

# Annual Report

2018-19





# Mercy Community

Supporting people in need to live healthy, connected lives within inclusive communities.

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*“Resolve to do good today and better tomorrow.”*

**Catherine McAuley**

Mercy Community is committed to protecting the privacy of people who engage our services. Where appropriate, names have been changed and stock photography used.



Mercy Community acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land on which we operate and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia. Mercy Community acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to live in spiritual and sacred relationships with this country.

## Message from Mercy Partners

## Chair & CEO Report



Dr Ricki Jeffery,  
Chair, Mercy Partners Council

Mercy Community, a ministry of Mercy Partners, is inspired by the life of Catherine McCauley and the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy to support people to live healthy, connected lives within inclusive communities. Every day Mercy Community puts into practice the words of Catherine McCauley 'We must strive to do ordinary things extraordinarily well' and this report showcases some of that extraordinary work.

Two primary accountabilities of Mercy Partners are to sponsor their ministries in the name of the Catholic Church and respond compassionately and creatively to their existing and emerging formation needs. Success in these accountabilities relies on the readiness of a ministry to firstly accept that they are a faith-based organisation and secondly engage in activities that help staff and volunteers understand and demonstrate their commitment to the values and traditions of that faith. Mercy Partners has been delighted with the level of engagement of the Mercy Community Board and Executive Leaders in opportunities that enrich understanding of mission, Catholic identity and governance. The engagement with Mercy Partners at gatherings for leaders, mission leaders and working groups has been excellent and demonstrative of their commitment to the mission and values of the organisation.

Mercy Partners acknowledges and thanks all staff and volunteers for their dedication and ongoing commitment to service excellence. Every day those involved in aged care and social services are faced with providing support to individuals and families with complex needs. They are in fact working in the context that Pope Francis describes as a 'complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integral approach for combatting poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded and at the same time protecting nature' (Laudito Si 139). Mercy Community heeds Pope Francis' instruction that we need to ensure that our approaches to community at all levels are appropriate to and inclusive of the diversity of cultures within our communities. The importance of local culture and active participation by community members in developing local solutions is inherent in our approach to work.

Mercy Partners takes pride in the continued pursuit of the vision for Mercy Community set by the Brisbane Sisters of Mercy - to carry forward and drive innovative, integrated, inclusive, coordinated and responsive social services in the communities we serve.

Dr Ricki Jeffery  
Chair  
Mercy Partners Council



Dr John O'Donnell AM, Chair



Fritha Radyk, CEO

Mercy Community continued to deliver quality services to support vulnerable individuals in Queensland and Northern NSW this year despite facing a number of key challenges. They included:

- the huge changes in funding of services for people with disability with the implementation of the NDIS. Mercy Community continued providing services throughout this transition period, albeit with substantial commitment of our own resources. We are pleased to report that more appropriate levels of NDIS funding commenced in May and June 2019;
- changes in funding of aged care services, preparation for new aged care standards, and consequential restructuring costs. While not yet complete, these changes have improved quality of service to even higher standards, while also maintaining financial viability in the longer term;
- the terms and conditions associated with State funding for family services have tightened, requiring review and re-structure of all services. In some instances, programs have become non-viable financially; Mercy Community has consequently been supporting family and children to access other providers;
- the need for Mercy Community corporate office and information systems to change, and for operating systems to be upgraded or replaced to be more efficient and 'fit for purpose'. Given cost-effective data gathering, analysis and reporting requires major transformation of our IT infrastructure, the Board has invested significant funds to ensure we can substantiate the excellent care outcomes we achieve;
- the long-awaited move from our historic Woolloowin home in September 2019, which

required significant investment in the 2018-19 FY to refurbish our ‘new’ home at Nudgee. We are all looking forward to our corporate services teams being integrated again, and being co-located with many of our family and aged care services.

Changes to our executive management team this year also impacted on operations and our strategic direction. Our CEO, Elaine de Vos resigned due to ongoing ill-health. We thank Elaine for her leadership and service to Mercy Community, and wish her well. Thanks also to Harriet Brummelhuis who stepped into the CEO role, and discharged that responsibility with skill and enthusiasm. We also acknowledge and thank the Mercy Community Executive members who have worked well as a team, and have led with skill and purpose through these many changes.

