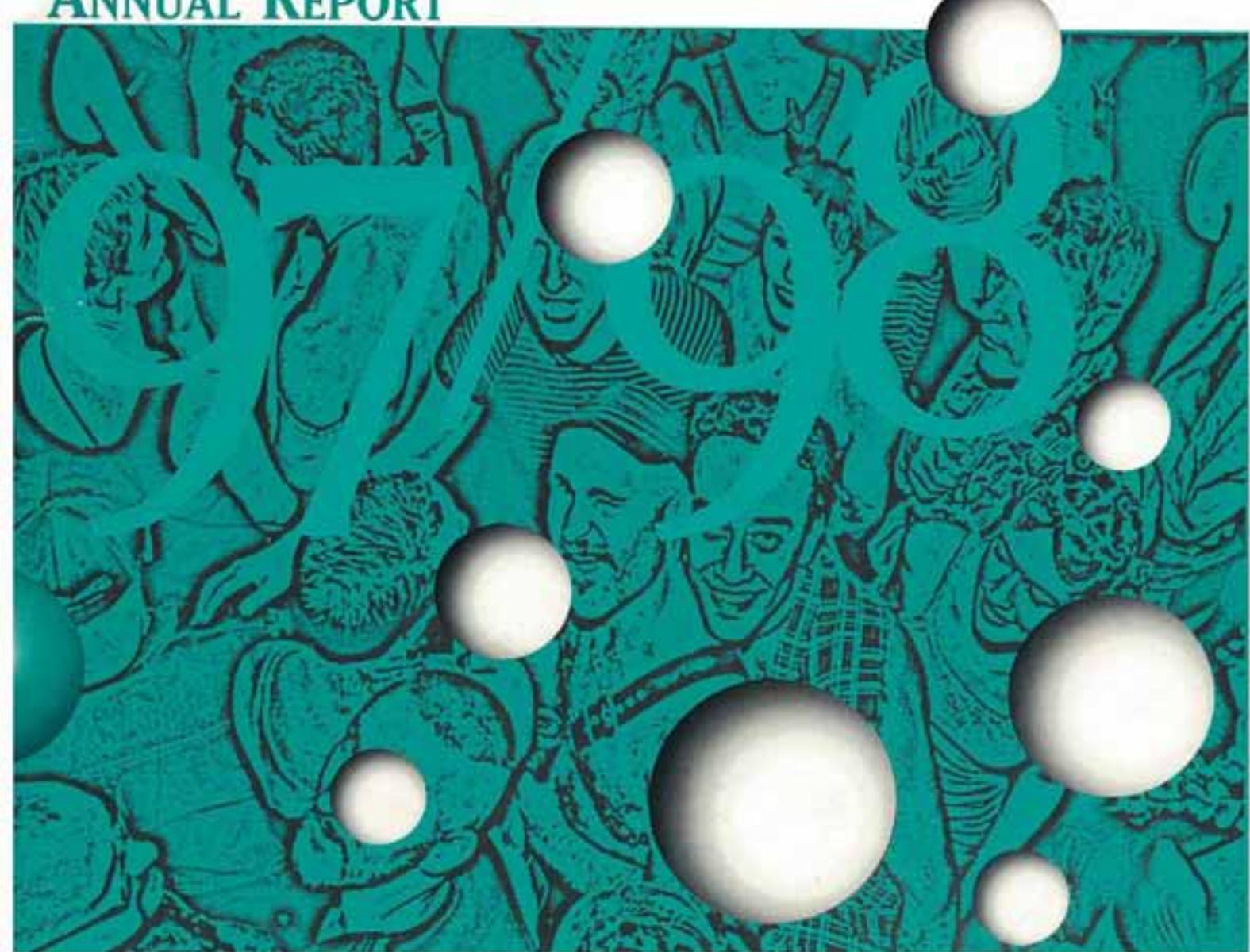


**AACON**  
AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

## ANNUAL REPORT





ANNUAL REPORT

97/98

Talk. Test. Trust. Trust Launch, volunteers.



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The AIDS Council of NSW would like to thank those people who left the organisation this year for their commitment and dedication during their time of service. This year ACON lost some of its most senior and longest-serving staff. Their contributions over the years have had a significant impact on the epidemic in NSW and their presence will be missed.

An (\*) in project staff lists denotes those who left during this financial year.



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# ABOUT ACON

The community-based AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) is Australia's largest AIDS organisation, funded through a combination of NSW and Commonwealth Government monies, donations and fundraising.

**OUR VISION**  
ACON works to bring the continuing AIDS crisis to an end by mobilising HIV positive people, gay men and lesbians and their communities.

## OUR MISSION

ACON's purpose is to bring the AIDS crisis to an end.

We strive to do this:

- by building on the response of the gay community
- by empowering all affected by the epidemic; and
- by achieving self-determination for people with HIV/AIDS

We work primarily with gay men, and we are committed also to working with other people and communities directly affected by the epidemic in New South Wales.

ACON works to achieve its vision by:

- Mobilising HIV positive people, gay men, lesbians and transgender people, and those people with a close attachment to these communities, to continue the community response to HIV/AIDS.
- Advocating for provision of adequate and appropriate services for all men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS and those directly affected by HIV.
- Providing direct care, support, HIV/AIDS education and health promotion services to members of identified communities according to epidemiology and/or level of risk of HIV infection and where there is an identified or emerging community.
- ACON accepts that it has a special responsibility to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure the provision of appropriate services to HIV positive, gay, lesbian and transgender people in those communities.

## OUR VALUES

- The centrality of HIV positive people to all that we do.
- The right of all communities to ownership and control of their own endeavours and destinies.
- Participation by affected communities and individuals in decision-making and actions which affect them.
- Respect for the dignity and choices of our clients.
- Excellence in service provision.
- Responsibility for showing leadership in the community response to HIV/AIDS.
- A collaborative approach to working with other organisations.

## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

As a community-based organisation, ACON exists primarily because our constituent communities see a need for us to be here. Hence, ACON remains accountable and responsive to those constituent communities, as well as to the government bodies that fund us. Over time, however, the nature of those communities has changed. ACON currently regards its constituent communities as being:

- HIV positive men, women and children.
- The gay and lesbian community, including transgender people who identify as part of that community.
- Those people involved in the community response to HIV/AIDS.

## OUR ROLE

ACON works to provide direct care, support, HIV/AIDS education and health promotion services to areas where the need and the communities already exist to support those services. In those areas where new communities are emerging, ACON undertakes community development work to strengthen the establishment of a strong and independent community presence. While not a peak or umbrella HIV/AIDS organisation, ACON does recognise that it has a key leadership role to play in ensuring a co-ordinated state-wide response and in lobbying for change. ACON also acknowledges the support provided by the wider community in Australia's ongoing response to the epidemic and looks to give back to the community by sharing our hard-won expertise in community-based health promotion and through the promotion of harm minimisation.

Additionally, in those areas where ACON does not directly provide services, ACON advocates for:

- the provision of those services by other agencies;
- the principles of community health partnerships; and
- the principles of harm minimisation.

## OUR NETWORK

ACON is comprised of seven management units (located in the Sydney office) and four regional branches. The seven management units are:

- HIV Living Unit
- Community Support Network (CSN)
- Client Service and Information Unit
- Policy and Women's Unit
- Sydney Gay Education Unit
- Peer Education Unit
- Organisational Services Unit

The four regional branches are in the:

- Hunter (Newcastle)
- Northern Rivers (Lismore)
- Illawarra (Wollongong)
- Western Sydney (Parramatta)

There are also two outreach services:

- Mid North Coast
- Rural Project

## ACON INC.

ACON is incorporated under the NSW Associations Act and has a detailed constitution and management plan to ensure:

- Efficient use of resources
- Clear lines of communication
- Effective participation of volunteers. Under this structure, ACON is governed by a selected honorary committee of 13 persons, reduced from 20 following a constitutional amendment at last year's Annual General Meeting.

This Committee of Council is:

- Responsible for determining ACON's strategic directions and policy; and
- Financially accountable for the organisation.

The committee also has a number of working groups and sub-committees which report, advise and develop policy. Membership of these working groups and sub-committees is open.

## STAFF

Across its operations, ACON employs over 100 people in permanent positions, as well as various other staff engaged for fixed-term projects. Together, these dedicated people strive to carry out ACON's complex day-to-day administration, while implementing policy in accordance with the organisation's

established Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

Legal advice and casework services are also provided through the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre, which operates out of ACON's Sydney office but has a separate management committee. The Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP), currently under the auspices of ACON, is looking into devolving to become an independent organisation by 1999.

1 million hours of invaluable, unpaid service each year to ACON, enabling the organisation to stretch resources considerably. Without the selfless generosity of these volunteers, the capacity of ACON to effectively tackle the job would be greatly diminished. For that, we thank you.



ACON Committee of Council

## VOLUNTEERS

The above is only half the story. ACON also

actively encourages participation from its membership and constituent communities, across a variety of roles in the organisation. At any time, volunteers can be found:

- sitting as members of the ACON committee;
- working on strategy groups;
- undertaking research;
- organising special events;
- fulfilling a range of important administrative functions; and
- engaged in home care for CSN.

Altogether, these volunteers provide over

## In Memoriam

The Committee, staff, volunteers and management of ACON dedicate this Annual Report to the memory of those people who have lost their lives as a result of AIDS over the last 12 months.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## INTRODUCTION

When I reflect on 1997-98, ACON seems to have been stretched meeting a changing epidemic, political environment and client needs. This process has not been easy. But when I review the Unit and Branch Reports, I am struck with the continuing diversity, depth and commitment of ACON's work, staff and volunteers.

The experience of the epidemic is changing for both ACON and clients. But an outstanding new CEO (Robert Grieves) has been appointed, a new Strategic Plan maps out the work that must be done over the next three years, and the Board and Management Team are working together with the new CEO to ensure that the work gets done. I am confident that ACON is engaged with the challenge of change.

