



# Annual Report 2021 – 2022

Corazon Centre Inc.  
A not for profit organization serving the people of Wyndham.

## Introduction

The report covers the period from July 2021 to June 2022. The highlights and significant events of these twelve months have included the following:

- Continued provision of Psychological Counselling service, against the ongoing challenges presented by COVID-19.
- Renewal of service agreement with North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network to provide 'CAREinMIND' Targeted Psychological Support Services and 'On the Line' Suicide Prevention Services. This involved an extensive tendering process in which we were successful. We are constantly evaluated against Key Performance Indicators for quality and improvement.
- Suspension of the Circle of Security (CoS) intensive group program for caregivers and their young children aged 1-5 years.

- Suspension of our partnership with Mr Joe Coyne (QUT) and Dr Tiffani Howell (La Trobe University).
- Small increase in Medicare rebate for clinical psychological services from \$129.55 to \$131.65 per session.
- Reform to group therapy MBS item to make it more accessible for both psychologists and clients.
- Resumption of relaxation therapy albeit on a limited basis in accordance with Covid guidelines.
- Renewal of service agreement with Carers Victoria to provide relaxation therapy.
- Ongoing commitment to reducing our 'carbon footprint' by both planting additional trees and shrubs and capturing and storing water for use in the garden.

## Service Provision

### Professional Services

#### Psychological Counselling Service

##### Referral Source

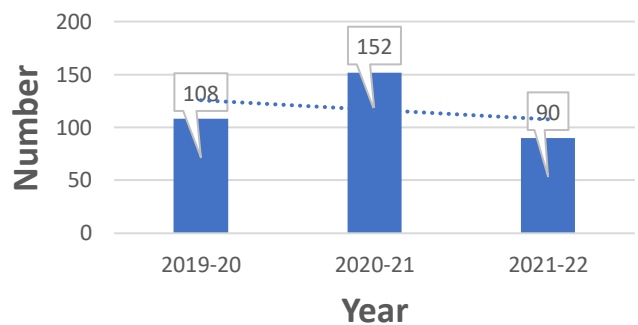
Our referral sources remained the same as in previous years and are derived from the following providers:

- Better Access to Mental Health, funded by the Commonwealth Government through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS).
- CAREinMIND (CiM) Targeted Psychological Support Services for people living in the North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN).
- CAREinMIND Suicide Prevention Service managed by 'On the Line'.
- Access Employment Assistance Program (Access EAP).

The total number of referrals accepted for service during our reporting period was 90. As shown in Figure 1, new referrals decreased by 40.8% (62) compared to the previous reporting period. This decrease is indicative of our limited resources to accept further referrals during this time. Sadly, we were swamped with referrals we could not accept. As reported in the Australian Psychological Society journal, this was a commonly reported phenomenon with 1 in 3 psychologists unable to see new clients at

a time when more help was needed due to the impact of the pandemic. This speaks to the shortage of psychologists in the workforce across Australia.

