

AMITY HEALTH LTD

Annual Report

2017 - 2018

Our Mission

Providing country people with the best possible access to health services

Our Purpose

To work in partnership with others to provide services, support, advocacy, leadership and coordination in the development and promotion of primary health care in regional, rural and remote WA

Our Values

Fairness
Integrity
Responsibility
Enjoyment

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Chairman's Report

Dear Members

Firstly, I would like to respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional custodians of the lands on which we work and deliver our health and community services and pay my respects to Elders past present and emerging. I also acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal Australians and non-Aboriginal Australians to the health and wellbeing of all people in this country that we all live in and share together – Australia.



This past year has been one of physical upheaval and consolidation. The modifications to our Albany premises are now complete and staff all have their own desk and workspace. Within the new space we have incorporated private telephone interview rooms for the mental health services, an enclosed room for equipment sterilization, more staff amenities space, more consulting space and generally some room to move and expand should we need it. I would like to thank all the staff for their patience and perseverance during the rebuilding process, which was dusty, noisy and very disruptive. In addition, our remote services are all now located in permanent office space, which I am sure will provide a sense of stability and belonging for the staff in those locations.

Amity Health are now providing services to not only the Great Southern but also the Wheatbelt and the Southern Goldfields. The Mental Health Services, Chronic Disease Care programs and Social Work initiatives are all providing much needed services in all the regions in which we work. Three new projects/services were also initiated this year:

- a diabetes capacity building project offered scholarships to support those with the appropriate underpinning qualifications and an interest to undertake Diabetes Education study, to increase the number of qualified diabetes educators in the Great Southern;
- a project with the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), "Wound Care – WA growing our own skin champions", reviewing, scoping and designing wound care within the Great Southern, and
- a partnership with Relationships Australia (WAPHA funded) to provide facilitated support groups for Children of Parents / Carers with Mental Illness.

Our staff teams are now well established with over 70 team members across the lower part of Western Australia. Without these fantastic people our work would not possible and the organisation would not be held in such high regard. Team managers are regularly visiting service sites and using internet technology to maintain staff connections and provide client services. The Board thanks all staff for their diligence and action orientated attitude which has ensured that services are working and thriving.

Our finances continue to be positive, which provides us with the stability and assurance to plan for the future, look at new opportunities and deliver what we are contracted to provide. We continue to be a strong, progressive and well-respected community services provider providing professional health, community and social services within a large area of southern Western Australia.

I would like to thank the executive team, program managers, clinicians and support staff for their continued professionalism and dedication to team work that ensures that Amity Health is an employer of choice for many allied health care providers and administration personnel. I look forward to another exciting year in 2018-2019. I also thank my fellow directors for their support and guidance during the past year

Trish Ryans-Taylor

Membership and Board

Membership

Amity Health has two categories of membership

1. Primary members
2. Special members

A Primary Member is a Registered Primary Health Provider and a Special Member is a Community Member.

Board

Directors

Ms Trish Ryans-Taylor

Mr Richard Keeler

Dr Ligia Galvez

Dr Mark Victor

Ex-Officio

Ms Robyn Marchesi – Company Secretary

Ms Robin Surridge – Chief Executive Officer

Overview

Amity Health is a not for profit organisation providing a range of programs and services to help adults, children and families. Through these services we work to achieve our mission of providing country people with the best possible access to health services.

We work hand-in-hand with doctors, nurses and other health professionals to ensure a holistic approach to meet complete health care needs. We work collaboratively and in partnership with other organizations to secure service provision for improved health outcomes in our communities across the Great Southern, into the Wheatbelt and South Coastal Goldfields. Partnership relationships extend from federal, state and local government agencies to GP practices, other not-for-profit organizations, other allied health service providers, schools and community groups.

Our team of allied health professionals work to provide health and wellbeing solutions using a partnership approach and provides early intervention and prevention strategies for mental health and physical health, and chronic disease management. This team includes dietitians, diabetes educators, occupational therapists, an allied health child mental health provider, social workers, speech pathologists and nurses. Members of staff are located and work across the Great Southern as well as in Narrogin, Northam, Merredin, Moora, Esperance and Kalgoorlie.