## COMMUNITY

There is no doubt that ACON's communities are a source of abiding organisational strength. The new ACON Strategic Plan tries to explain more clearly why 'community' is central to the work we do. We have also taken a more collaborative approach to community work this year by:

- building stronger links with other community organisations;
- establishing a Community Agencies Forum to work with other HIV/AIDS agencies;
- disbursing \$60,000 to other community HIV/AIDS agencies; and
- supporting the renewal of the Candlelight Memorial by commissioning and funding a review with PLWHA.

Positive or negative, people are always ready to give feedback to ACON. But there are other signs of continuing strong support for ACON's mission, like the success of the Hand In Hand party, which raised over \$100,000. ACON also relies on a committed network of over 1500 volunteers, carers and peer support facilitators who contribute countless hours of work around the State.

## EPIDEMIC

A more sober outlook on the epidemic has emerged to replace the tide of optimism following the Vancouver Conference. Viral resistance, side-effects and problems in adherence were already complicating the picture by the time of the Geneva International Conference this year.

Despite the more subdued outlook, access to treatments remains the number one issue for positive people around the globe. Many countries like Australia have also reported rises in unprotected anal intercourse with casual partners as a result of advances in treatments, raising new questions such as the possible impact of transmission of multi-drug-resistant virus.

ACON's programs this year reflected the complexity of this picture. The new Treatments Policy officer lifted our advocacy game. Other initiatives responding to the complex picture of needs for HIV positive people included:

- a new treatments campaign;
- a retreat for positive women;
- the establishment of Positive Fun and Esteem for young positive gay men;
- over forty treatments workshops around the state;
- the co-sponsoring of Planet Positive, a community initiative for positive people in Sydney;
- the renewal of the award winning 'Talk, Test, Test, Trust' campaign; and
- the production of new Positive Gay Sex and Impact campaigns.

## POLITICAL

The Third National Strategy for HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases ushered in a new era for the partnership between the government, medical, scientific and other affected communities. The Commonwealth has stepped back from its tradition of active leadership. New Public Health Agreements urine HIV/AIDS money to the States. New Medicare agreements no longer separately identify AIDS money for hospitals. A continuing series of attacks on needle and syringe exchange programs has also threatened to erode one of the most successful strategies of Australia's response to HIV/AIDS.

Despite the continued support of the New South Wales Minister and Federal

Minister for Health, this uncertain framework for HIV/AIDS service delivery has led to some local level confusion and dispute as hospitals and Area Health Services seek to shift HIV/AIDS funds and services. In response, ACON has:

- secured NSW Government guarantees on HIV/AIDS funding until July 1999;
- lobbied with other HIV/AIDS community agencies for a NSW HIV/AIDS strategy;
- argued for a state-wide review of care and support services to ensure services shift to meet patterns of demand without budget cuts;
- worked with the Hep C council and injecting drug users groups to protect harm minimisation approaches in New South Wales; and
- lobbied to ensure continued bipartisan support for the HIV/AIDS response in NSW.

#### COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

Involving the community in all levels of ACON's work, including governance, strategy and vision setting, needs constant attention. In the last year, the Committee of Council has:

- launched a membership campaign, tripling ACON membership;
- ensured better communication and services with members, including the ACON Update;
- formed strategy groups to give interested community members a chance to help set ACON's broad strategic directions together with the Board and Management; and
- completed a Strategic Directions document outlining ACON's directions for the next three years.

#### ORGANISATION

One of the major challenges facing ACON is ensuring that its organisational infrastructure is responsive to client needs, while also providing opportunity for staff in a workplace culture that supports excellence. Some headway has been made this year with a new

budgeting process, investment in new finance systems and the creation of the new Regional Services Manager position.

But failure to conclude an enterprise agreement means it and other organisational development needs remain on the Strategic Plan agenda. During the year, ACON also farewelled a number of long-time Managers, including Paul Kinder, Kevin Golding and David Edler. Thanks to all of them for their contribution to ACON, its clients and its communities. I also want to thank former Executive Director Berrie Coates for his commitment to ACON and to the demanding, difficult job of leading it.

#### CONCLUSION

There have been many core achievements for ACON this year, all of which are essential foundation stones necessary to the rebuilding and reshaping of ACON, if the organisation is to adapt to the changing client needs and epidemic. At the same time, the day-to-day work of the organisation in education, care and support has continued. I am confident ACON knows the extent of the challenges that face it and is well placed to meet them.

Chris Gration  
President



# Executive Director's Report

It has been a year of mixed fortunes in the struggle against HIV/AIDS. The good news is manifold. After more than two years, treatments continue to work, at least for most people. Funding is still flowing to HIV services. The level of health care available to positive people is still amongst the best. There is a new

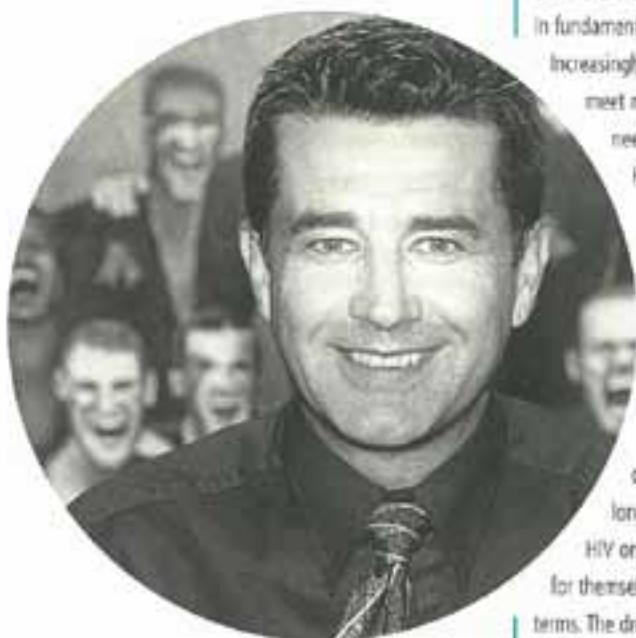
are steady, so there are a growing number of people living with the virus and their needs and demands are increasingly diverse.

These are immensely difficult times for AIDS organisations, too. However you look at it, AIDS is no longer so special. It is no longer the top public health concern out there. We are challenged to operate in fundamentally different ways.

Increasingly we are being asked to meet more complex and diverse needs, to move away from an HIV=illness model and, hardest of all, to adjust attitudes and models built on 15 years of rage and raw energy.

client needs [its services]. We also sought to clarify what sort of organisation we want to be in the future and to whom we are ultimately accountable. Perhaps the greatest challenge was to formulate a response to the expectation, especially from governments and the health field, that we will take on a wider agenda in areas such as gay and lesbian health or, at least, Hepatitis C.

Having answered these fundamental questions, ACON went on to produce a strong strategic plan to guide us forward. Now we are faced with the more difficult task of bringing these new Strategic Directions to life, a process that requires fundamental shifts in ACON.



recognition of the more complex needs of some people.

The bad news is how complex and confusing it has all become, as we adjust to the different epidemic we now face. Side-effects, treatment failures, compliance/adherence issues add to the challenge for many positive people of finding a way back into work or of continuing poverty. In addition, there is a group of people with complex needs who require more intense and specialised assistance. In the prevention of HIV, there is also evidence of some breakdown in the safe sex culture that we have built so proudly. Infection rates

Now that HIV is less special and the language of emergency and crisis no longer has the same resonance,

HIV organisations need to account for themselves in more conventional terms. The dreary language of customer satisfaction, performance measures and cost-effectiveness has taken on new significance alongside social justice, community mobilisation and activism as key measures for both clients and funding bodies.

It is in this context that ACON has sought to shape a new strategic plan for the next three years. After almost 18 months of effort, a rigorous and highly consultative planning process has produced the document, Strategic Directions 1998-2001.

From the outset, we agreed we wanted clarity. Firstly, clarity about whom ACON is serving (its clients). Secondly, clarity about how ACON responds to

services and culture.

The challenge for ACON is to better meet the increasingly complex needs of those we serve, at a time when the perception is that AIDS is no longer so special. We have to adjust to the less glamorous job of providing new, better and more professional services with the same money. What the people around us, including our clients, keep telling us is that they really need ACON to focus on answering our phones and producing better services.

Our management systems were developed for different times and have proven to be inadequate for the new task. In approaching planning and budgeting, the organisation needs to be willing to accept the need for a more rigorous assessment process based on needs and performance. The best interests of people living with HIV and those who remain at risk — mainly gay men — demand improvement from ACON.

ACON is the largest and best resourced AIDS organisation in Australia. We should also be the best in all that we do, regularly breaking new ground. But to do so, ACON needs systems designed for quality and responsiveness rather than crisis.

Caught in the gap between a sense of the need to change and the realities of the changes themselves, ACON has been doing it tough this last year. With higher staff turnover and fluctuating morale, it has at times been difficult to maintain service continuity. Communication between staff, management, the Committee of Council and the community has been difficult. This is symptomatic of the difficulties of change, especially the

yes; including improved governance and strategy settings, made possible through a restructure of the Committee of Council (Board) and the establishment of three new strategy groups which cover all aspects of ACON's work and report to the Committee. More attention is being paid to increasing and improving communication with the membership, in particular through the development of a new regular newsletter reporting to our communities, as well as a wildly successful recruitment drive and the creation of more opportunities for the communities we serve to become involved in ACON's work and the development of better budget systems, business planning and information technology.

confusion that change creates. To a greater or lesser extent, this is also a confusion that has been shared by most other HIV organisations in coming to terms with the changes in the epidemic and in the social and political environment of the late '90s.

In the middle of this confusion, it is easy to forget that overall ACON is in very good shape. It continues to have political authority, to enjoy community goodwill and to secure funding. Its governance remains without peer. It also has the commitment of many skilled staff and volunteers, even if the structures and systems in place too often fail them. I feel confident that ACON will make the transition successfully. It will do so because it remains a remarkable organisation and because its fundamental strengths will drive success ultimately.