We thank the Board for their collegiality, diligence and professionalism in governance. We pay tribute to the leadership group and all people at Mercy Community, who have managed throughout a period of major change to maintain a steadfast focus on our Mission and purpose. The Board has paid particular attention to measures of care outcomes for families, children, and all people whom we support. Some of their heart-warming stories appear elsewhere in this report. We believe Mercy Community’s services remain true to the visions of Catherine McAuley and our Mission which commits us to “..enhancing the quality of life and well-being of those who access our services, believing that through actions of merciful love, Mercy is given and received”.

Post end-of-year events:

At the time of publication in September 2019, there are material changes in the governance of Mercy Community which it is relevant to report now, rather than in 12 months time.

It is with delight that we announce Fritha’s appointment to the CEO role with effect from 5th August 2019.

Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee, and Chair of the Property Committee of the Board, Mr Terry Crawford’s appointment as a director of the company ended in July 2019. Mr Shane Fracchia will retire from the Board at the Annual General Meeting scheduled for November 2019. My term as Chair and as director, and that of Adj. Prof. Iyla Davies, who is Chair of the Mission, People and Culture sub-committee of the Board, also ends at the AGM. [Deputy Chair Ms Lynn Smart and Ms Gail Davidson’s current appointments continue until at least 2020 and 2021 respectively].

Mercy Partners have made two new appointments to the Board, effective August 2019. Mr Peter Carroll,

B. Comm, LLB, CA is an experienced company director, with a distinguished career in professional consulting. Mr Carroll retired as a partner of Deloitte in 2002, and maintains a consulting practice. In recent years he has been a member of the Board of Centacare Brisbane.

Mr Peter Forday, B. Speech Therapy (Hon), Grad Dip. Soc Sci, MAICD also has extensive experience in board roles and executive leadership, with a focus on issues including disability services, child protection, youth justice, diversity and inclusion. Mr Forday is current Chair of Multicultural Australia and Welcome Sports Ltd.

On behalf of the directors and Mercy Community, we thank all those named above for their substantial commitment of skill, time and effort over many years of service as we strive to achieve our Vision of a “world where people, families and communities are strong in spirit, healthy and connected”.

Dr John O’Donnell AM  
Board Chair  
Mercy Community

Fritha Radyk  
Chief Executive Officer  
Mercy Community



# Families & Young People

Mercy Community's services for families, children and young people are as diverse as the communities we support - from our Family and Child Connect (FaCC) services for at-risk families (of which MC is the largest Queensland provider), through to our Cultural Diversity Hub in Toowoomba and our Lowood Hub Early Years' Service.

Each day our staff connect with individuals ranging from new parents who need a listening ear, through to young people who are preparing to transition from foster care into independent living. Regardless of who we are working with, the programs we deliver to families, children and young people have one thing in common: they aim to help individuals feel valued, connected and strengthened, and have hope for the future.

## Toowoomba's Women's Wellness Centre: Hub for Healing

In 2018 Mercy Community launched the Toowoomba Women's Wellness Centre (WWC): a safe hub for women in the Toowoomba region seeking support on their journey to healing, growth and recovery.

With a focus on women who have faced domestic and family violence and other trauma, the WWC provides connection, counselling and practical support. A highlight of its whirlwind first year was a photographic art exhibition in April 2019 (Sexual Violence Prevention Month).



## Agency Through Art: Your Body, Your Rules Exhibition

Your Body, Your Rules aimed to start a public conversation about a taboo topic. It told the stories of five real-life women who had experienced sexual violence, in their own words.

Over 200 people attended the event curated by Ania Harnden - a WWC counsellor whose photography has been showcased in European galleries. Photographs taken by Ania gave powerful visual testimony to each survivor's tale.

## Connected to the Toowoomba Community

Women sharing their narratives described the experience as empowering. People who experienced their stories had other words ... and other reactions.

*Powerful. Honest. Resilient. Brave.*

*"How many of my friends may have a story that I may not be aware of?"*

*"What can I do to help?"*

The event raised awareness and showed how Mercy Community stays at the forefront of creative solutions to local community issues.