Amity Health also provides a range of programs to help adults, families and children and their communities. Amity Health is able to respond flexibly and adaptably to the needs of its rural and remote communities, and as such the scope and number of programs change and develop as needs arise.

At its purpose-built Albany location at 136 Lockyer Avenue, a site providing clinic rooms and a child therapy wing, Amity Health continues to attract an increasing range and number of specialists who provide a visiting consulting service for our communities in the Great Southern.

Activities

Partnerships

Amity Health's ongoing partnerships approach has resulted in the establishment of positive working relationships with a range of community agencies, including state and federal government, other not for profits and service provision agencies. This approach is a key factor to ensure available resources are well-utilised, and outcomes maximised where possible.

Amity Health's list of partnerships crosses government and sectoral boundaries and includes the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA), the planning and commissioning body focussed on the delivery of patient centred primary health and social care systems. WAPHA has commissioned Amity Health to deliver mental health, chronic disease, and Aboriginal specific health programs over the past year.

With the WA Country Health Service (WACHS), Amity Health has established a number of programs embedding Amity Health allied health clinicians in WACHS services. This has occurred successfully in the Great Southern, Wheatbelt and the Goldfields. In addition to these, a collaboration with WACHS to deliver rheumatology services in Albany has ensured patients continue to receive the much-needed service.

A well-established and successful partnership with the Department of Social Services marks 12 years of Communities for Children, a program that aims to support and facilitate early intervention and prevention programs to achieve positive outcomes for children aged between 0-12 years and their families.

Other effective partnering relationships created in the past year include:

- Headspace
- Palmerston
- Silver Chain
- Relationships Australia
- Baptistcare
- Clarence Estate
- Rural Health West



Sarah Pegden -Children's week in Albany

Allied Health Services

Amity Health's early intervention team continue to provide speech pathology and occupational therapy services to the Great Southern community.

Children and Families:

Schools in the region continue to request the services of the speech pathologist and occupational therapist to school kindy, pre-school and at-risk children. 117 screenings were administered in 5 Great Southern schools – Jerramungup, St Joseph's, Great Southern Grammar, Woodbury Boston and Frankland.

Amity Health continues to be a registered provider of speech pathology and occupational therapy services for children with autism spectrum disorder and complex disability. Families eligible for funding under the federal programs Helping Children with Autism and Better Start for Children with Disability can be assessed and managed by our clinicians. These services will transition to NDIS after July 2019.

Two occupational therapy groups providing support for fine and gross motor development – Happy Hands and Dynamic Developers – were delivered in Cranbrook and Frankland Primary Schools terms 1-3. OT education and support were provided to parents and teachers in a range of regional towns. An additional Happy Hands group was delivered in Narrogin.

The "Mindful Kids" groups conducted last year by the mental health occupational therapist and therapy assistant were very popular and successful, so another group was run this year as well. The 6-week group offers children and parents education in managing anxiety and self-regulation.

With the support of the WA Primary Health Alliance further COPMI (Children of Parents with Mental Health Issues) groups were conducted this year – 2 for children and 1 for adolescents. Once again Amity Health collaborated with Relationships Australia to provide a supportive program for children with family members experiencing mental health problems. Engaging adolescents in the program was the greatest challenge. In conjunction with Alta 1 College a modified program was successfully presented.

The Amity Health dietitian was very busy with a number of activities: a collaboration with WACHS to deliver Eating with Dinosaurs at Spencer Park PS and Coolangarras; providing dietary education to workers at Department of transport and the Water Corporation, under a partnership agreement with HBF Health Services; supporting Curtin University Dietetic Masters Students in a 6 week community placement.

Adult and Aged Care Services

Amity Health continues to provide speech pathology and dietetics services to 6 aged care facilities in Albany and the region, as well as servicing home-based recipients of home care packages.

Our allied health team continues to provide services for adult clients delivered from our clinic rooms in Albany. The team comprising dietitians, diabetes educators, a speech pathologist and an occupational therapist provided individual assessments and reviews throughout 2017-18.