In addition to producing Strategic Directions, there have been several other important ACON achievements during this

As I write this report, it is two weeks since I left ACON as only its third Executive Director to date. We remain proud of the changes we have made in ACON's management structure and culture, in the accountability systems, in improved regional services and the increased respect for the communities and clients that ACON serves.

I leave with a sense of having named the problems hampering the organisation and with a belief that I have made it easier for my successor to continue the critical task of reform.

In this my final report to members, I want to thank the Committee of Council (Board) of ACON and the staff who have remained focused on the clients and the

ACON has also made some important steps this year toward significantly improving our regional services network, so that ACON has a credible reach beyond Broadway and the Bridge. This challenging and vital process included improving the premises and resources of the neglected Western Sydney area, giving more emphasis to regional community development, restoring services to the Mid North Coast region following the closure of the former regional branch 18 months previously, establishing a new Regional Services Manager position.

In addition to all this, ACON launched important new prevention campaigns and completed the second Gay Men's Education Strategy over the past 12 months. The Community Support Network (CSN) also came through with flying colours in its Community Health Accreditation and Standards Program (CHASP) Review.

bigger picture. In particular, I want to thank President Chris Gration for his passionate concern and dedicated leadership of ACON, as well as for the personal and professional support he provided to me. It has been a privilege serving this extraordinary organisation and its often demanding communities.

Bernie Coates  
Executive Director



**Manager**  
Helen Dooley  
**Rural Education Officers**  
Graham Hore,\*  
Ross Bell,  
Evan Sullivan

Together we provide information, advocacy, care and support, HIV prevention education, health promotion, stigma, currency, community development, and information and resources. Our operations target all people living with HIV/AIDS, their carers, family and friends, with a core focus on people in high-risk groups such as gay and bisexual men.

It is clear that the needs of people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS in regional and rural NSW can be quite different from the needs of those who live in inner Sydney. People in rural and regional areas face a number of specific problems, including lack of a viable, accessible gay and lesbian community; social and geographic isolation; concern about confidentiality in small towns; lack of easy access to treatments; fewer appropriate services; lack of transport, low recruitment and training opportunities.

ACON's network of regional services plays a crucial role in leading a co-ordinated and consistent community response to the continuing AIDS epidemic across NSW.

In 1998 ACON undertook an important step in the ongoing development of an effective regional

A comprehensive network of branches and outreach projects makes up the regional services division of ACON's operations across NSW. The four existing branches are:

#### WESTERN SYDNEY ILLAWARRA HUNTER NORTHERN RIVERS

ACON also administers two outreach projects:

- the Mid North Coast Outreach Project
- the Rural Outreach Project.

services strategy with the creation of the new Regional Services Manager position.

Manager positions based in the Sydney office but often on the road, this position assumes overall responsibility for ACON's regional operations, covering existing branches and outreach projects.

While each branch still has its own management structure and committee, the Regional Services manager will now play a central role in the development, delivery and implementation of co-ordinated, consistent, workable policy and procedures across ACON's regional and rural operations.

A Regional Services Manager was employed in June 1998. She is now busy working to ensure rural and regional needs and perspectives are addressed and represented in organisational decision-making. Her duties include regularly visiting the branches; talking with regional management and staff; improving lines of communication across ACON; facilitating primary interagency information exchange; co-ordinating overall regional policy implementation and management; consultation; problem solving and feedback assessment; and representing regional services at weekly ACON management meetings.

With this new structure in place, ACON is now firmly moving towards a more consistent, representative and responsive approach to its state-wide operations. Expected flow-on benefits include standardisation of protocols and practice, a tighter focus on client and community needs and a greater sense of co-operative unity across the organisation as a whole.

The Rural Project is a mobile outreach service staffed by two full-time officers reporting directly to the Regional Services Manager. The work of the project extends across rural areas of NSW which fall outside of the reach of ACON's Sydney office and regional branches, heading west of the Great Dividing Range down to the far South Coast. Our operational brief covers a vast geographical area, but is very specific and narrow in its focus. Our primary mandate is to work on gay men's education in rural areas.

Rural communities tend to be broad-based, diverse coalitions of disparate types, knitted together primarily by shared geographical location and isolation. The communities we are dealing with are generally not divided clearly along gender lines. In targeting the needs of gay men in rural areas, we have found that it is more effective to broaden our focus to working with gay men and lesbians.

To effectively service a geographical area as large as rural NSW, we have to be out there on the move. Successful community outreach demands we make personal contact, developing relationships, networking, addressing issues and building trust through familiarity and professional competence. This we have done, establishing our presence and credentials from Walgett to Broken Hill, Wagga Wagga and Albury. In 1997-98 alone, Rural Project staff clocked up an impressive 50,000km of statewide outreach travel!

## RURAL OUTREACH PROJECT

# MID NORTH COAST OUTREACH PROJECT

A central task is conducting peer education workshops for gay men and lesbians. Focusing on gay identity, acceptance and the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural communities, these workshops usually run for two-and-a-half days and are held over the course of a weekend. The Rural Project conducted two very successful workshops in Dubbo and Armidale. Both workshops were well attended and received, generating lots of positive word of mouth around the targeted communities.

Supporting rural gay and lesbian social groups in NSW is an important function of the Rural Project. Our involvement with these groups enables the project to more easily access and build local communities, develop networks, disseminate information, facilitate lines of communication, outreach and educate. The Rural Project supports an extensive program of contact, working with new and established social groups around the State. In the past 12 months, Rural Project workers have visited groups as far afield as Armidale, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Moree and Narooma.

As a direct result of this contact, we are expecting to conduct even more regional workshops in the coming year.

We are also currently working to increase the presence of rural groups in next year's Mardi Gras parade.

In addition to our work with gay men, the Rural Project seeks ways to make health care workers more responsive to the needs of gay men, lesbians, and people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Over the past year, we have had great success conducting seminars around HIV and sexuality issues for health care workers in Albury, Wagga Wagga, Broken Hill, Wentworth and Narrabri. More are planned for next year.

The Mid North Coast Outreach Project is a new ACON service.

In January

1998, ACON opened a new outreach office on the Mid North Coast. Staffed by two project workers, ACON MNC is located in Port Macquarie and provides education and support to a diverse network of communities stretching from Forster and Old Bar to Coffs Harbour, Woolgoolga, Dorrigo, Wingham and Gloucester. Currently the office has an HIV Community Support Worker and an Education worker. The majority of the MNC's client base is HIV positive gay men and some HIV positive heterosexual couples and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

The project's first two weeks of operations were handled out of a phone booth on a street corner and a local cafe. The next six months were spent setting up an office, establishing relationships and connecting with local communities. It's been a hectic but rewarding time characterised by a flurry of project activity up and down the Mid North Coast. So far, the project has been very well received, generating considerable community and media interest.

Within 6 weeks of opening, ACON MNC ran a series of introductory forums in Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie and Taree to discuss plans, goals and strategies for the Mid North Coast project with the targeted communities. The forums were

very successful and provided project staff with vital feedback regarding community needs and expectations.

MNC has established a regional chapter of CSN and now has a team of nearly 30 trained volunteers to provide 20 hours of care on average a week. The CSN team are responsible for planning education forums, fundraising, organising World AIDS Day events, arranging candlelight memorial services. They are a fantastic team of committed, competent and caring volunteers. Five MNC carers have gone on to Support Group Facilitator training in Sydney. ACON MNC would very much like to thank all our volunteers for their invaluable assistance.

Retreats are a major part of the ACON outreach program on the Mid North Coast. In May, a retreat was held at Stuarts Point attracting 20 people and was a huge success.

MNC has established close links with a local gay and lesbian social support group, Coastal Lynx. A supportive and cooperative relationship, ACON MNC now assists Coastal Lynx with the production of their

monthly newsletter. In return, Coastal Lynx have graciously given space to ACON news in their newsletter each month and allowed us to conduct fundraising for CSN at their functions and have given donations to CSN.

In the past six months, MNC has also forged close links with CHAPS Outback (Coffs Harbour Antibody Positive Support) and the Mid North Coast Area Health Service.

It's still early days for the MNC Outreach Project. The pace of our start-up operations has been frenetic and there is still a lot to be done in developing the project's presence, credibility and operations. Judging by the response and feedback so far, the prognosis looks very good. Anecdotal evidence suggests the services being provided have already helped at least two people to stay in the area rather than having to relocate back to Sydney. And that's what it's all about — providing the support people require to enable them to continue to exercise self-determination for their lives.

**HIV Community Support Officer**  
Greg Colby  
**Education Officer**





## ACON Northern Rivers



**A**CON Northern Rivers serves a diverse community, extending from Tweed Valley to Grafton. This region has the largest known number of people living with HIV/AIDS outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.

The Branch has moved forward significantly since the review in June 1997. New and innovative projects have been implemented, characterised by increased focus and direction.

Critical to our success has been relocation to a wonderful new building in October 1997; completion of internal restructuring and recruitment of essential new staff by early 1998.

The Branch hosted the 'Gay Men's Health Retreat' in May 1998, attended by 65 men. The aims of the retreat were to bring together gay men from around the Northern Rivers regardless of their HIV status, to provide a safe, relaxing and supportive environment where people could relax and build gay community structure, culture and networks. Education sessions were based on the principles of the ACON's Gay Men's Education Strategy 1998-2001. 96% of attendees recorded that their experience was good or excellent. We will be conducting a similar retreat in the coming financial year.

TWHA support office Sue Rodda was recognised with an Outstanding Contribution Award at the World AIDS Day

Awards in December of 1997. Sue has worked for ACON for over 8 years. She is particularly deserving of this wonderful acknowledgment of her tireless commitment to this specialised area of work.

