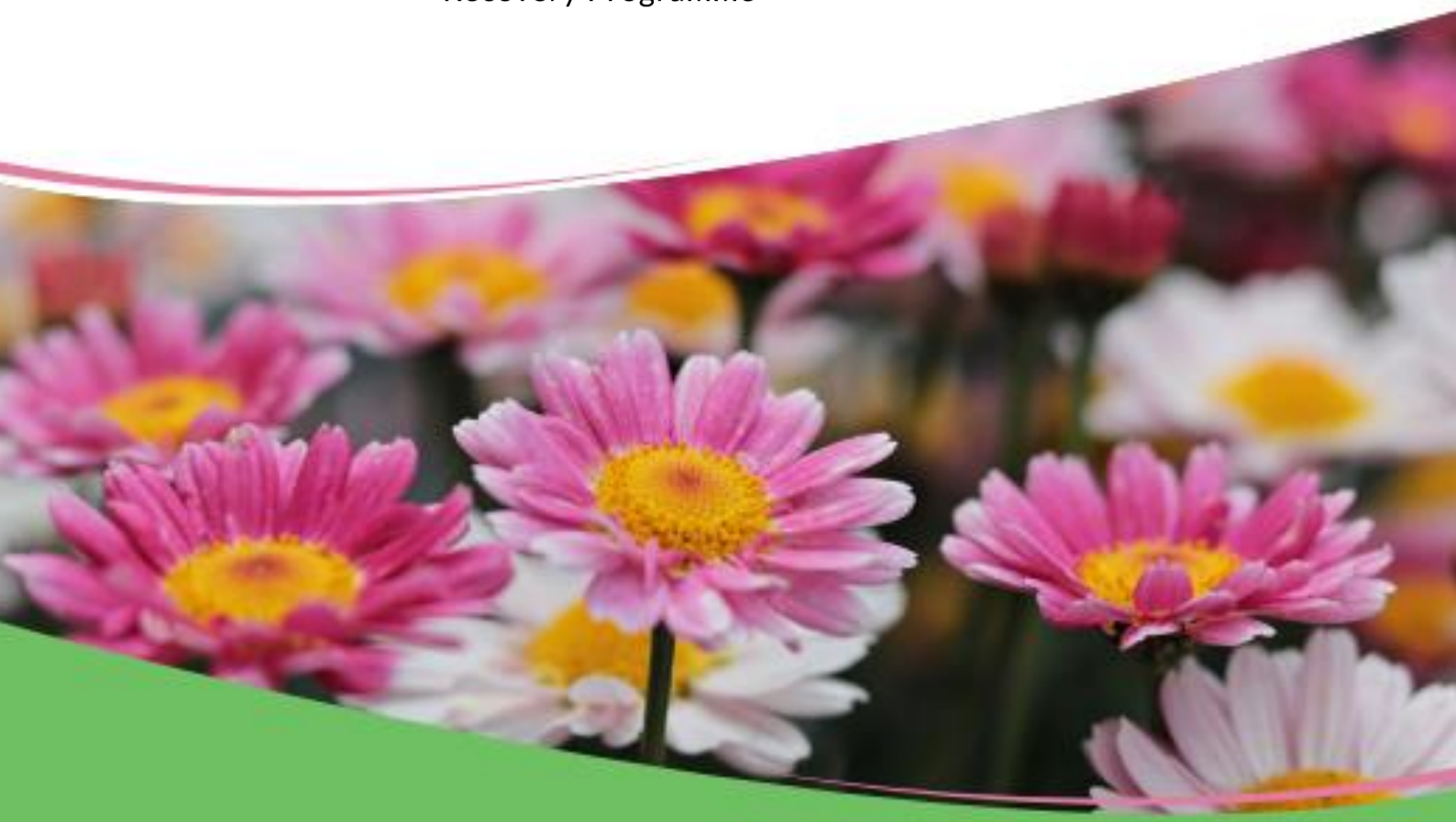
Fresh Start
Recovery Programme



# 2020 Annual Overview

## From the CEO

The past year has been a challenging time for Fresh Start, especially with the events around the COVID-19 pandemic in the latter part of the year. The closure of State and international borders, the suspension of elective surgery for ten weeks and the infection control measures that were implemented at all of our facilities have had far-reaching and lasting effects. The impact of these effects are seen in the reduced number of patients treated, the number of clients in our residential services and the reduction in other indicators reported in detail further in this report. For the first time in our history Fresh Start was forced to have a waiting list of patients awaiting treatment. At one point prior to reopening there were more than 80 people on the list and sadly there were 2 cases of overdose amongst this group.