Amity Health's weekly Stroke Communication Group continues to support people living with long-term communication impairment resulting from stroke and degenerative conditions such as Parkinson's. The group still draws a consistent attendance, while new referrals continue to be received.

Community Participation, Training and Promotion

Amity Health's allied health team continues to be in demand for community events and training to a range of organisations including aged facilities, care agencies, schools and the disability sector. Contributions to a wide range of community organisations and events have occurred in the past year:

- Community Living Association
- Arthritis foundation
- Arthritis and Osteoporosis Australia Health and Wellness Seminar.
- Woman's Health Forum
- Denmark Agricultural College
- Albany Nurses' Conference
- Cancer Council events
- Men's Health Week event
- NAIDOC week events
- Mad Hatter's Tea Party for Mental Health week
- City of Albany events



NAIDOC week – Zoe Upson (middle) with Stephen Hill (Left) and Michael Walters

Amity Health Visiting Specialists

Approximately 4735 patients accessed a range of specialist clinics hosted by Amity Health. These included:

Anaesthesiology	Paediatric Endocrinology
Audiology	Pain Management
Audiology (cochlear implant checks)	Podiatric Surgeon
Cardiology	Podiatrist
Clinical Psychology	Paediatric Endocrinology
Continence Management	Rehabilitation Physician
Dermatology	Rheumatology
Diabetic Clinic	Respiratory Physician & Lung function testing
General Surgery	Spinal Surgeon
Neurology	Urology
Orthopaedic Surgeon	Vascular Surgeon

Diabetes Capacity Building Project – Great Southern

In collaboration with the WA Primary Health Alliance short-term funding was secured to support a workforce capacity building project. The primary aim of the project was to provide scholarships for qualified health professionals resident in the Great Southern, to complete a Graduate Certificate in Diabetes Education, as well as support further training for qualified diabetes educators and other diabetes service providers. It was also designed to ensure those working towards credentialing status were well supported. This was successfully achieved with the following outcomes:

- 3 qualified nurses received full scholarships to complete their Graduate Certificate
- Support was provided to 5 other allied health professionals to be trained in DESMOND, a group program for those newly diagnosed with diabetes
- Flexit training (management of Type 1 diabetes) was provided to a credentialed diabetes educator
- 2 diabetes educators were supported to achieve credentialing via Amity Health's senior diabetes educator

Social Work– Narrogin

Integrated partnership, WA Country Health Service (WA State Government's Royalties for Regions Program, through the Southern Inland Health Initiative).

This program has been operating in Narrogin for over 4 years and has proved to be an essential support to the hospital and the community. The hospital-based social worker provides intervention services at a primary care level to reduce presentations to emergency. The role also allows for management at a hospital crisis level to avoid potentially preventable hospital admissions. Receiving both GP and hospital referrals, the social worker can address client needs in a timely manner, preventing escalation of psychosocial issues.

Key Activities and Achievements:

- 121 individuals were supported throughout the year and 490 occasions of service were provided
- This initiative has been extremely successful resulting in the position being integrated into WACHS services

Wound Care – WA Grow your own skin champions

Funded by the WA Primary Health Alliance a study is in progress to review, scope and design wound care within Great Southern primary health and provide a background to help create a collaborative and integrated model of skin care and wound management in the region. In developing the model, the aim is to augment and integrate current services thereby utilising existing strengths and promoting best practice in wound management.

Community Child Health Services – Esperance and Kalgoorlie

Integrated partnership, West Australian Country Health Service

Amity Health through this partnership established an Occupational Therapist and Speech Pathologist in the Esperance WACHS Population Health Service team and a speech pathologist in Kalgoorlie based at the Child Development Team. These two teams provide paediatric services for clients presenting with developmental concerns.

This project has created a collaborative model of child development services provided through the engagement not for profit organisation, Amity Health. Early identification of development issues, vulnerable at risk children and provision of appropriate allied health interventions are the primary goals.

