided a few challenges and continues to be work progress
- There is difficulty for clients understanding the diversity of social support services available and how to access support. We have an ongoing challenge of making sure there is up to date information about services and support available. We worked alongside the QLDC to support a comprehensive database on their Community Connect database however this currently has much work to be done. There is value in developing a “map” of support services available.

In November 2019 we moved into the new Community Hub. The hub offers us an exciting opportunity to “bump” into and work closely with a wide range of social and health service providers. It is great to be working in a beautiful space and we appreciate the huge time and energy the Wanaka Community House Trust have spent to create this space.

Coordinating Community Services

The team coordinates a range of services including the Community Foodbank, the Wheels to Dunstan Bus Services, the Meals on Wheels Drivers, the Community Support Fund (subsidised counselling), Total Mobility Vouchers and the interagency meeting.

Following are some of the trends;

- There is a large gap in support available for people with mild to moderate difficulties with their mental health. In 2019 we supported 87 families and individuals with the costs of counselling
- The Wheels to Dunstan shuttle service, run by volunteer drivers, has completed 275 trips and transported around 392 clients to and from hospital appointments
- We offered two “Calm Minds” parenting programmes throughout the year. The intention of these is to upskill and support parents in managing stress in their home environment
- In 2019 we started a project seeking the Winter Energy Payments from families that may not need these funds. This was well supported and we were able to supply 13 local families with fire wood
- Social Services Snapshot – 27 service providers completed the first of these surveys in February 2019 with an additional survey in September 2019. The most common issues reported among social service clients were poor mental health, relationship / family problems and social isolation. Poor mental health was the most common issue reported during both Snapshots (Feb and Sept 2019). The most commonly reported gap remained mental health services. However, a need for respite care, for all care types and life stages, emerged as a much needed service gap in Sept 2019.

Participation in Community Action Initiatives

The third aspect of our work is that which we do alongside other organisations and community groups. A common purpose of these groups is to increase the resiliency and social fabric of our community and to improve the efficiency with which services are delivered. This includes attending the Central Lakes Mental Health & Addiction Network, Central & Lakes Welfare Coordination group, the MSD Southern Community Panel, the Champion for Older Persons Group, Wanaka Alcohol Group, Strengthening Families Local Management Group Meeting, Suicide Post Vention Group, the Interagency Meeting and more recently the Southern Mental Health and Addiction Networks Leadership Group (as a whanau representative) . The groups provide valuable networking opportunities however we also need to keep in mind, how these add value to the services that CN provides.

Some of the outcomes of these groups include;

- Mapping exercise of mental health services and support available; to then advocate for equitable access to support across the region. This highlighted gaps in support for people in the more rural regions.
- Streamlining our systems for a Suicide Post Vention response
- Mental Health Awareness Week – worked alongside Ignite to organise a “Creating Healthy Workplaces” Workshop
- Advocated for respite care for older people
- Wanaka Alcohol Group – offered workshops to parents and the wider community to challenge our drinking culture and support parents

Our team and stakeholders

- In total we have up to 50 volunteers offering their time, skill base and support to many different aspects of the organisation. Our front reception volunteers supported the organisation with 505 hours throughout the year! Amazing support. Volunteers also deliver the Meals on Wheels (our 29 Meals on Wheels drivers have driven around 500 hours between them to deliver approximately 5,000 meals), drive the Wheels to Dunstan trips and offer Justices of the Peace services. Jana Reucleke and David Baker have increased our profile on social media and across other media channels.
- We have been supported financially and in sponsorship by many different organisations, community groups, businesses, local families and individuals alongside. This generosity is greatly appreciated and without our donors and volunteers Community Networks could not offer the range of services.

We have a strong team of trustees on our governing body, the Alpine Community Development Trust providing robust leadership to the organisation. We are fortunate to have such an enthusiastic team of trustees, staff and volunteers; I thank them for all their time, energy and expertise and look forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Kate Murray
Manager
June 2020