## How we supported families and young people:

- 88,435 bednights provided to children and young people through our Foster and Kinship Care programme
- 2,974 people supported by our Cultural Diversity Hub
- 1,270 families connected with support through Family and Child Connect

# The Romero Centre

## The Romero Centre: Supporting refugees and people seeking asylum to settle in Brisbane

MC's Romero Centre follows in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley and St Oscar Romero, who identified unmet need in their communities and did everything in their power to bridge the gap and bring peace to displaced societal groups.

For two decades, Romero has supported people seeking safety and asylum in South East Queensland. Romero supports women, men and children to access essential services including housing and employment.

At MC, we value the human dignity of every person and are dedicated to enhancing their quality of life and wellbeing. Working alongside participants, families and agencies, Romero aims to reduce isolation, restore hope and create pathways to community integration.

It is this steadfast commitment that drives us to deliver key supports for refugees and people seeking asylum, including:

- individualised case coordination service



- an emergency support pantry (Oscar Romero Pantry)
- social inclusion groups run by volunteers, such as English classes, Men's Group, Sewing Group, and an Art Group
- in-house support delivered by individuals donating pro bono services, such as a legal migration advice clinic
- targeted programs provided in partnership with other community organisations, such as cultural exchange tours, job-readiness programs and business workshops.
- Individual and group counselling to support mental health
- Housing information and education sessions including: rights, responsibilities, the law, available support services and how to access them, and negotiating and understanding leases and form filling.
- Emergency, medium and long-term community based accommodation in partnership with parishes, schools and community members.

### Thanking our community of supporters

Romero wishes to extend our deepest gratitude to all supporters who have gone above and beyond to ensure people seeking asylum feel welcome and connected in our community. The work we do at the Romero Centre would simply not be possible without our generous community of supporters who share our commitment to St Oscar Romero's legacy of 'giving a voice to the voiceless'.

### How we supported refugees and asylum seekers this year

- More than 500 people accessed our individual case coordination service
- 420 people supported to access emergency housing
- 200 adults and children supported to find medium to long-term accommodation



With the progressive rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) across Queensland, Mercy Community has welcomed the opportunity to review our NDIS service offerings, to meet the increasing demand for greater choice and control over how they receive support.

Mercy Community’s NDIS services focus on partnering with individuals and equipping them to live as autonomously as possible through consumer-directed supports such as:

- Supported Coordination
- Specialist Disability Accommodation
- Assistance with Daily Living
- Supported Employment
- Supported Independent Living

This year we delivered Support Coordination services throughout Queensland, and other supports in South-East Queensland and parts of Northern NSW. We were also appointed as a provider of the Queensland Community Support Scheme effective July 2019.

**Client profile: More choice and control for Adam**

Mercy Community has supported Adam\* to reintegrate into the community after 24 years spent in care in a forensic hospital setting.

In mid-2017 when our team first commenced working with Adam we were unable to meet him due to extreme safety risks and worked predominantly with his care team at the hospital. Monthly stakeholder meetings were held with the hospital to discuss introducing external therapists, what type of housing would be most appropriate for Adam and what

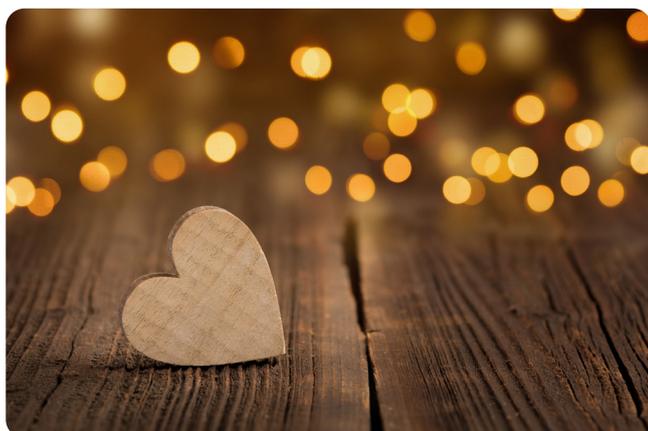
support workers Adam would like to work with. The hospital was very hesitant with the transition as the risks with Adam transitioning into the community were incredibly high due to his behaviours.

