

Cabrini's social outreach program commenced in 1992 with the establishment of Cabrini Centacare, a partnership with Centacare Catholic Family Services. The success of this experience set the model for the program, which has expanded over the years as we have partnered with other agencies with similar values and goals. We seek to bring value to the relationships through our human, financial and material resources and by leveraging our skills, knowledge and services. The results reflect that strong partnerships are an effective way to address economic and social disadvantage.

As well as focusing on delivering real value to the recipients of each service, we have sought opportunities for our staff to be engaged in the program. Working on the premise that most people want to do good, our social outreach program provides a vehicle for staff to make a contribution to the broader community. In turn, this has assisted in the development of a strong culture within the organisation that brings to life our Catholic and Cabrinian values.

In 2008–2009 the program comprised 37 projects. We are pleased to provide the following report on our activities.

Serving the most marginalised in our community

In July 2008, the Cabrini Sisters released their 'New Missionary Vision'. This vision is the catalyst for the review and strategic development of the Sisters' work throughout the world for the next six-year period. It challenges us to develop new and creative ways to respond to "the cry of the poor and excluded, the suffering of children and elderly at risk, the disintegration of the family and the disorientation of youth, the tragedy of so many of our immigrant and refugee brothers and sisters, the exploitation of women and human trafficking." We have responded to the challenge in a series of projects that serve the most marginalised in our community.

In the last 12 months we have:

- Supported the provision of services to homeless/marginalised people in Melbourne through Sacred Heart Mission, St Mary's House of Welcome, The Way Community and The Wellington Community Centre
- Contributed to the Food Rescue program coordinated by Jewish Aid Australia and
- Created a sense of community for the clients of the St Kilda Parish Mission Drop In Centre through our partnership with that agency
- Supported the Visiting Friends Volunteer Program in Lightning Ridge, NSW – one of the areas of highest disadvantage in Australia
- Assisted in providing services to 'at risk' youth in Melbourne through Cabrini Lighthouse, the Open Family Chatterbox Bus and MacKillop Family Services and funded programs with street children in the Philippines and Vietnam
- Provided employment to refugees and others who find it difficult to compete for work on the open market
- Supported Project Respect's work with women who have been victims of human trafficking



A Journey to Social Inclusion

According to statistics, 105,000 Australians are homeless on any given night, and between 30% and 40% of these people are trapped in a cycle of homelessness. The crisis-oriented homeless service system results in a fragmented approach that is not only costly but rarely assists people to break the cycle.

A Journey to Social Inclusion will pilot a model of investing the time and resources necessary to establish meaningful relationships with participants as a platform to address the underlying causes of homelessness in ways that leads to permanent outcomes.

We are proud to support this action research project and will contribute \$150,000 over the 3-year life of the project.

Community development projects

We recognise that we are part of a community with complex needs. As a large, not-for-profit organisation, we are committed to sharing our resources for the benefit of the community at large. This has resulted in a second stream of projects, those aimed at strengthening and developing community capacity and sustainability.

In the last 12 months we have:

- Assisted in funding Cabrini Centacare, a family-counselling centre in the City of Stonnington
- Assisted in the establishment of community development workers in the areas most severely affected by the Victoria bushfires
- Assisted in funding the Malvern Emergency Food Program
- Provided funding for bursaries for young people at Catholic colleges whose studies are in jeopardy because of financial pressures
- Helped Very Special Kids, an agency supporting families throughout their experience of caring for children with life-threatening illnesses

Victorian Bushfire Response

The Victorian bushfire disaster in February created an immediate, overwhelming community response as people donated time, skills and material goods to help those affected. As the months have passed, the fate of the people and communities is no longer headline news. However, those affected by the disaster are still living with it day by day. As part of our partnership with Centacare Catholic Family Services, we are supporting a community development project in the most severely affected communities. The initiative will assist in mobilising the communities, create networks between agencies and maximise community input into reshaping their future. The project commenced in March 2009 and will continue for approximately 3 years.

Indigenous Projects

We want to make a real difference to the lives of Australia's indigenous people. In focusing on small, achievable goals, we have found a place to start. We have also found that we have been blessed – and changed – in the process. Our indigenous projects tell our reconciliation story.