The Tweed Valley project is a community outreach service providing trained volunteer care and support to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS in the Tweed Valley area.

It's been a very successful year for the Tweed Valley project worker, who has hosted a bi-monthly Community BBQ, attended on average by 20 people, worked very closely with the HIV Worker at the Murwillumbah Community Health Centre and forged links with Queensland Positive People (QPP) on the Gold Coast. The demand for direct support from Tweed Valley project volunteers has not been as high in recent times. Consequently, we have re-evaluated our training program; volunteers can now choose which area of the operation to be involved in, including fundraising and health promotion.

A joint community Forum was also organised this year by ACON, the Northern Rivers Health Service and QPP, looking at cross-border issues and the gaps in services available to the Tweed area. Overall client feedback has been very positive, with people saying they are happy to have ACON's representation in the area.

Young & Proud is run in conjunction with the Lismore Sexual Health Service. The group enjoys an average attendance of 10 men every month. Feedback from within the group has been very positive.

In 1997/98 the Branch implemented an innovative volunteer training program targeting HIV positive people wanting to return to the workforce. Conducted over a three month period, the program requires each trainee to attend one day per week. The program has been very successful and is expected to be an ongoing initiative.

The contribution of volunteers remains a very important aspect of our work. But the role we need volunteers to play in the branch is changing; in the past year we have looked at the needs of the branch and its client base and adjusted our volunteer recruitment and training program to reflect those changing needs. Volunteer numbers are rising again. As always, we remain thankful to the many hours of time and energy that volunteers continue to provide to the Branch.

A secondary outlet in the area, our Neefle Exchange Service nevertheless remains very busy. This year, we dispensed approximately 27,000 1ml syringes.

The HIV positive Open Minded Environment (HOME) lunch program operates twice a week out of Lismore. HOME aims to provide PLWHA, their carers and friends with a safe, relaxed environment and discussion of relevant issues and peer support.

ACON Northern Rivers has been working closely with Aboriginal services and clients for a number of years now. This includes regular meetings with the Hepatitis, AIDS and Sexual Health network (HASH), Aboriginal sexual health workers, attendance by invitation at Aboriginal HIV & Sexual Health meetings and liaison with Aboriginal workers from the Department of Community Services (DOC) on shared client cases. We are working with Aboriginal Sexual Health workers to organise, design and co-facilitate a program to suit the needs of workers in Aboriginal Home Care service and other related Aboriginal care services. The completed program will cover a range of issues including HIV/AIDS transmission, universal precautions, values and attitudes.

We remain committed to a process of building our professional ability to provide the highest quality services appropriate to communities living in rural areas. We will continue to ensure that what we offer is dynamic, creative and, most important of all, reflects the constantly changing needs of the communities we work with.

**Branch Coordinator:**  
Kevin O'Neill

**PLWHA Support Worker:**  
Sue Rodda

**Educator:**  
Ian Gray

**Administrator:**  
Graeme Williams,\* Ron Davis

**Administrative Officer/  
Tweed Valley Outreach**  
Geoffrey Colwill,\* Glenn King



Mardi Gras Fair Day, Temple of Love, Swami Beverly



Mardi Gras '98 ACON Counselling Team



Surry Hills Multicultural Community 1998 "Fiesta" ACON Stall



Shirley Purvis features in CSN's recruitment campaign



Safe Sex Sluts, Queer Film Festival



Mardi Gras Fair Day, ACON Temple of Love



Mardi Gras Fair Day, ACON Temple of Love, Samy Muljadi, Asian Project



# ACON Hunter Branch

The ACON Hunter Branch serves a diverse community, extending across a region including major centres such as Newcastle, Maitland and Cessnock.

The staff and clients of ACON Hunter have enjoyed a jam-packed year of change. Moves undertaken to refine reporting and feedback mechanisms mean we can more effectively target services to meet client needs. We have also been improving service delivery and fostering better lines of communication and information exchange with ACON's Sydney office.

A number of factors have significantly impacted on the branch's operations this year, including a review of the branch's educational services, the development of the Gay Men's Education Strategy, the introduction of Intranet Email across ACON, Enterprise Agreement negotiations, and the development of the new ACON Strategic Plan.

Hunter continues to develop a broad network of working relationships with a wide variety of government health and community organisations. The branch has ongoing representation on the HIV Networking Committee, Hunter Lesbian and Gay Interagency, Hunter Youth Forum, and Sexual Diversity Network.

Hunter has joined with the Hunter Centre for Health Advancement on two projects funded under Area Health, the Gay and Bisexual Men's HIV Prevention (completed) and the MSM Needs Assessment Phonetel Project (current).

We are also currently involved in the Hunter Area Health Service HIV/AIDS, HCV and STD Management Committee, plus related sub-committees on Health Promotion, Study Grants and Sex Worker Education.

Volunteers continue to play a vital role and their contribution covers a range of activities



from fundraising and community outreach to clerical duties, care and support, publishing and education. Thanks to the volunteers who worked so hard this year, clocking up an invaluable 27,277 hours or \$395,000 of direct CSN client care, 68,615 km of CSN travel, and 850 hours of beat outreach and office work.

CSN client load increased again this year with services being provided to a total of 97 individuals. The number of positive people accessing the service rose to 76, while Significant Other client applications fell to 21. There was increasing demand for transport to

medical appointments and longer term home care and support.

Apart from this core load of client casework, CSN staff and volunteers were also very busy working on the eighth CSN Hunter Carer Course, an internal preliminary Community and Health Accreditation and Standards Program (CHASP) audit, hosting monthly carer support and education nights, overseeing the operations of the Positive Speaker's Association (PSA), developing a monthly Carer's Committee newsletter, staging the Xmas In July luncheon and show, running fortnightly two-hour quilt panel workshops (August to November), establishing a toiletry and laundry product co-op.

An average of 20 people regularly turned up to the monthly Carer Network nights. Feedback on the eighth Carer Course was particularly favourable.

Bereavement support was effected through the facilitation of eight locally made quilt panels presented as part of the Hunter region's World AIDS Day program. A total of 15 clients began regularly accessing the new toiletry/laundry co-op service. The preliminary CHASP accreditation audit proved extremely successful, paving the way for CSN to undergo a full CHASP accreditation review in the coming year.

Peer education and support remains central to Hunter's operations. This year's program of activities included two 'Coming Out' groups, facilitated for 13 participants and fortnightly Peer Education workshops, attended by an average of 20 people.

The branch has also continued to provide space and resources to assist the operations of a variety of outside groups and projects.

The Positive Speaker's Association is a community-based outreach and education initiative. It consists of 10 positive people trained as public speakers; provides

education and HIV awareness sessions to community groups on request, has conducted 37 sessions this year reaching over 1800 people. The PSA operates independently with assistance from the Hunter branch.

Launched in November 1997, Our Now magazine is a new bi-monthly publication aimed at promoting Hunter community development and empowerment. A joint community and ACON initiative, local involvement in the production of the magazine is high. Our Now covers news, stories and events specific to the Hunter region, disseminates safe sex information, is produced by a team of 30 volunteers in association with ACON staff and it has a rising circulation of approximately 1,000 readers.

Hunter also continued to provide the local community with a range of vital, on-the-ground client services, including provision of condoms, lubricant and dams, the ACON Vitamin Service, Needle and Syringe Exchange, printed materials and library resources.

Hunter was also responsible for other community outreach initiatives in 1997-98, including publication of a bi-monthly ACON Hunter Newsletter and coordination of World AIDS Day activities in the region.

The coming year promises an intense period of development and consolidation as we move into the reporting and implementation phase of the post-review process in order to continue to meet client needs.

## Manager

Kevin Piton

## Counsellor/educator

Gail Maffesoni

## CSN Coordinators

Rosemary Bistow,  
Mary-Anne Saunders

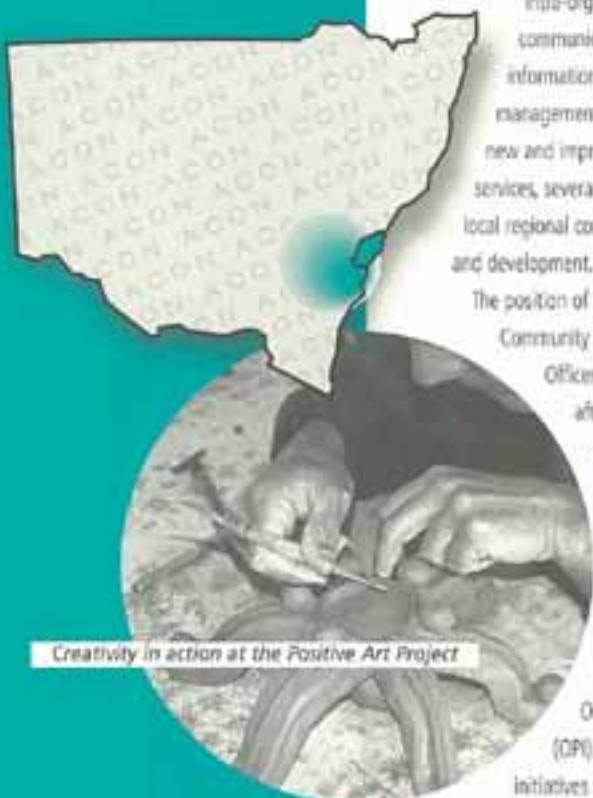
## Education Outreach Officers

Wayne Cook, Brett Steel

## Administration Officer

Crelyn Collison

# ACON Illawarra



Creativity in action at the Positive Art Project

#### Manager

A/ Kathy King\*  
Trudy Heathwood  
A/ Keith Marshall\*

#### Community Development Officer

David Webber

#### CSN Care Liaison Officers

Thelma Todd\*  
Glen Barrington  
Debbie Vukasinovic

#### Administration Officer

Emma Partridge\*

#### HIV Community Development Officer

Kathy King\*

#### Coordinator Positive Art Project

Tania Daniels

The ACON Illawarra Branch serves disparate communities down the South Coast of NSW from Helensburgh to Wollongong, Ulladulla, Nowra and South Durras.