I am very grateful to the staff at Fresh Start who responded magnificently to the challenges faced during this period. The imposed rules around social distancing, infection control and general hygiene gave rise to significant changes at our facilities. Generally speaking, these were for the good and many of the improvements have been established as enduring standard operating procedures.

The reduced number of people treated during the period from February 2020 onwards has of course flowed through to our financial position. Income from treatments fell rapidly by around 70%, as did Medicare receipts, accommodation and donor support. The support through the Federal Government's JobKeeper scheme and Business Incentive Payments, together with a one off COVID support payment through the WA State Government have ensured our financial viability and sustainability while coping with the reduction in our private income. Throughout the period we have kept the doors open and every one of our staff has been fully employed and fully paid. We ended the period in a sound financial position.

Western Australia has headed towards the "new normal" as the community transmission of COVID-19 has receded. This is reflected in Fresh Start returning to implant treatment and a slow return to uptake of our residential services. It's hard to contemplate the future as borders re-open but I am confident that the team at Fresh Start will continue to strive for the very best outcomes for people seeking recovery from addictions.

**Jeff Claughton**
**November 2020**

## HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR

**32,598** occasions of service were provided to our clients

**1,356** patients received treatment or support

**460** of these patients received detox and pharmacotherapy treatment

**370** people received 1,448 counselling sessions

**249** people received accommodation during their treatment

**47%** of patients received treatment at Fresh Start for the first time

**70% of opioid patients, who could be contacted, reported that they had not returned to use after 1 year**

**82% of Amphetamine users, who could be contacted, reported they had not returned to use after 1 year**

*Fresh Start CEO Jeff Claughton, Dr George O'Neil and Pekka Korhonen*

## Facts and figures for 2020

57% of patients treated were for **opioid addiction**

30% of patients were for **amphetamine type substances**

57 patients presented for treatment for **Benzodiazepine addiction**

12% of patients treated were for **alcohol addiction**

95% of patients were **from WA**

10% of patients identified as **Indigenous**

## Residential rehabilitation and recovery

Fresh Start is committed to providing a unique drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation program for men at our Northam Recovery Centre. The program is accredited to the WANADA Standard on Culturally Secure Practice. Accreditation was renewed this year following an audit and review that was conducted in July 2020.

**38** men took part in the program in the financial year, staying an average of **148** days each. The reduced numbers and increased length of stay compared to last year reflected a change in the intake and screening process and the effect of COVID-19 which resulted in the closure of the program in March 2020. It was not reactivated until July.

The outcomes achieved have been outstanding with **80%** of residents successfully graduating from the program. **72%** of graduates transitioned into paid employment or education.

Social Enterprises operated strongly through the program until COVID-19 forced the closure of The Hill Café Co and The Hill Catering Co. These enterprises have not reopened due to the low number of residents in the program. It is likely that we will reactivate them in 2021. The Hill Contracting Co has continued to operate and is in high demand in Northam. It is providing training for 1 program graduate and full-time employment for another.

## Supported Housing

At York Street Lodge **225** people were provided with accommodation pre and post detoxification treatment. The average length of stay was **10.9** days.

A further **13** people were provided with supported accommodation or transitional housing at our metropolitan houses. Several of the houses were unoccupied for much of the year but have been reactivated in the final quarter and are currently seeing a high occupancy rate.

**Supported accommodation** in Kewdale (women and children only) or Mt Lawley and Alexander Heights provide safe accommodation for residents in the final stages of recovery.

**Transitional housing** in Warwick provides accommodation and support for men who have graduated from the Northam Recovery Program.
**The Banyans Health and Wellness** is an enterprise that is 50% owned by AMPRF Ltd. Located in Brisbane, Queensland it provides a luxury residential setting for recovery from addiction, executive stress and burnout, and other mental health concerns including eating disorders, anxiety and depression. The centre traded strongly in the first half of the financial year but rapidly wound back its operations with the impact of COVID-19. The closure of international and state borders reduced its market by 70% and the facility was temporarily closed on 4th May 2020. Since re-opening in late June, the business has performed strongly and has a bright outlook with the likelihood of state border controls being relaxed progressively across Australia. A dividend of $0.10/ share was declared and paid in March 2020.