Key Activities and Achievements:

- Reduced waitlist for child development referrals
- The OT led Peggy Lego Pre-writing program continues in local schools
- Establishment of a New Parent's Group led by the OT
- Increase in SP and OT school screenings
- Increased SP and OT clinics in regional towns
- An increase in the implementation of multidisciplinary Allied health related patient care

Primary Health Care and General Practice Support

A very active participation in regional health networks has been maintained with Professional development events supported or convened through Amity Health, have provided interagency and interdisciplinary education and opportunities for networking and collaborative partnerships with General Practice, WACHS and other agencies.

Four regional networks were convened through Amity Health over the year:

- Great Southern Mental Health Professionals' Network (MHPN)
- Great Southern Practice Nurse Network
- Practice Managers' Network
- Great Southern Nurse Practitioner Networking Group

From July 2018 two of these networks transitioned to the WAPHA Country WA PHN. The Great Southern Practice Nurse Network, the Practice Managers' Network are now convened through the WAPHA Great Southern Country WA PHN.

Amity Health also continues to organise 'Chat and Chomp' which is a bi-monthly interagency lunch time gathering. Each meeting is hosted by a different agency and provides the opportunity to showcase the programs and activities of the agency who hosts and also those who attend.

Visits to General Practice were undertaken to provide information and support where new Amity Health programs were being established in the Great Southern, the Wheatbelt and the South East Coastal regions. The Amity Health Managers of the Integrated Chronic Disease Care and the Mental Health program visited most practices in the Eastern and Southern Wheatbelt in December 2017 to ensure regional access to the new services.

Key Activities and Achievements - Amity Health Education Events

- Liaison support for the Medical Director and PracSoft training day for General Practice Albany
- Stepped Care Approach, Mental Health Portal, presentation in Albany and Northam for General Practice and mental health professionals; service operating in the Wheatbelt and Great Southern, supported by WAPHA
- Psoriasis and Dermatology Q & A sessions, Dr Robert Granger, Dermatologist, Albany
- Pharmaceutical Opioids - A Hidden Epidemic, Dr Mat Coleman, Addiction Psychiatrist, Narrogin, supported by WAPHA, (35 attended plus 14 off site via VC)
- Aboriginal Mental Health and Cultural Competency Training, Dr Tracy Westerman, Albany (37 attendees), Northam (32 attendees), two-day
- Insulin delivery devices and glucose monitoring, Clinical Endocrinologist Professor Aris Siafarikas, PMH Consultant Paediatric, Albany breakfast session

Mental Health Professionals Network (MHPN), four events convened:

- Psychology – What's happening in Schools with Maree Daws a Senior School Psychologist on Current mental health education programs

- Pharmaceutical Opioids - A hidden epidemic with Psychiatrist Dr Mat Coleman who has sub-specialty training addiction psychiatry spoke on pharmaceutical opioids
- Making Sense of Somatisation with Professor Geoffrey Riley AM, Honorary Senior Research Fellow in The Rural Clinical School of Western Australia
- Advocacy in Mental Health - the expanded role of the Mental Health Advocate: what all practitioners should know with Liz Mortimore from the Mental Health Advocacy Service



Dr Tracey Westerman - Cultural Competency Training

Clinical updates and education were provided through the Practice Nurse meetings held monthly at Amity Health

- WACHS Population Health update with Georgina Greaves WACHS Child Health Nurse Coordinator, Kath Penton WACHS Health Promotion Officer, Karen Sigley Family Violence Prevention Services
- Diabetic Foot Assessment with Olivia Ho Podiatrist WACHS High Risk Foot Clinic
- Meningococcal update and DHA eHealth update with Kathleen Smedley Regional Disease Control and Immunisation Coordinator, Kathy Rainbird Digital Health Programme Manager
- Wound Management Update- trouble shooting with Julie Roberts CNS Wound Clinic Albany Health Campus
- Child Health Checks & Child Health Nurse Service Update with Georgina Greaves WACHS Child Health Nurse Coordinator and Introduction, Q & A and topics wish list: Clinical Professor Aris Siafarikas, PMH Consultant Paediatric Endocrinologist
- The cutaneous findings associated with having diabetes with Dr Robert Granger – Dermatologist
- Changes in primary health service delivery to community with Megan Bob - Silver Chain Community Manager Great Southern Region and Jessie Jones – Silver Chain physiotherapist Carolyn Graeser ACAT Seniors Health and Community Rehabilitation
- Influenza Vaccinations: Update for 2018 with Silvie Miczkova Acting Regional Disease Control and Immunisation Coordinator
- Community palliative care services update with Desiree Grace - Home Care Manager and Clare Wasley – Palliative Care Coordinator from Hall and Prior and Aged Care Group
- CPR and Anaphylaxis update with Nurse Practitioner Leanne Laurie
- Troublesome wounds after joint replacement - tips and advice with Orthopaedic surgeon Dr Simon Wall