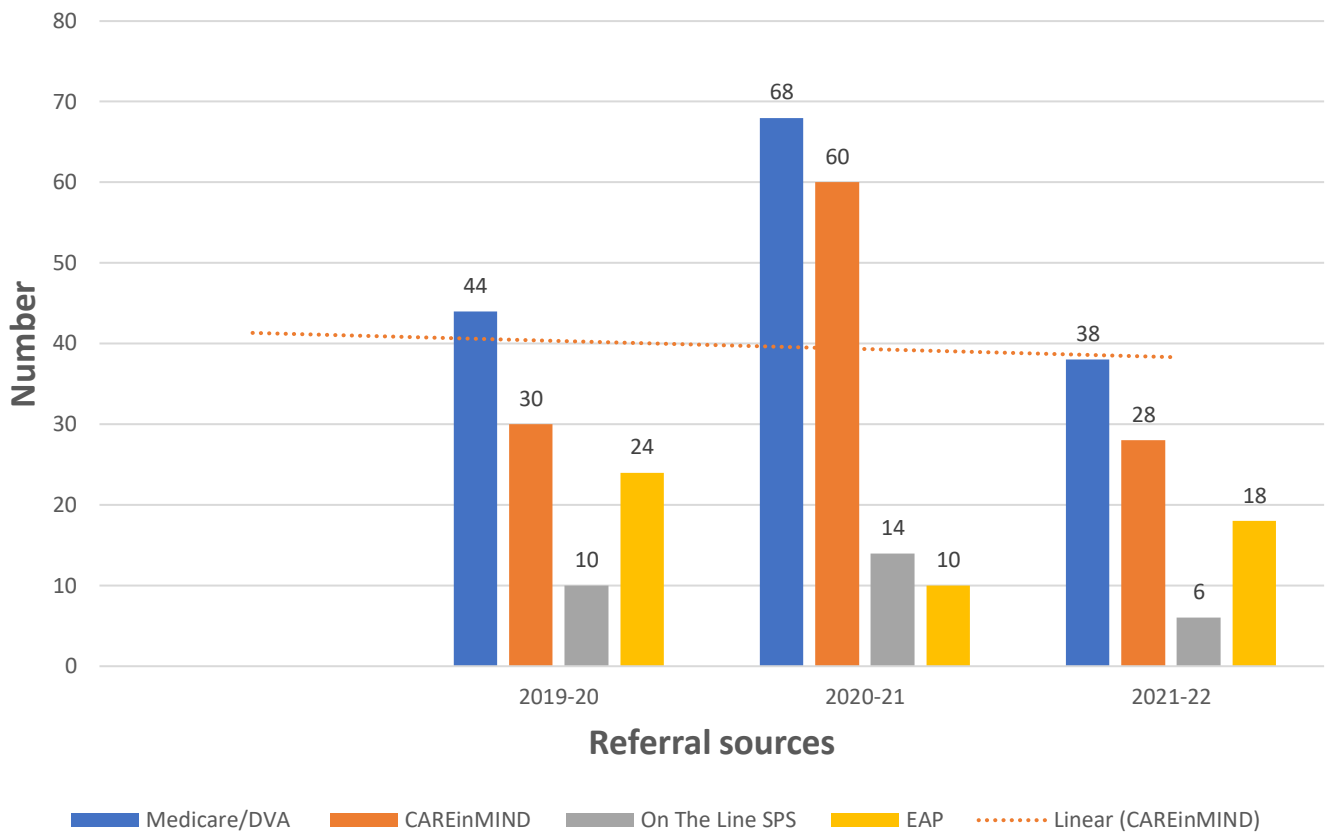
Figure 1. Total psychology referrals



### Some Reflections

Many of the challenges we faced during the previous reporting period remain due to the ongoing nature of the pandemic. In addition, a new Covid crisis has been unfolding in the form of an increase in family violence that one could say was more severe and dangerous especially for Corazon which works on the front line. It is imperative that governments of all persuasions prioritise women's safety especially among minority groups including First Nations People, LGBT+ communities and the disabled. The pandemic has done much to highlight inequalities that exist in the community on a much larger scale.

**Figure 2. Referral sources and number**



We made a conscious decision to prioritise referrals from the NWMPHN, CAREinMIND (CiM) Targeted Psychological Support Services and On the Line (OTL) over Medicare referrals. CiM services provide support to those most in need, including hard-to-reach vulnerable populations and those that are socially excluded. Typically, these clients are complex cases with trauma presentations. With the decline in the provision of bulk-billing services provided by both General Practitioners and Psychologists the need for mental health funding for those who are socially and economically disadvantaged has never been more urgent.

From 1 November 2022 Medicare made changes to their Better Access group items numbers. This change has much significance for us. Under the former rules, group therapy sessions had to be six in number to attract a Medicare rebate. Our Circle of Security groups consist of only 4 people and therefore were ineligible for the rebate. In the past we ran these groups out of our own resources. This change means we can run groups for four and receive a rebate even if only three people attend. This reform increases the use of group therapy making it more affordable for both clients and psychologists involved in the provision of this service.

During the ongoing Covid pandemic the government increased the number of Medicare funded

psychology sessions from ten to twenty sessions per calendar year. Sadly, this will be withdrawn at the end of the year when the demand for mental health services is at an all-time high.