## Detoxification Addiction Treatment Clinic

On **Wednesday** each week, Fresh Start continues to operate a detox clinic for patients seeking help for their addiction. Anyone seeking help is offered treatment for their addiction and the chance to begin their recovery straight away. Fresh Start continues to be committed to operate without waiting lists and to treating people for addiction recovery regardless of their ability to pay for the treatment at the time of treatment. The implant and detox services were suspended for ten weeks during COVID-19 due to a national ban on elective surgery. The Clinic was kept open throughout the period to provide support for patients and general medical services and full treatment services resumed in July.

## Day Hospital

The Clinic in Townshend Rd, Subiaco is a registered as a Class B Day Hospital, licensed annually by the WA Health Department. The external measurement of our performance is conducted by the Licensing and Accreditation Unit of the WA health Department. We have met all requirements of the review process conducted throughout the year but the licence is subject to a Notice of Dispensations covering 16 items of mandatory compliance. **These items will need to be addressed as a matter of priority in the coming year.**

## Marketing

Our website www.freshstart.org.au and FB Page https://www.facebook.com/fresh.start.recovery.programme continue to be important pathways for clients and families to learn about treatment and other services offered by Fresh Start. Every week we have many enquiries through both channels from people seeking treatment or information.
A significant revision of the website has been completed during the year with particular attention paid to the structure and content to facilitate more effective search responses. A Search Engine Optimisation review has resulted in improved access to our services through the website. Monthly reports reflect the steadily increasing traffic and engagement.

Each week we receive many enquiries from the website by email and telephone calls from people seeking assistance for themselves or for someone else. The site had **77,053** page views and **26,656** sessions which is an increase of **17%** over the previous year. Fresh Start also has an active presence on Facebook with a total of **3,292 followers**.

## Staffing

As at 30th June 2020 there were **55** employees (**38** FTE) with **23** full-time, and **27** casual or part-time. In addition, there were 5 Medical Practitioners and a Clinical Psychologist on contract. JobKeeper was accessed for **50** staff ($150,000/month) which ensured that all staff were retained throughout the COVID-19 period.

## Volunteers

- On 30 June there were **74** Fresh Start volunteers, including **43** regulars, **12** on-call and **10** on the lunch roster for detox days. There were a further **9** volunteers helping in the Northam Recovery Program.
- Their contribution was valued at **$969,891** (according to Volunteering Australia calculations)
- Volunteers included admin assistants, surgeons, sandwich makers, gardeners, chaplains, pastors, carers, doctors, pharmacists and lawyers.

## Training

In 2020 the Clinic was accredited as a training site for the WA General Practice Extension Training program (WAGPET). Our first trainee is Dr Scott Martyn who will complete his six-month training commitment with us in 2021.

In conjunction with UWA, men from the Northam residential program participate in seminars for medical students each semester. This initiative by Professor Gary Hulse continues to be well received and has helped to educate many students with an understanding of addiction services leading to positive outcomes.

Other partnerships continue with students from:

- University of Notre Dame (Medical Students)
- Edith Cowan University (Para-Medic students)
- TAFE (Community Services students)
- King Edward Memorial Hospital (Midwifery trainees)

Dr Scott Martyn

## Employees Assistance Program

Fresh Start provides support through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for staff experiencing any work-related and personal, legal or health problems. This service, made available free of charge to staff and their immediate family is provided through WANADA and Relationships Australia.

## Chaplaincy

The Chaplains lead Fresh Start community support groups in Subiaco and the Northam Recovery Centre. The team of **1** full-time, **1** part-time and **1** Volunteer Chaplain provided chaplaincy support to **180** people and also ran **82** group sessions this year with an average of **6** people attending each session.

Chaplains also provide Christian services for those who request them.