Over an 18 month period, external therapists and support workers were introduced and were able to complete an occupational therapy and psycho-social assessment as well as some life-story work with Adam. Then, in late 2018, a house in Toowoomba was identified for Adam to transition to, and intense work commenced to support Adam in this regard. At this point Adam met his Support Coordinator face-to-face, and then in early 2019, after an intense transition period, he was moved into the house full-time.

Since then Adam has continued to access his allied health team in his own home and successfully accesses the community on a regular basis with a consistent team of support workers. To date there have been no significant incidents that would potentially result in Adam returning to the hospital, which is a significant achievement given the risk associated with Adam’s transitions.

Adam continues to achieve his goals and make progress and we continue to support him to integrate into the mainstream community.

\*Participant name has been changed to protect privacy.



**How we supported people with disability this year**

- 1,018 people benefited from Support Coordination
- 309 people accessed Plan Management
- 33 people accessed Assistance with Daily Living supports
- 29 participants found safe accommodation through our Supported Independent Living service
- 5 people were employed by our ADE Cookery Nook

# Aged Care

Mercy Community offers a range of aged care services that are tailored to meet individual needs. We are committed to providing care that enables individuals to have greater choice and control over their lives as they age.

Mercy Community cared for hundreds of older Australians in Brisbane’s northern suburbs this year. More than 220 people engaged us for residential or respite care at our aged care home at Nudgee, and more than 75 people accessed in-home care packages.

## How we supported older Australians this year

- Home Care
- Residential Aged Care
- Dementia care
- Respite Care
- Palliative Care

## Client Profile: Charlie’s story

Charlie is a single 82-year-old male who has never married. He lives alone in a unit and is independently

mobile, fit and active. He still gardens, goes to church and walks to the local shopping mall for lunch every day; however, he has moderate to advanced dementia. Our home care service gives Charlie personalised help around the house so he can continue to live by himself.

Charlie is visited six days a week by Mercy Community Aged Care Services’ carers. He is taken by carers to doctor’s appointments, the dentist, podiatrist and on social outings. He has the morning paper delivered every day which he reads and does the crossword. He has a memory diary in which his appointments are written by staff.

The carers walk around the garden with Charlie and admire his gardening achievements. Charlie enjoys the local parish concerts and lunches and his fellow parishioners take him to Mass twice a week. He sings in the choir.

The carers check in with Charlie each morning and ensure he has taken all his medication. MC Aged Care Services keep in touch with Charlie’s family on a regular basis to provide updates on his health and welfare.



# Celebrating Our People

Mercy Community prides itself on being an employer of choice in the community sector. As of 30 June 2019 we employed 986 people and worked with 95 volunteers. Our team's committed efforts provided invaluable support to people in Queensland, spanning communities from Northern NSW to Cairns.

The Mercy Community 'family' includes a diverse range of people, ranging from psychologists and social workers in our direct service streams, through to finance and HR specialists in our Corporate Services division. We have a strong focus on actively recruiting staff from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds for positions in all areas of the organisation.

Service stream	Total staff per service stream	Gender (female as % of total)	Volunteers
Aged Care	287	90	59
Families & Young People	457	70	35
NDIS	185	71	0
Corporate Services	87	47	1
Total	986	73	95

## Recognising our people

As an organisation that delivers services to enhance the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in our community, we recognise our employees are our most important asset. To celebrate the achievements of our staff and volunteers Mercy Community hosts Mercy Day every September. The Board and Executive Team pays tribute to individual achievements through 'Mercy Moments' awards on the day, which recognise colleagues who go the extra mile to deliver positive



outcomes for the people we support, in keeping with our vision, mission and values.

## Leadership training

Leading Edge is a program for Mercy Community's emerging leaders that provides participants with professional development workshops, peer coaching and self-reflection through our Integrated Leadership System (ILS). We are pleased and proud of the 2018 Leading Edge Cohort that completed the program in early 2019. Many of the cohort are either in emerging leadership positions or aspiring to grow and develop into leadership positions; Leading Edge has provided a deeper understanding of their personal skills and attributes as leaders of the future.