In the last 12 months we have:

- Worked with the Menzies School of Health Research on 'gECHO', a research project to identify the incidence of rheumatic heart disease amongst children in remote indigenous communities
- Supported the Indigenous Hospitality House to provide a homely environment for indigenous people with a relative in a Melbourne hospital
- Enabled a group of staff to spend time in the Western Arrente desert to learn about our indigenous culture
- Enabled our nurses to undertake short term paid and unpaid contracts in the primary health clinic at Santa Teresa



Getting Every Child's Heart Okay (gECHO)

The incidence of Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) amongst indigenous Australians is one of the highest in the world. If untreated, RHD will inevitably lead to heart failure. The major challenge is to diagnose the disease early – ideally prior to symptoms developing – so that preventive measures can be instituted when they will have the greatest effect.

Cabrini's cardiac technologists welcomed the opportunity to be involved in this project. Our staff roster now also includes regular placements in remote communities in central and northern Australia, a world away from suburban Melbourne!

We acknowledge our social outreach program partners and thank them for another year of working productively together

Australian-based organisations

Afghan Australia
Development Organisation
Australian Catholic University
Centacare Catholic Family Services
Children First Foundation
Indigenous Hospitality House
Interplast Australia & New Zealand
Intjartnama Aboriginal Corporation
Jesuit Mission Office
Jewish Aid Australia
Lighthouse Foundation
Lightning Ridge Transcultural Community Council Inc
Malvern Emergency Food Program
MacKillop Family Services
Mannix College
Melbourne Overseas Mission
Menzies School of Health Research
Newman College
Open Family Australia Inc
Opening the Doors
Foundation Project Respect

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Australia-Timor Leste Outreach Program
Sacred Heart Mission
Santa Teresa Health Clinic
St Kilda Parish Mission
Drop In Centre
St Mary's College
St Mary's House of Welcome
The Way Community
The Wellington
Collingwood Inc
Very Special Kids

Overseas organisations

Cabrini Ministries, Swaziland
Catholic Health Services, Diocese of Kerema, PNG
Modilon General Hospital, Madang, PNG
Save Our Street Children Foundation, Baguio City, Philippines
Wapenamanda Centre for Primary Health, Enga Province, PNG

International health projects

Australia really is the lucky country when it comes to access to good quality healthcare. Through our social outreach program we strive to improve the health and wellbeing of people in other parts of the world by sharing our knowledge, skills and resources.

In the last 12 months we have:

- Funded a basic health and literacy training program for rural women in Afghanistan
- Assisted in funding of health outreach to HIV/Aids sufferers in Swaziland's low veld
- Sponsored orphaned/vulnerable children living in the hostel at St Philip's Mission in Swaziland
- Supported plastic and reconstructive surgery service/education programs in the Asia-Pacific region
- Conducted an orthopaedic service/education program to Modilon Hospital in Madang, PNG
- Designed plans for the construction of a new theatre block for Modilon Hospital in Madang, PNG
- Established a partnership with the Catholic Health Services in the Diocese of Kerema, PNG
- Provided scholarship funding for healthcare training for the Clarist Sisters in India
- Provided profoundly life-changing surgery for Tapino from Nauru and Joyanto from Bangladesh through our medical evacuation program
- Assisted in funding a primary health service in Wapenamanda, PNG
- Shipped medical and surgical supplies to the National Referral Hospital, Honiara, Solomon Islands
- Supported Children First Foundation's Miracle sMiles program
- Supported the development of a biomedical engineering service for hospitals in Timor Leste



Modilon Hospital Partnership

Bare wooden-slat beds, overcrowded wards and few medical supplies... this is the daily reality for our partner hospital in Madang, PNG. The partnership was first established in December 2007. One of the early priorities identified by the hospital CEO and Board Chair was assistance with their operating theatre redevelopment project. With the cooperation of our architects, who donated their time, the completed plans and specifications were recently delivered. The estimate to have had the plans prepared in PNG was approximately AUD400,000 so this aspect of the partnership has generated enormous savings to the hospital.

The plans were enthusiastically received by the hospital staff, particularly as they had been able to have input into the design to ensure that it suited the local conditions. The PNG Deputy Secretary of Health, who was present at the handing-over ceremony, believes the plans will be able to provide a blue-print for theatre development throughout the country so there is uniformity in design and construction.

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Cabrini Health

Sharing the healing mission of the Missionary
Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Social Outreach Annual Report

2008–2009