Program Delivery

Kids Health Link – Merredin

The Kids Health Link Program is being delivered in partnership between the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) and the Merredin College. This project aims to deliver a school based social work, family support program as well as linking with the community to provide services to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable children aged 0-12 years and their families.

Two family support workers are also based at the Merredin Community College and operate a successful 0-4 year playgroup twice a week. This playgroup provides an environment for children to participate in a variety of activities to further develop their social and emotional skills in the years prior to entering school. Parents and carers have the ability to positively influence their children's health and increase their knowledge of the importance of supportive parenting relationships.

The social worker position is also based at the Merredin Community College which forms a bridge between health and education through the provision of individual, group and community based social work services. Families are able to connect with the social worker in a safe, private, neutral environment on the school grounds. The social worker also supports, coordinates and advocates for families to access services. This position has been vacant for six months.

Key Achievements:

- Provision of a save environment for parents and children through Playgroup, focusing on school readiness skills and building children's confidence in socialising with their peers.
- Engagement with the community through collaboration with local organisation, provided activities to children and parents during dedicated community outreach events.
- Face to face counselling and engagement with primary school children on the school grounds.
- Addressing issues early and supporting the needs of primary school children. The social worker provided one on one counselling for children who may have been experiencing trauma, bullying, abuse, had behavioural and/or school attendance issues.



Colourful scenes at playgroup

Footprints to Better Health

The current service outcome of this program is for Aboriginal people to have increased access to chronic disease screening and care planning. This is achieved by providing access to bulk billed drop in style GP led health clinics, provided in a culturally appropriate manner and in partnership with general practices around the Great Southern. Clinics are held in Albany, Mt Barker, Gnowangerup, Tambellup and Katanning. Amity Health partners with Great Southern Aboriginal Health through this program, linking in with the team to provide services and venues outside mainstream practices in Albany, Katanning and Tambellup.

Key Activities and Achievements:

- 470 clients seen
- 686 Occasion of service for chronic disease screening
- 325 clients received health checks
- Community events held in Kojonup, Albany and Katanning
- Cultural Awareness Training provided in Mt Barker



Integrated Team Care

The Integrated Team Care activity has replaced 'Closing the Gap' funded programs that Amity Health had been providing. This new program retains the broad aims of improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people with chronic health conditions through:

- better access to coordinated and multidisciplinary care
- increased support through their General Practitioner
- provision of more proactive management

Amity Health delivers this program in the Great Southern and Southern Wheatbelt.

The roles of Care Coordinator, Indigenous Health Project Officer and Indigenous Outreach Worker are all aligned under this new program and fully funded in the Great Southern. Amity Health continues to provide highly valued outreach services to the community. Strong links with general practice have grown as GPs recognise the PIP incentives for providing care to Aboriginal clients. The Care Coordinator can also provide clients accepted onto the program with Supplementary Services and aids, for example, footwear for diabetes clients, or access to a specialist service.

Strong relationships with Great Southern Aboriginal Health, general practices (including regular coordination meetings with larger GP practices), community groups, not for profit organizations, allied health providers and specialists, ensure the program is widely promoted and well utilised.

In the Southern Wheatbelt, Amity Health is funded to provide a Care Coordinator and Outreach Worker. Amity Health developed a partnership with KAATA (Kaata-Kooringal Employment and Enterprise Development Aboriginal Corporation) around the employment of an Indigenous Outreach Worker. This position transitioned to Amity Health this year, allowing Amity Health to broker more supported client transfers to Perth for medical treatment and specialist appointments.