These include

- Bible study and prayer groups in our supported accommodation
- One-on-one prayer
- Grief counselling
- Baptism and funeral services
- Connecting people to a local church for their ongoing spiritual growth

## Facilities and Capital Works

Fresh Start has acquired a long-term lease of acreage on the coast between Busselton and Dunsborough with a view to developing a respite and reunification centre for families in recovery from addiction. The first four years saw very slow progress as we sought local help with funding for the project but there have been encouraging steps taken in the past year. A number of buildings have been established on the property with power, water and sewage connected. Substantial financial support has been generously committed and it is anticipated that the centre will be ready for occupancy in 2021.

*The Family Reunification Centre in Busselton under construction.*

Substantial improvements have been made to our ITC infrastructure. This was completed following an attempted but unsuccessful “hacking” attack in late 2019. The costs of the upgrade were covered by an insurance claim.

## 2020 Financial overview

The O'Neil family and their company Go Medical Industries Pty Ltd provide a regular supply of Naltrexone implants manufactured here at their factory in Subiaco. Fresh Start and Go Medical have recently reached agreement with regards to the continuing supply of the implants for a set monthly fee. Fresh Start also provides compliance and research functions to Go Medical which are recognised in the agreement as a further contribution towards the cost of implants used in treatment. A long term liability of $2,200,000 has been recognised as a contribution towards the cost of past implants, eliminating the possibility of a call by Go Medical for approximately $7.89 million of historical costs through to 30 June 2020. This adjustment was reported in the 2019/20 Annual Financial Statements.

We are extremely grateful for the support and generosity we have received from individuals and organisations during the past year. Their financial support offers the hope of a drug free future to hundreds of people each year.

Fresh Start works closely with the Western Australian Government Health Department and the Mental Health Commission (MHC). Recurrent funding from the MHC in 2020/21 totalled $2,789,467.

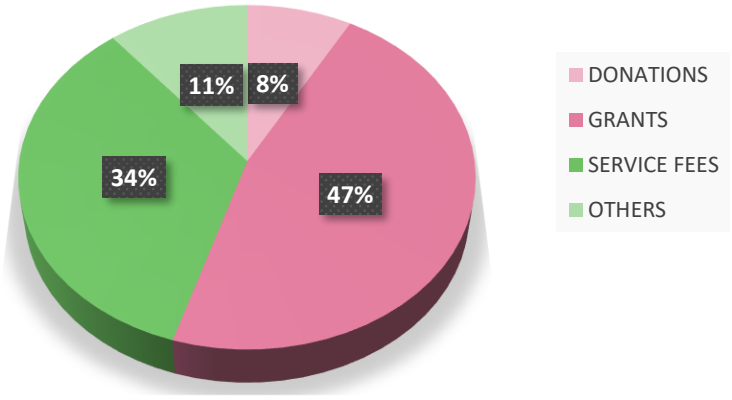
Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

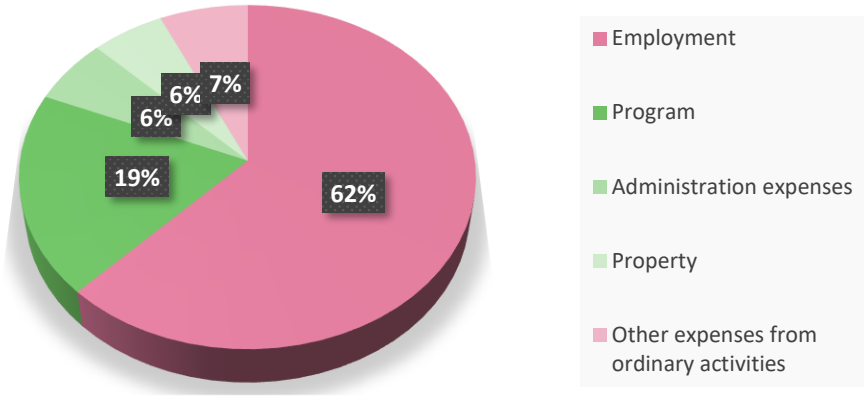
Government of **Western Australia**
**Mental Health Commission**

Go Medical Industries Pty Ltd

## Summary of Financial Operations

Operating Income **$6,726,806**
for the 12-month ended 30 June 2020




Operating Expenditure **$6,215,888**
for the 12-month ended 30 June 2020