## Cultural awareness training

Mercy Community is committed to creating a culturally safe and inclusive environment, where we recognise and respect the cultural identities of First Nation people and others. This year 274 staff completed Cultural Awareness training. As part of our commitment to inclusion, we also took steps towards developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP framework will focus on relationships, respect and opportunities.

## New Saba learning and development LMS

With a geographically dispersed workforce, we need to enable access to learning anywhere, anytime, using any device. To support this approach, we launched a new online Learning Management System (LMS) that can be accessed via mobile device and uses collaboration tools to connect our people. The new Saba LMS, in addition to the redesign of content, provides functionality to reduce time in the classroom, backfill, manual overhead of producing reports, travel and accommodation costs. By implementing a contemporary best practice LMS, we have been able to focus on the people, processes, systems and content required to position our organisation for future growth and sustainability.

# Governance Statement

Mercy Community Services SEQ Limited is a company limited by guarantee. Mercy Partners is the sole Company Member of Mercy Community Services SEQ Ltd (Mercy Community). Mercy Partners is a Public Juridic Person in the Church and a registered charity. The members approve the statement of mission, philosophy and values of the company and appoint the Board of Directors.

The role of the Mercy Community Board of Directors is to set the strategic direction of the company and oversee good governance practice. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is appointed by the Board and is responsible for implementation of Mercy Community's strategy and day-to-day management of the organisation. The Mercy Community Board of Directors and Executive Team have extensive skills and experience in service delivery, strategy development and organisational governance.

The Board is supported by an independent Company Secretary and, as part of effective governance processes, all relevant governance documents are reviewed on a regular basis.

Mercy Community is supported by strong quality processes and oversight. Mercy Community has continuous improvement practices that ensure internal policies and procedures are up to date to support best practice in service delivery. This is further demonstrated by Mercy Community's accreditation against the Queensland Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF), the Australian Aged Care Quality Standards and Home Care Common Standards.



**Board of Directors**

From left: Adjunct Professor Iyla Davies, Adjunct Professor Terry Crawford, Lynn Smart, Gail Davidson, Dr John O'Donnell, Shane Fracchia.

# Our Performance

Mercy Community Services SEQ Limited operated at a loss for the financial year ending 30 June 2019. The result is reflective of the restructure of our operations and our intent to invest in areas of unmet need in support of people in the community.

## Financial Summary

<b>Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income</b>		
For the year ended 30 June 2019		
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Revenue	84,639	77,904
Other income	2,171	2,165
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>86,810</b>	<b>80,069</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Employee benefit expenses	(72,966)	(63,785)
Client service expenses and consumables	(2,471)	(2,362)
Administrative expenses	(2,863)	(2,419)
Auditor remuneration	(88)	(84)
Utility and property expenses	(4,584)	(4,178)
Motor vehicle expenses	(1,833)	(1,686)
Computer and communication expenses	(2,131)	(1,665)
Insurance expenses	(791)	(723)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(2,639)	(2,498)
Impairments	(139)	-
Finance costs	(157)	(155)
Other expenses	(444)	(459)
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>(91,106)</b>	<b>(80,014)</b>
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>(4,296)</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		
Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss		
Change in fair value of financial asset	8	(6)
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>(6)</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>(4,288)</b>	<b>49</b>

*The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

<b>Statement of financial position</b> as at 30 June 2019		
	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$000</b>	<b>\$000</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	23,028	31,327
Trade and other receivables	5,084	4,904
Other current assets	1,968	1,359
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>30,080</b>	<b>37,590</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Financial assets	234	426
Property, plant and equipment	72,916	52,546
Intangible assets	2,916	3,619
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>76,066</b>	<b>56,591</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>104,146</b>	<b>94,181</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	37,519	39,558
Employee benefits	5,606	5,071
Other current liabilities	5,169	4,663
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>48,294</b>	<b>49,292</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Employees benefits	5,606	5,071
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>48,863</b>	<b>49,786</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>57,283</b>	<b>44,395</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Contributed equity	36,040	36,040
Other reserves	17,192	9
Retained surplus	4,051	8,346
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>57,283</b>	<b>44,395</b>

*The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*



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