### Referral Sources and Numbers

As shown in Figure 2, 90 referrals were accepted for service and came from our long-standing providers: General Practitioners, CAREinMIND, On the Line, and EAP.

The main referral source was General Practitioners (GP's) referring through the MBS and accounted for 38 referrals (42.2 % of all referrals). This represents a decrease of 30 referrals (44.1%) compared to the previous year. There were no DVA referrals during this period.

Thirty-four referrals were received for service from the NWMPHN. Of these, 28 were from the CiM program while 6 were from the On the Line Suicide Prevention Service. Compared to the previous reporting period, there was a decrease in the number of clients referred through both programs: CiM (32, 53.3%) and On the Line (6, 57%).

Referrals from the Access EAP, which traditionally remained low, have increased during the reporting period. The total number of referrals accepted for service was 18 which is an increase of 8 referrals (80.0%).

## Referral Sources and Psychological Counselling

### Individual

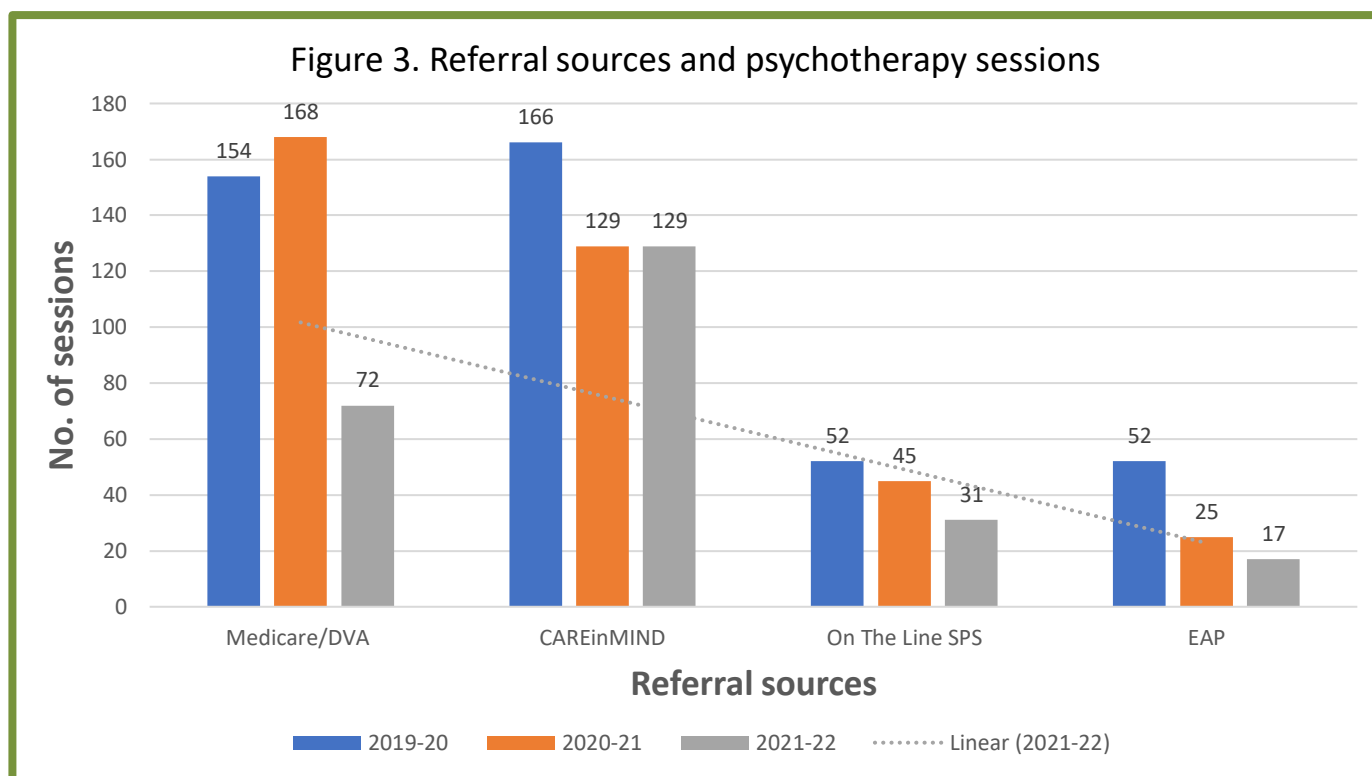
As shown in Figure 3, a total of 251 sessions of individual psychotherapy sessions were delivered during the reporting period. Overall, this figure represents a decrease of 118 sessions (32%) when compared to the previous reporting period and apart from CiM, decreases occurred across all referral sources: Medicare 96 (57%); EAP 8 (32%); On the Line 14 (31%). The data reflects our deliberate decision to prioritise referrals from the CAREinMIND service over other referral sources.