Key Activities and Achievements:

- 153 clients supported in Great Southern
- 95 clients supported in southern wheatbelt
- 2108 occasions of care coordination service in the Great Southern
- 1502 occasions of care coordination service in the Southern Wheatbelt, Instances of service coordination include 153 specialist appointments supported and 97 individual GPs referring clients

ATSI Wellbeing and Resiliency



Members of the Merredin Yorga's group creating library bags for local children

A new program funded by WAPHA Western Australia Primary Health Alliance to support the Aboriginal Community in the towns of, Narrogin, Moora, Gnowangerup, Tambellup and Mt Barker. This program supports the community by assisting them to access services and programs that are relevant to their needs and interests. We have 4 ATSI Wellbeing and Resilience Coordinators working in the program and they respond to the local needs of the community, working with Elders and the community to establish a way forward and the types of support to be provided. A Partnership is also formed with Palmerston Association Inc to support Mt Barker, Tambellup and Gnowangerup communities alongside Amity Health's Wellbeing and

Resiliency Coordinator. The program aims are to support the five dimensions of Aboriginal health and wellbeing:

- Physical Health
- Psychological Health
- Social Health and wellbeing
- Spirituality and;
- Cultural Integrity

By promoting a strength-based view of these five dimensions this acknowledges that a strong connection to culture and country builds resilience in individuals and the community.

In the communities of Narrogin, Merredin, Tambellup, Gnowangerup and Mt Barker, weekly/regular groups have been established bringing together the community to support each other, build new skills and develop resiliency amongst their peers. Art and Craft, Therapeutic activities are supported and agencies are invited to attend to support engagement of services and build knowledge of services available to the community. Palmerston are delivering "Bush Classrooms" for the male community which focuses on reconnecting with culture, land and their peers, promoting healthy messages and promote good mental health. An example of resiliency and healing, connecting with culture and land through the group sessions is the dying of fabric using natural fibres and textures (leaves, flowers, sticks, berries) to make Healing Dolls (pictured) and weaving workshops to build new skills and art.



Art & Crafts – basket weaving

Rural Health Outreach Fund – Allied Health Intervention to Walpole

Following almost 4 years of successful outreach, this Rural Health West funded Allied Health program continues to provide speech pathology and occupational therapy services to children and families of Walpole. Amity Health continues to work closely with the Walpole Primary School, GPs from Denmark Medical Centre, Silver Chain remote area nurses and WACHS South West to support clients across the age spectrum. Each term the speech pathologist and occupational therapist visit Walpole Primary School and assess children identified as at risk for speech, language and sensory-motor issues and follow up on those for whom they have previously provided programs.

Integrated Chronic Disease Care

Amity Health's first complete year of service delivery of the Integrated Chronic Disease Care program has seen services fully operational in the Great Southern, Southern and Eastern Wheatbelt, and Southern coastal area of the Goldfields. This new program has been designed to provide a multi-disciplinary team-based service based on individual patient Care Coordination. Services are based in Merredin, Narrogin and Esperance and cover surrounding communities. Integrated Chronic Disease Care referrals are made via GP.

This service is tailored to identify needs in each region, but clients with diabetes, cardiac, or respiratory conditions are eligible in all locations and clients with Cardiac conditions are eligible in the wheatbelt and southern coastal Goldfields. In addition, clients must also fall under one of the following:

- be vulnerable and disadvantaged, including Aboriginal people, culturally and linguistically diverse populations; or
- be in an area of disadvantage (SEIFA scores) and/or areas which are not adequately serviced by regional health services; or
- hold a Health Care Card

Key activities and achievements:

Great Southern

- 926 clients registered
- 2585 Occasions of Service
- 89 clients discharged

Southern and Eastern Wheatbelt

- 338 clients registered
- 386 episodes of care
- 160 care coordination sessions

Southern Coastal Goldfields

- 444 assessments
- 528 GP referrals
- 316 clients referred into self-management programs



Members of the Better Breathers group at Albany Body Care Physiotherapy

Integrated Primary Mental Health Care Program

Amity Health has successfully implemented the first year of WAPHA funded mental health program to the Wheatbelt and the Great Southern. Early work on developing the program began at the end of 2016-17. Full recruitment and service delivery was achieved by March 2018. Clinical hubs have been established in Albany, Denmark, Katanning, Northam, Merredin, Narrogin and the Coastal Wheatbelt.