Much has been achieved in the last

12 months, including improved lines of intra-organisation communication, better information flow management, development of new and improved client services, several milestones in local regional community pride and development.

The position of HIV Positive Community Development Officer was vacated after the withdrawal of Area Health Service funding. Half of that funding was reallocated to Our Pathways Inc. (OPI). Two important initiatives remain as a significant legacy of the HIV positive Community Development Officer position: the Positive Speakers Network (PSN) and the Positive Art Project (PAP).

The PSN trains PLWHA as public speakers for presentation of seminars/workshops about HIV/AIDS and discrimination. The aim was to empower members of the local positive community by providing them with resources and assistance in establishing the network. A great success, the PSN now operates independently out of OPI.

The Positive Art Project developed to generate major interest as a benchmark project in the area. The program promotes investigation of the positive self-image

through creative expression. Utilising peer contact and support, the program encourages participants to develop a new confidence in working artistically with an ever-increasing range of materials to record their personal development, stories and ideas as PLWHA. A key highlight of the branch's operations over the last year, the project keeps going from strength to strength and has received a well-deserved \$2,500 grant from Hand In Hand.

This year the ACON-sponsored Illawarra regional float in the 1998 parade was called "Planet Wollongong". The float represented the first major, planned ACON Illawarra Mardi Gras parade entry to be organised, with input from a broad-based coalition of local community groups. Coming together in a new spirit of co-operation facilitated by the branch, the groups worked together.

Another Illawarra-sponsored community milestone for 1997-98 was the development and launch of the first locally designed safe sex pack. The pack was launched at Chequers Nibspot with the assistance of several notable local drag celebrities. It was designed by Tania Daniels, a local artist and ACON volunteer attached to the Positive Art Project.

Illawarra also expanded its operations further south this year providing finances, resources and support to the Safe Haven (volunteer-run positive living space and outreach program) project in Nowra.

Overall, support for the ACON Illawarra volunteer program has dropped off somewhat since the initial successes arising from the implementation of the Volunteer Illawarra Support Implementation Team (VISIT) last year. The branch is looking to rejuvenate our volunteer program under the guidelines set out in the ACON Volunteer policy.

Despite this, volunteers have continued to play a vital role in the branch's operations during the course of 1997-98. In particular, the Gay Community Development Project Officer has enjoyed a very productive year working with a crack team of six trained

Safe Sex Slutts on an active program of beat and venues outreach. A dedicated team of volunteers has also been responsible for the ongoing publication of the bimonthly Illawarra branch, BeACON newsletter and One Community calendar.

The contribution of volunteers remains integral to the operations of Illawarra CSN. Over the last 12 months, CSN has continued to provide a comprehensive program of trained home care and assisted travel to PLWHA in locations spread out over the regions 5,653 square kilometre radius. Following on from this year's ACON wide Community Health Accreditation and Standards Program (CHASP) audit, the Illawarra chapter of CSN is now preparing for an official CHASP accreditation review.

Illawarra has continued to provide the local community with a range of vital, on-the-ground client services. This has included the administration of a gay drop-in centre established in July '97 and a lesbian drop-in centre established in Nov '97.

The branch also worked in conjunction with OPI to organise a very successful month-long program of events and activities around AIDS Awareness Week and World AIDS Day, including an art show, a concert, a Memorial Quilt unfolding, and red ribbon fundraising.

The branch is now in a strong position to move forward into a period of carefully planned growth and development. Integral to this process will be a dedicated program of consultation with the affected communities within the Illawarra Area Health Service region, including those living in Shoalhaven and further south, plus other service providers and stakeholders.

**A**CON Western Sydney serves a diverse, rapidly developing community, spread across the city's most dynamic urban and population growth centres. The branch covers a vast area extending from Auburn to Parramatta, Liverpool, Penrith, the Blue Mountains, Castle Hill, Campbelltown and Blacktown.

ACON Western Sydney has undergone an incredibly challenging and rewarding period of consolidation and expansion in the past 12 months, culminating in recent moves towards attaining full branch status for the office. During 1997-98 we relocated to new premises, increased our client base, fine-tuned programming in the wake of last year's Community Health and Accreditation Standards Program (CHASP) review, ran training courses, developed partnerships, took to the web and generally improved confidence in our service overall.

The relocation of the ACON Western Sydney office was the biggest challenge for the year. Our existing offices were unsuitable for our expanding operations. We now have space for storage, volunteers, special projects and confidential client meetings.

Following on from last year's Community Health and Accreditation Standards Program audit, CSN has been through a very successful period of post-review consolidation. In the past year, we have developed a secured client record database, consolidated our training program in conjunction with ACON's training and volunteer co-ordinator, undertaken a volunteer recruitment drive, completed training 27 new carers, assisted 83 established carers to provide 5583 hours of care across 1798 shifts.

The development of co-operative relationships with local community transport providers has been particularly important due to a huge increase in demand for assisted transport for PLWHA as a result of new treatments. CSN carers have been able to meet some of that demand, but we've also needed to look at a long-term response. We are now

networking with community and government health organisations to help co-ordinate a community transport response, including training community transport workers to be sensitive to PLWHA needs and issues.

last year by Brooke Crawford. Organised as a World AIDS Day event, the pageant was held at the Parramatta Golf Club and proved to be hugely popular. The competition was fierce and generated a lot of interest. Congratulations to Miss

## ACON Western Sydney

The Gay Men's Education Project is now in its second year and forging ahead. The project capacity was increased this year with the employment of a second gay education officer. The focus of the project's operations has also shifted slightly, moving away from the running of workshops towards a more effective community development and social support model incorporating a strong educational component.

We have assisted the establishment of two new, very well received social groups in Liverpool and Penrith, and continued the popular Fun & Esteem program, covering Cabramatta, Fairfield and the Blue Mountains, and have developed a strong venues outreach program.

Introduced last year, the HIV Community Education and Support Project has been a very positive initiative. Already accessed widely by a large number of people in the West, feedback has indicated the project is a safe, confidential service where people feel they can comfortably discuss treatment and lifestyle issues around living with HIV/AIDS.

Thanks to the efforts of resourceful staff and volunteers, ACON Western Sydney blazed a trail onto the World Wide Web this year, with the development of our very own web site on the Internet. A bold initiative, this site has been very well received generating a lot of interest from both here and overseas. The site has offered information on our services, and links to a wide range of HIV-related sites.

A brilliant new annual talent quest and fundraising initiative, Miss Western Sydney was introduced to wide acclaim

Geraldine of Liverpool, who was crowned as the inaugural Miss Western Sydney. Long may she reign!

ACON Western Sydney also provided a full range of information, counselling, referral and preventative services during the course of the year. We also took part or assisted in the staging of a number of events. Other highlights from the year include the staging of a joint lunch with Ankal and BGF catering to our shared client base, production of the bimonthly newsletter Blue West, advertising our events, programs and

**Manager**  
Michael Ervine

**Administration Officer**  
Lynne Price,\* Tim Diamond

**CSN Care Liaison Officers**  
Anne Clepham\*, Book Hill,\*  
Michael Buggy, Kerry Weir



Miss Western Sydney launches the new office

services, and the Western Suburbs Positive Drop-In service established its own premises.

We look forward to the consolidation of our new branch status with the establishment of a fully elected advisory committee in the new year.

**HIV Education Officer**  
Scott Rutter\*

**Youth Peer Education Officer**  
Tony Williamson

**Gay Men's Educator**  
Joseph Jewitt, Brooke Crawford

**C**lient Liaison & Information Unit includes the reception and switchboard service, ACON Library and

# Client Liaison & Information Unit

Information Project. A multi-focal unit, covering first-line client service for all incoming clients, distribution of internal and external information, knowledge and resource management and a library service.

A number of staff left the unit, and new staff were recruited, both internally and externally. We initiated a professional development program, ("Breakfast and Lunch" sessions to minimise disruptions to service), trained casual staff, recruited volunteers.

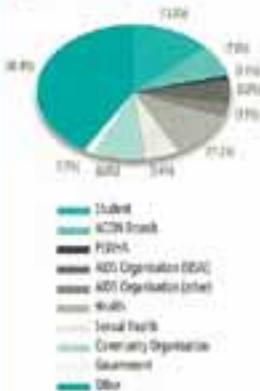
The purpose of the Information arm of the CLU is to provide ACON clients, staff and volunteers with up-to-date information about the organisation, its operation, resources and referral networks as well as to lead in the development and implementation of Information technology and other systems to improve knowledge and resource management and sharing. The Information Unit consists of two teams, the Information Project, and the Library.

A new professional Librarian was recruited to the ACON Library this year along with a part-time assistant.

In response to a Committee of Council request, a membership drive to re-engage constituent communities, clients and volunteers was initiated. Promoting membership and providing more for ACON members was seen as a

professional development in response to the changing epidemic. In the coming year, we will also finalise the production and commence implementation of an Information and Library Services Strategy. CLU is also proud of the high number of HIV positive people working in the unit. This gives a particular flavour to the unit's operations, assisting the organisation to support positive clients, especially those making first contact with us. The CLU is keen to increase levels of HIV positive staffing in the future as part of our commitment to assisting positive people back into the workforce.

Requests for information by organisation type



## Manager

N/ Shan Short

## Senior Client Liaison

Leighton Cheal,\*

David Wallace

## Client Liaison Officers

Nicola Addison\*, Juliet Dewar,  
Paul Yould, Michael Howe,  
Barry Brookwell and casual  
staff.

## Information Coordinators

N/ Paul Yould,

N/ Faye Resigno

## Information/ Membership Assistant

John Byrne  
and 5 Information Volunteers.