Compared with previous years there is a significant reduction in the number of sessions offered to providers. This reflects the continued impact of the pandemic on service delivery. Some issues included: last minute cancellations which related to our decision to offer face-to-face sessions which meant if clients were ill or isolating, they could not attend; the inability of clients to handle technology necessary for online sessions; unsafe home environments to access online services; inability to access childcare if their child was sick; our own limited resources.

### Group Therapy

The Circle of Security (CoS) was cancelled for a third time due to Covid-19 restrictions, the unpredictability of lockdowns and our inability to complete group therapy sessions. The nature of our clientele and the structure of the program made it impossible to offer through telehealth.

This also meant that our research partnership with Mr Joe Coyne (QUT) and Dr Tiffani Howell (La Trobe University) was put on hold until the Covid situation could be evaluated and deemed safe to resume group work.



## Relaxation Therapy

### Referral Source

The Relaxation Therapy service continued to be provided by Fiona McKee. All referrals to this service come from Carers Victoria.

### Referral Numbers

During the current reporting period, a total of 42 referrals were accepted for service. As shown in Figure 4, the number of referrals increased by 6 (16.7%) compared with the previous reporting period. The increase in referrals can be attributed to the demand for stress mitigating strategies from Carers because of the ongoing pandemic.

### Relaxation Sessions

As shown in Figure 5, a total of 6 massage sessions were delivered during the current reporting period. This represents a decrease of 4 sessions (66%) compared to the previous period. It has been difficult to provide a massage service during the frequent Covid waves that have swept Victoria. Worker safety has been our priority.

Figure 4. Total massage therapy referrals

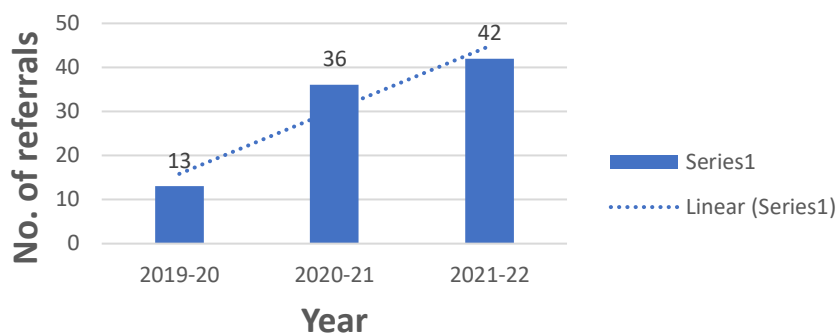
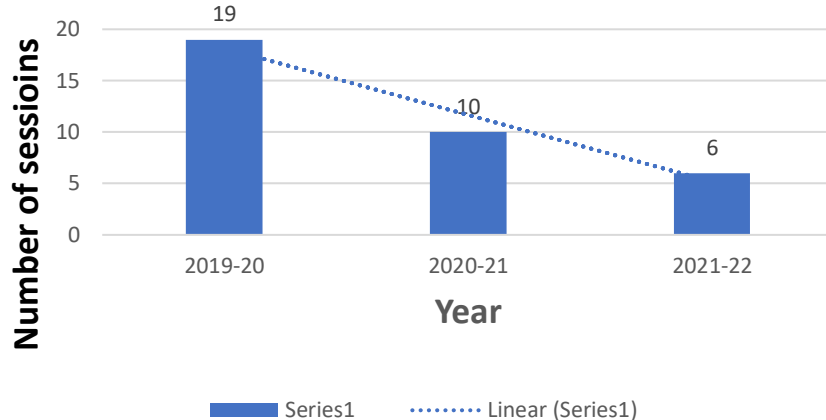


Figure 5. Relaxation therapy sessions



## Ongoing Developments

### Development of Infant Play Group: Letting the Infant lead

The group will be based on the Circle of Security protocol and will assist caregivers to better read and understand the emotional needs of their children. This will involve a professional part time position for someone with expertise in infant mental health.