Those eligible for this program have been able to access a range of services including virtual (online) care and telehealth, brief focused intervention and care management.

Referral into the program during the first year has been very high, with the Great Southern receiving 824 referrals and the Wheatbelt receiving 649. 413 clients in the Great Southern were provided with mental health support, while the Wheatbelt clinicians supported 470.

Communities for Children

The Communities for Children programme has operated in the Great Southern since 2006. The programme is funded through the Department of Social Services and currently in its third year of a new five-year funding agreement. The programme continues to assist children 0-12 years and their families across the Great Southern through various collaborative services and community-based partnerships. This program is guided by the Communities for Children Committee meeting monthly consisting of parent, health and government representatives.

The strategies of the program are:

- Healthy young families
- Supporting families and parents to provide an environment for children that is stable, positive, stimulating, safe and secure
- Early learning - assist parents with ways they can stimulate and promote child development and learning
- School transition and engagement
- Create strong child-friendly communities

To achieve this, four priority areas have been formed for the Communities for Children Great Southern site: Early Years in the Great Southern, Out of School Activities, Parent Support and Community Capacity Building. This year the program supported 20 Community Partners to deliver various family engagement activities and supports across the Great Southern.



The most recent Community Partner for the Communities for Children Program is Relationships Australia delivering Family Education across the Great Southern region. These workshops are delivered in locally and free at Community Resource Centres, Schools, Playgroups across the Great Southern, reducing barriers for regional families by bringing the sessions to their local area. These workshops provide important information to support family wellbeing and development and are well attended and received. Providing support to regional communities is an

important component of the Communities for Children program, building community capacity by introducing new or developmental activities.

NAIDOC Week 2018 – Play in the Park with Special Guests Town Square

This year we celebrated “Play in the Park” NAIDOC Week in the Town Square, Albany with around 150 families attending the morning event, a collaboration led by the Communities for Children team, bringing together family support and children service agencies to celebrate this important week. This activity was one of many events for the Albany community for NAIDOC week which was part of a greater collaboration led by the City of Albany.

The Communities for Children team actively promote services and activities for families across the Great Southern. The use of Social Media is an increasingly active engagement strategy to promote these services and opportunities for families. Our team design a newsletter on a monthly basis which is sent out to over 400 people on the distribution list via Mail Chimp, and further promoted on both the Amity Health and the Albany Early Years Network Pages.

This year we developed and delivered a Survey for Parents/Carers and Service Providers to continually monitor the needs and developments in the communities across the Great Southern. This information and other tools is used to support decision making, monitoring community changes and opportunities for new projects and developments. Through the survey, Facebook was highlighted as once of the best ways to promote information to the community.



Children and Parent Support in Narrogin

The Families and Communities Programme funded by the Department of Social Services and provides support to families to improve the wellbeing of children and young people to enhance family and community functioning, as well as increasing the participation of vulnerable people in community life.

Amity Health provides prevention and early intervention activities under the Child and Parent Support Program in Narrogin. Two weekly ‘Kids Hub’ playgroups are provided, with the aim of supporting vulnerable ‘hard to reach’ families who would not normally engage with playgroup services. The program has also run several community family friendly events, in partnership with other agencies engaged in the pro-active Narrogin Early Years’ Network.

Key Activities and Achievements:

- Two playgroups providing early intervention and referral support for disadvantaged families in Narrogin
- Partnerships with East Narrogin and Narrogin



The kids love to paint during playgroup

Primary School

- Membership of Narrogin Early Years' Network
- Support groups, for example, mums'n'bubs for new parents
- After school activities, for example, Leggo Club
- Parent education sessions including:
 - Protective Behaviours
 - Bringing up Great Kids
 - Self Care
 - Circle of Security
 - Triple P
- Community events including:
 - Families' Week
 - Easter Party
 - Christmas Party
 - Mental Health Week activities



Children's week in Albany