## Librarian

N/Susan McGurkin,\* John Dows

## Library Assistant

Maude Frances

## Graphic Designer

Martin Kohn



The primary role of the Client Liaison Team is customer service with both clients and ACON staff and volunteers. face-to-face "walk-in" client contact, on average of 400 per week, and switchboard, at an average of 1400 calls per week.

A permanent Senior Client Liaison team leader position was created, after being successfully trialed using a rotating roster of existing staff. Vitamin Service, providing discount vitamins to PLWHA, continued with 175 current service users, serviced a further 280 clients in the past year, and 25 mail order clients.

particularly effective way ACON could consolidate its relationship with its communities.

ACON membership has increased by several hundred in only a few short months, thanks to the verve and creativity of the newly appointed part-time membership officer.

CLU looks forward to a period of consolidation, team building and



Some of the Client Liaison Team

Community Support Network (CSN) is a volunteer-based service providing home-based practical care, transport and housing to people living with HIV/AIDS in NSW. CSN is committed to supporting the quality of life, independence and choice of HIV positive people. CSN strives to be sensitive and responsive to changing client needs. Special care is taken to adequately train, source and support our volunteer workers on whom the service relies.

The main achievement over 1997-98 was maintaining the levels and quality of service in the face of a difficult climate for recruiting carers. New treatments have impacted on the service in a number of ways but there has not been a major decline in home-care demands. A slight drop was registered in the average number of clients who accessed CSN home care during the year, moving down from 106 to 100. There were 61 new clients referred to CSN during the year, primarily drawn from those for whom combination therapies are not working or who were having debilitating side-effects from the new treatments regimens.

Demand for transport increased as clients on combination therapies were monitored by their doctors more frequently. There are also increasing numbers of clients, up from 299 to 316. Housing inquiries also increased by approximately 10%.

New developments and initiatives introduced over the year include:

- the creation of an additional training position in response to growing training needs in the Western Sydney Branch, and to assist in training community transport workers to be sensitive to PLWHA so that existing community transport could take on some of the demand or could provide service where no other existed;
- the introduction of an emergency food service for house-bound CSN clients;
- redesigning volunteer training to reflect the new demands on the service;

- extending the scope of carers' forums; and
- the introduction of regular CSN state-wide meetings for the development of common policy and management across the various independent CSN chapters.

Despite these changes, the core mission and values of CSN remain unchanged. The changes have occurred in the way we deliver services and the way in which we train our volunteers. The changes all reflect the recent shift in the progress of the virus. Whereas volunteers used to provide a substantial amount of palliative care, they are now more involved in addressing the need for cleaning, shopping and social support.

In the past 12 months, the climate for recruiting volunteers has been difficult, not only for CSN but for many volunteer-based organisations. Consequently, CSN has emphasised support for its present volunteers. Where approximately 50% of carers do not extend their term beyond the agreed 6 months, those who do generally contribute well in excess of two years of their time.

Recently CSN has introduced new recruitment processes and a striking new recruitment brochure. The initial reaction has been most positive, and we expect to enhance our recruitment activities as a result of their introduction. Shirley Purvis, the well known comic, has volunteered her time to serve as the central 'character' in the new brochures.

In the coming year CSN is moving toward the creation of a new database system which will be compatible with the ACON system and which will be 'millennium bug' proof. CSN is also beginning the process which forms the initial review by the Commonwealth Health and Accreditation Standards Program (CHASP), and which should lead to CSN accreditation. It could make CSN one of the very few non-government, community-based organisations, to hold such an accreditation. Finally, we expect to continue investigating the use of

already available services, such as our earlier move into taxi transport, in the present work with community transport. The goal, of course, is to be able to provide our clients with the very best service we can.

# Community Support Network



## Manager

Jim Belford

## Volunteer & Training Officer

Liz Yeo

## Training and Recruitment Officer

Lisa Osborn

## Care Liaison Officers

Tess Zeims, Shane Wells, Diana Carr, Steve Wheatley

## Housing Officer

Julie Callaghan

## Client Assistance Officers

Deb Broughton, John Dixon

The Volunteer Mission is to assist in bringing the continuing AIDS Crisis to an end while providing the best possible experience for volunteers.

The ACON Volunteer program consists of a database register of volunteers who provide time and commitment to the organisation across a range of programs,

This year, the volunteer program has been through a period of consolidation. Much of the year has been spent fine-tuning the Volunteer Policy as the new guidelines have been put into operation. A benchmark policy for the recruitment, organisation and support of volunteers, Volunteering Australia rates the ACON

Volunteer Policy Team, which continues to operate two days a month, the Volunteer newsletter, produced by the Volunteer Management Team, covering volunteer news and profiles; the staging of an information session for Kambala Church Of England Girls' School.

It was with real sadness that the

# Volunteers

## Volunteer Coordinator

Martin Cowling\*

Al Simon Findlay

services and activities. ACON volunteers are organised under the ACON Volunteer Policy which aims to ensure that volunteer resources are used in the most efficient way possible and volunteers are valued and supported in the work they do.

Volunteers are essential to the operations of ACON across the board. They contribute the equivalent of over \$2 million of paid work to the organisation every year. Without this invaluable contribution, ACON would not be able to provide most of its services. ACON volunteers participate at all levels and all areas of ACON's work.

The volunteer services database is a register of approximately 1600 people. These volunteers are divided into two categories. Currently ACON has 1279 regular volunteers and 300 'Special Events' volunteers. All ACON volunteers are recruited at information sessions held twice a month, are interviewed by the Volunteer management Team to assess their motivation, commitment and the skills they can bring to ACON, are given appropriate training and support and are asked to make a commitment to volunteer for a minimum of 6 months.

All ACON volunteering information sessions are open to the public and are widely advertised. These information sessions have been extremely successful, not only for recruiting volunteers, but also as educational forums to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS issues in the general community.



Martin Cowling

Volunteer Policy as a model of its kind for community-based organisations.

During the past year, an information session was held in the Port Macquarie offices of the Mid North Coast Outreach Project. It is now expected that similar sessions will be conducted at all regional ACON branches over the next twelve months. The branches are also being actively encouraged to adopt the volunteer policy to their own regional operations.

Volunteer highlights for the year 1997-98 included the Big Volunteer Day Out, a picnic afternoon attended by 180 volunteers in Centennial Park, the

ACON staff and volunteers said farewell to Martin Cowling, who left the Coordinator's position in June this year after two-and-a-half years of extraordinary work in building the volunteer program and culture at ACON as well as leading the development of our model Volunteer Policy.

The five teams provide a diverse range of support, education and information services and programs to people living with HIV/AIDS and their significant others. This includes the provision of both peer and professional support and education to clients, and information and training to health and support workers.

This year, HLU staff have had to reorientate the direction of the unit, taking on board changed client needs, impacting on the nature of the services, workshops and support groups. A greater sense of client hope, a stronger focus on living rather than dying with HIV/AIDS, the increasing need to look for innovative ways to support people getting back into the workforce and social structure again, treatment issues, particularly negotiating lifestyle and work around treatment regimens, their side-effects and compliance.

The HIV Living Project adopted a new service logo reflecting the changes in the unit and the epidemic: "Networking Our Way Through It". The project continues to deliver a wide range of services, including 12 support groups for 120 PLWHA, 'Planet Positive', a joint venture with the Positive Living Centre and PLWHA Inc., one-to-one peer support in person and over the phone, responding to information requests, weekly outreach services aimed at improving access and widening our client base.

'With Complements' is a newsletter which discusses complementary therapies in relation to HIV/AIDS. Issues were regularly produced over the past 12 months.

The Counselling Team provides individual counselling (short-term crisis management or on a longer-term) to people living with HIV/AIDS and their significant others. Through POR LA VIDA, HLU continues to offer information and counselling to Spanish speakers. Counselling sessions are handled in person and over the phone. During 1997-98, the counselling team underwent a team review, weathered major staff changes, and handled a substantial case load. Between July 1997

and June 1998, the HLU Counselling Team had 165 documented new appointments. Of these appointments: 58% were PLWHA, 90% were male, 72% lived in the city or inner city suburbs, 88% were gay-identified, 39% were unemployed, 82% said that the ACON Counselling Team was the only source of mental health support they received.

The most common issues raised by clients in counselling sessions were HIV issues, such as seroconversion, HIV disclosure, coping strategies, changing health, body image, relationships, grief and loss, and depression.

The Treatments Project provides individuals with up-to-date information on conventional HIV/AIDS treatments over the phone, in person, in workshops, forums and written materials. The project has grown with the changing epidemic, particularly with new treatments options, processing more than 20 phone

# The HIV Living Unit

community groups, compiling content for the upcoming ACON web site, revising and updating educational material about treatments.

The HIV AIDS Legal Centre (HALC) advocates for and provides legal advice to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. The main clients concerns are: superannuation, wills, power of attorney, enduring guardianship, discrimination, immigration, insurance, debt waiver. In the last 12 months, HALC has serviced 644 clients, conducted 13 seminars on HIV and the Law in Sydney, conducted 5 rural seminars in Lismore, Murwillumbah, Albury, Griffith and Wagga Wagga, hosted regular Monday night advice nights.

ACON and the HALC team would like to thank the President of the HALC,

## Manager

A/ Grant Farquharson

## HIV Support Coordinator

Austin Cochran

## HIV Health Promotion, Graham Norton

## Peer Support

Roger Roberts and Adrian Ogier

## Counselling

Grant Farquharson, Tim Wong, Sheelagh Daniels, and Volunteer Counsellors Elizabeth Riley and Roger Edmonds, Sharon Snir, Joe Kelleher

## Treatments Project

Bonnie Harrison, Jamie Dunbar, John Cumming\*

## HIV/AIDS Legal Centre

Solicitor: Paul Garde,  
Coordinator: Vincent Dobbie  
and volunteers

## Positive Retreats

John Trigg, Claude Fabian  
and Larry Wellings



Information requests and 6 requests in person per week, conducting 42 workshops on HIV treatments to community, PLWHA and health industry groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers and HIV Dementia nurses, researching new treatments issues, writing articles for Talkabout magazine, liaising with health professionals and other

Management Committee, John Godwin who is resigning this year and other committee members who resigned.