### Employment of Gardener

It has been necessary to employ a gardener to undertake needed maintenance and restoration work on the property. Formerly, this work was undertaken by volunteers whom we have not been able to reinstate.





## Training of Therapy Dogs, Finn and Fletcher

On February 7, 2022, Jenny graduated from the Institute for Human-Animal Connection, University of Denver, along with therapy dogs Finn and Fletcher. The certificate course was designed for animal assisted intervention specialists seeking to improve their knowledge of and skills when collaborating with canines. Course co-ordinators, Philip Tedeschi and Jennifer Pearson have included our research project into the student learning material of the course.

The learning and insights we gained from undertaking the project are important for the research partnership with QUT and La Trobe universities.

## Future Planning and Development

- Employment of administrative assistant
- Employment of psychologist / social worker
- Rebuilding our volunteer base
- Development of policies and procedures to address ethical, practical, regulatory framework to best manage delivery of services
- Ongoing management of cyber security risk
- Development of a strategic plan to guide the development of Corazon across the next five years
- Researching possible partners who could take the Ministry of Corazon into the future. In view of diminishing personnel resources to service the Ministry at Corazon, it is proposed that the future of the ministry, in the longer term, be considered together with its possible transition to a new Provider. A research and discernment process will be developed and followed. The outcome of these processes will shape a proposal as to the best options for Corazon's longer-term future. This proposal will be submitted to the OLSH Provincial Leadership Team.

## Thank you to our Partners in Mission

The Committee of Management has continued its unstinting support of Corazon in what have been difficult and challenging times. We thank them for their interest, commitment and sharing their expertise and skills in the work of Corazon.

We wish Belinda Sullivan all the best for her future ministry which takes her to Queensland.

Thank you, Belinda, for what you have contributed. We will miss you and your expertise in early childhood learning.



Flinn (above) and Fletcher (the Labrador) sporting their new bandanas as Therapy Dogs.

# Financial Report – for end of financial year to 30 June 2022.

## CORAZON CENTRE INC. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Donations	\$3,188.80
Interest Income - CDF	\$0.24
Interest Income - ING NAB 2	\$150.83
Interest Income - ING Term Deposit	\$1,224.01
Massage	\$1,065.00
Psychology Access EAP	\$1,615.00
Psychology - PHN	\$20,325.00
Psychology - Medicare	\$11,826.00
Psychology - Consultation	\$2,165.00
Refund Solar Energy	\$775.56
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$42,335.44</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Bank Fees and charges	\$351.62
Centre Expenses	\$2,037.79
Council Charges	\$249.94
Insurance	\$779.27
Interest Expense	\$0.16
Light, Power & Heating	\$604.33
Medipass fees	\$155.07
Memberships & Subscriptions	\$2,117.61
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$4,255.30
Office Expenses	\$83.45
Professional Development	\$6,893.18
Psychology Registration	\$923.18
Psychology Resources	\$1,077.75
Repairs & Maintenance	\$6,765.27
Superannuation	\$309.82
Telephone & Internet	\$2,495.93
Supervision	\$245.00
Travel Expenses	\$425.88
Wages & Salaries	\$3,225.54
Water Rates	\$717.47
Work Cover	\$213.75
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$33,927.31</b>
<b>SURPLUS (Income - Expenditure)</b>	<b>\$8,408.13</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash in bank	\$770.04
Investments	\$301,876.93
Motor Vehicle	\$27,956.82
Furniture & Equipment	\$18,014.43
Property Improvements	\$44,556.84
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$393,175.06</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
GST	\$566.27
Creditors	\$659.18
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$1,225.45</b>
<b>ASSOCIATION'S EQUITY</b>	<b>\$391,949.61</b>