The Positive Retreats Project hosts regular PLWHA five-day retreats in a rural setting. During the course of the year, the project has conducted five retreats for 70 clients.

The Sydney Gay Education Unit develops education programs on

campaign, we produced a new, improved information booklet this year: HIV/AIDS

The Rubberless Fuck Raises Its Head and Passion, Pills & Poofters. Both forums

# Sydney Gay Education Unit

## Manager

Alce Spina\*

## A/Manager

Daniel Madeddu\*

A/ Brent Allan

## Campaign Planners

Nicholas Parkhill,\* Stephen Gallagher,\* Greg Simpson

## Venues Liaison Officer

Philip Terry,\* Bevan Vickers

## Gay Education Officer

Hannah Niven, Richard Knight\*

HIV/AIDS, safe sex practices, new treatments and related issues, with a primary focus on the inner city Sydney gay community.

Over the last 12 months, the Sydney Gay Education Unit (SGEU) produced a range of materials, services and key community events. New campaigns and resources produced included the second generation "Talk, Test, Test, Trust" negotiated safety campaign, additional resources around treatments, compliance and recreational drug use, and an HIV positive sex campaign.

A retooled version of the originally controversial "Talk, Test, Test, Trust" campaign was run this year with a tighter focus on people moving into new relationships, where a number of

and life has gone to reprint twice. It features more up-to-date, accurate and in-depth information and covers a host of new drugs and their side-effects. It also offers more options, including more ideas on how to incorporate treatment regimens into your life.

Two other resources have also been produced, "Considerations On Taking Your Drug Holiday" and "Recreational Drug Interactions". These supplementary pamphlets focus on the two biggest problems associated with treatments, compliance and recreational drug use.

Two other campaigns were developed this year in direct response to the impact of new treatments. Designed to encourage the development of a healthy HIV positive gay sexuality by looking at considerations and information around sexual practices for HIV positive gay men and responding to fears that men may be abandoning safe sex practices in light of new treatments.

A series of snappy posters and an information booklet, the Positive Sexuality Campaign, represented a reinforcement of existing messages such as negotiating disclosure. The impacts of new treatments campaign, "Crystal Condom", was about making sure people understand the full implications of new treatments. The campaign consisted of a series of posters, postcards and advertisements in the gay media.

The unit also instituted a new, innovative Community Education Program of public forums. Topics covered included recreational drug use and HIV risk management. SGEU staged two forums over the year, hosted by Vanessa Wagner,

were very well received and attended. The unit plans to stage more in the coming year.

The Safe Sex Sluts had a particularly successful year, appearing at a range of events from Sleaze Ball to Pride New Year, various Mardi Gras events and Hand In Hand. Utilising the services of 20 volunteers, the sluts distributed over 45,000 safe sex packs to gays and lesbians in 1997-98. The annual ACON Safe Sex DIVA Award for 1997-98 was presented to Miss Beverly Hills.

The SGEU continues to conduct feedback surveys of the community of all its educational campaigns and programming such as workshops. This year, street surveys, conducted by a new pool of volunteers, were introduced.

In the coming year, the SGEU will increase its joint planning with the Peer Education unit to ensure better delivery of services and education to our target groups.

## INFORMATION



## for gay men

2nd Edition, Talk, Test, Test, Trust Campaign

seroconversions occur for gay men. Reaction to the rerun campaign was very positive. A groundbreaking campaign when it was initially run, the concepts and arguments behind negotiated safety have since been adopted by key AIDS agencies around the world, vindicating ACON's bold initiative in this area.

Continuing from last year's very successful 'New Tests and Treatments'





Steve Ostrow and MAG group with Clover Moore



Mardi Gras Fair day, ACON Temple of Love



Positive Fun & Esteem group at launch with Ab Vanessa and Anthony Adams, Project Officer

Mardi Gras Fair Day, Staff member Sarah Bergin & friend



Saturnalia, ACON end of year party



Mardi Gras, Ken Crouch, CSN caret, Illawarra



Suit day

Leather pride Fair Day  
CSN Worker Shane Wells



# Policy & Women's Unit

**Manager**  
A/Robyn Maurice

**Policy Officer**  
Isla Cabossi

**Housing Policy**  
Stacey Miers

**Treatments Policy**  
Geoff Honour\*

**Women's Team Coordinator**  
Shani Prosser

**Women and AIDS Project Officer**  
A/Sonia Lawless\*

**A/Women Partners of Gay/Bisexual Men Project Officer**  
Sara Lubovitz,\* A/Maureen O'Sullivan

**Women's Campaign Officer**  
Sarah Bergin

**HIV Women's Support Officers**  
Vivienne Munroe, Amelia McLaughlin,  
Eryka Fars, \* Shellee Kom\*

**Family Support Liaison Officers**  
Angela Stewart, Sam Carlie\*

**Gay & Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project**

Male worker: Tony Hand  
Female worker:

The Policy & Women's Unit (PAWU) has two areas of work: policy and advocacy work, and services for women.

Two new positions complementing the existing Policy Officer were created in 1997-98 focusing on HIV Treatments and Advocacy and Housing policy. These new positions strengthen our policy capacity and reflect the needs engendered by the changing epidemic.

The new ACON Strategic Plan, developed this year, represents a major step forward in the organisation's recognition of HIV positive women and their needs. There have also been major structural changes in the women's unit resulting in some key new appointments, as well as the departure of the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women's position, now managed in the Peer Education Unit.

The PAWU has strengthened its partnerships with other services over the last year. This included working with the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA), the Hepatitis C Council of NSW and Needle Exchange programs, in relation to harm minimisation and needle exchange support. The unit has participated with other ACON units and branches, on the ACON Western Sydney Positive Women's Day and HIV Living Unit Treatment Workshops on recreational drug use and compliance, established links and worked with Area Health Services, particularly through the HIV Positive Women's Peer Support Project, and initiated the HIV Agencies Forum. A network of non-government HIV organisations, the forum acts as a mechanism for consultation, and assists in the formulation of ACON's policy positions on issues of common interest to all organisations involved.

The ACON Committee of Council formed three new working groups this year. Drawing their membership from the committee, staff and the community,

these groups represent a new forum for consultation and feedback into the organisation. The three groups are: Care & Support Strategy Group, the Treatments Strategy Group, and the Education Strategy Group. These strategy groups have already been busy assisting with research and recommendations on a variety of issues this year, including changes to the St Vincent's Hospital campus, the NSW Health Care Services review, the Poverty Report, Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), NSW HIV Treatment prescriber numbers, and criteria and credentials for HIV treatment prescribers, the impact of Public Health Agreements, and continuing to input into the national policy response as a key member of The

Booklet, it is more comprehensive and up-to-date, and is soon to be released.

This year the Positive Women's Peer Support Project hosted fortnightly support meetings in Sydney, averaging 8-10 women each session and also initiated a Western Sydney support group attended regularly by 5-6 women. The project conducted its best-ever retreat which was fully booked, attended by 14 women, and the feedback has been positive. A new model for positive women's peer education and support has been in development, and the project continued to host lunches for HIV positive women.

This year, the Gay and Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project (GLIDUP) supported ACON in the development of a



Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO).

Two new positions were created and filled in the women's team this year—a full-time Women's Team Co-ordinator and a part-time Women's Campaigns Officer.

The new team co-ordinator position has responsibility for supervising the women peer-support workers, the campaigns position, and the Women Partners of Gay/Bisexual Men position. The role also includes identifying policy issues for women, planning and coordination of services. The campaigns position is responsible for the development of resources targeted for women. This year a new resource has been in development to complement the range of ACON materials already available for women. The Informer builds on the success of the Lesbian Sex

submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Safe Injecting Rooms. GLIDUP also had a strong presence at all major parties and community events such as Mardi Gras, Hand In Hand and Sleaze.

After eight dedicated years of groundbreaking work, Sara Lubovitz, the driving force behind the program to date, left the Women Partners of Gay/Bisexual Men Project. After leaving ACON, Sara presented a paper on this significant project at the Geneva conference. Internationally recognised as an extremely successful and innovative program, Sara's paper on the project was included in the plenary wrap-up as a highlight of the conference. Other achievements for the project in 1997-98 include the release of an accompanying manual for health care workers, to go with the last year's Three In A Marriage video, continued operation

of support groups in Canberra, Wollongong and Gosford.

The Family Support Project continues to provide advocacy, education, support and training to the Department of Community Services and substitute care agencies, as well as directly to families affected by HIV/AIDS. The project works closely with the Children's Hospital and Camp Goodtime.

The Sydney Women And Sexual Health (SWASH) survey was conducted for the second time this year. A joint initiative of the Lesbian GLIDUP position, the Women Partners of Gay/Bisexual Men Project position and the National Centre in HIV Social Research and the National Centre for HIV Epidemiology, the SWASH survey was initially developed from the Sydney Men And Sexual Health (SMASH) survey. This time around, the SWASH survey questionnaire was redeveloped into a more targeted tool for talking about women's sexual health issues.

In the coming year, the policy and women's teams will participate in the development of a 4th National HIV/AIDS Strategy, and continue policy responses to emerging issues as well as maintaining ongoing work in key areas such as housing and treatments. The unit will continue work on harm minimisation, needle exchange services and methadone programs, investigate issues and treatments for women, especially in relation to pregnancy choices for those who are positive and to identify and begin responding to other areas of policy and service concerns for women affected by the epidemic.

The Sex Workers' Outreach Project (SWOP) targets the Sex Industry and sex workers to promote sexual health and HIV awareness and to provide relevant resources, counselling, information, support and referrals. The service also lobbies at local and state level and advocates and develops policy in relation to the Sex Industry and the needs of its workers.

The Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) has experienced a year of stability, growth, and high spirits. With all permanent positions filled and a strong set of relief staff available, team work and communication among the staff is buzzing along with some outstanding results.

Outreach, our cornerstone activity, has consistently reached sex workers across the State and throughout Sydney. With many businesses relocating due to legal actions by local councils, it has been no mean feat keeping up with the industry. Our eight staff have performed over 250 'Parlour' runs and 150 'street' outreaches in order to access workers on-site.

Workshops for sex-workers have covered topics including sexual health, negotiation skills, safety and legal issues. Key service providers, such as the Police and Sexual Health Clinics, have also been provided with training and information sessions to improve access to services. These 'road-shows' keep sex workers informed, connected to SWOP and networked at a local level.

New resources developed included the poster 'Safety, Dignity, Unity, Respect', accompanied by a leaflet outlining our aims, objectives and services. 'The Professional', SWOP's bimonthly magazine has enjoyed an increased community involvement, with a very active editorial committee putting together some 'sell-out' issues.

Lobbying around the implementation of the 'Disorderly Houses Amendment Act' has been pursued, with all State ministers responsible being made aware of the lack of commitment to an effective plan for regulating the Sex Industry at a local level.

After successful consultations with sex workers, some good outcomes have occurred at local council level to put in place planning policies which will improve health outcomes.

The Department for Women funded a new project, Sex Workers End Rape and Violence (SWERF), to address these issues at both a Sex Industry level and with service providers. 'Smooth Operator' workshops for sex worker safety have been implemented to increase awareness and provide information about services and rights if workers are assaulted.

Two firsts occurred this year. The Sex Industry only 'Hookers and Strippers' Ball was held, drawing a great diversity of sex workers out on a cold Tuesday night to

see some of the hottest, funniest and most creative talents perform. Also, we floated by in Mardi Gras for the first time. SWOP will continue to build on its achievements into the future.

## Sex Workers' Outreach Project

### Manager

Maria McMahon

### Administration

Craig Skinner,\* Kerry Putaranul

### Counsellor

Maggie Moylan

### Reception

Lisa O'Brien

### Information & Support Workers Female

Lecca Pride, Julie Cassidy, Kylie Leahy, Elizabeth Zanino, Mary Heard\*

### Non-English-Speaking Background

Polly Perez, Kha Hien Huynh

### Men & Boys

Kenn Robinson

### Rural

Rosemary Anderson

### Rural Coordinator

Deej Faby

### Sex Workers with Transgender Qualities

nonie May Welby

### Resource Production

Catherine Faragher

### Community Legal Education

Andrew Miles

### Sex Workers Ending Rape & Violence Project

Madeline Bridgett



**Manager**

Brent Allan

**Asian Gay Education Officer**

Sandy Muljadi

**MAG Project Officer**

Steve Ostrow

**Youth Peer Education Officers**

Brad Gray, Greg Staples, Leon Fernandez

**Positive Youth Peer Education Officer**

Richard Knight, \* Anthony Adams

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Project Officers**

Chris Lawrence, Sue Fowles

Workers in NSW, moves to establish an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander project Advisory Committee, considerable publicity and media exposure for the project.

One of the more mobile of ACON service divisions, rural project workers spent the year travelling the length and breadth of NSW, from Albury to Armidale. Project activities included workshops, HIV and sexuality seminars for health care workers, co-operatively planning the 1998 regional HIV conference.

Overall responsibility for the Rural Outreach Project shifted to the new Regional Services Manager in June 1998. The Rural Project continues to jointly plan with PEU staff, as well as taking part in PEU professional development seminars.

The Asian Gay Men's Project was significantly redeveloped this year. Six

workers, government health organisations and community groups;

- conducted a joint, corporate-sponsored campaign launch with AFAD for 'Asian Gay Proud', established a strong community presence at venues and events; and

- moved to develop an Asian project advisory and support committee.

The project would like to acknowledge and thank William Yang and Anthony Wong for their invaluable assistance.

The Mature Aged Gay Men's Project (MAG) remains one of ACON's most successful programs. Taking a holistic approach, the project operates through fortnightly general group meetings, average attendance 135 members, hosting monthly Sunday dinners at Heffron Hall, with 35 MAG volunteers

A vital force in the community, the MAG program this year won a much-deserved DIVA Award for Outstanding Community Service.

Recognised as a model youth peer education program, in 1997-98 the Fun & Esteem project hosted a successful weekly drop-in, conducted 12 Start Making Sense and 6 Relationship workshops, published a regular newsletter, assisted AFAD in the development of a national youth campaign, participated in a number of joint project activities, including community forums and training, developed a volunteer facilitator manual based on the Fun & Esteem manual, launched a volunteer counseling program with one volunteer providing 70 hours of counseling.

Originally developed as an HIV Living Unit program, the Positive Fun & Esteem Project moved over to PEU this year, now taking a much stronger peer education approach. Over the past 12 months the project worker has run three very successful Positive Fun & Esteem peer support workshops and has established a popular fortnightly Positive F&E social group.

This year also saw the development of the ACON Gay Education Strategy, aimed at ensuring the quality and consistency of ACON gay educational programming.

Volunteer numbers have been increasing over the past year, due to the implementation of the new Volunteer Policy and improvements in client services. We also now have a new recruitment strategy built into the unit's programs, including improved training and outreach.



Road remains as the PEU support program for Asian gay men, but Positive Asian Connection (PAC) replaced Yum Cha as the support program for positive gay Asian men. During the course of the year, the Asian Project:

- conducted client needs assessment research, utilising a sample of 300 gay Asian men;
- consulted with a wide range of health

catering to an average clientele of 100 PIWHA, producing and distributing the MAG newsletter to over 700 people, collecting toys for the Prince of Wales Hospital paediatric AIDS unit, Watsons Bay and Long Bay prison outreach, supporting ACON packing days, participation in community events, volunteer recruitment and activities to a total of well over 20,000 hours.

Picture includes  
SGEU staff:  
Greg Simpson,  
Hamish Niven

# Organisational Services Unit



The Organisational Services Unit (OSU) provides ACON with a range of operational and administrative services. The responsibilities of the OSU include financial management, personnel and payroll, training and development, volunteer and staff support, volunteer co-ordination, computer systems and support, building management, fleet management, insurance administration and purchasing.

The OSU is undergoing a period of change and development but it's been business as usual ensuring that ACON continues to function.

ACON took significant steps in 1997-98 toward the development of better lines of communication and more efficient information management across the organisation. Central to this process was the introduction of Lotus Notes and the provision of Local Area network service to branches.

A review of the JCC took place in 1996-97, where it was decided that the role for the JCC would be to ensure that consultative processes across ACON are

adequate and to provide recommendations to management. In the past 12 months, the JCC has developed and implemented new protocols for consultation, designed to ensure that all procedures across ACON are consistent, clear and transparent.

Finance is moving to upgrade the financial computing package used by ACON.

With the approaching Millennium, Year 2000 compliance has to be addressed. The IT working group, headed by the Computer Support Officer, has initiated a comprehensive program to deal with this complex issue.

During a demanding year, Personnel continued to do what it does best in payroll and recruitment. It is introducing a new payroll system, Micropay, and bringing ACON into line with changes to superannuation legislation.

Maintenance and administration of the various ACON offices and buildings around the State took a great leap forward this year with the introduction of a new reporting system.

This year was the first time the Occupational Health & Safety Committee hit the road to visit ACON regional branches. The OH&S Committee regularly assesses and oversees the health and safety issues of staff and volunteers, reporting to management and assisting with policy development, implementation and budgeting.

Martin Cowling, the Volunteer Coordinator, left the organisation in June, 1998. A new Coordinator will be recruited shortly. The development of the new volunteer co-ordinator positions for supervision and feedback has been particularly useful. We are now looking to facilitate the adoption of the Volunteer Policy across ACON's regional branches.

The year ahead promises to be exciting, challenging and eventful, with a number of significant initiatives on the way. Foremost of these upcoming developments is the formation of an Organisational Development Team. Also expected to be of vital importance in the coming year is the recruitment of new staff, the ongoing development of the ACON web site, installation of external Email and Internet access to all branches and unit, the further development and consolidation of the volunteer program ensuring organisation-wide year 2000 compliance, and the introduction of the new finance system.

## Manager

Kevin Golding,\* Trudy Heathwood,\* Irene Tollner\*

## Administrative Services Officers

Faye Resigno, Michael Rowe

## Personnel Officer

Mark Gruber

## Payroll Officer

Tracy Wood

## Training & Development Officer

Paul Hansen

## Staff and Volunteers Support Officers

Steve Keith,\* Alex Sosnow\*

## Volunteer Coordinator

Martin Cowling,\* Simon Findlay

## Finance Officer

Allen Lee,\* Hiran Cooray

## Finance Support Officers

Rose Nguyen, Sue Davies,\*

## Computer Support Officer

Richard Green

## Recruitment Officer

Adrian Ester

# Treasurer's Report

Annette Gunnis—Treasurer



I am with pleasure that I present this year's set of financial reports for ACON. Although this year has proven a challenging one in many ways, ACON's financial well-being has been sustained and in various areas improved over this past period.

ACON has enjoyed a continued, though modest, increase in income over this past period. It is notable that this increase has been achieved through a diversity of sources. These include both fundraising events and activities as well as very gratefully accepted bequests.

Overall, grant income was down \$206,383, mainly due to a decrease in grants from the NSW Department of Health. Some other minor sources of grant income did increase over this past period. The amount of Grants Unexpended decreased by \$138,000, this increased expenditure being appropriately directed towards improved services.

ACON's staff, volunteers and management should be commended on their efforts toward again returning a surplus after abnormal and extraordinary items of \$39,793. This continued vigilance toward maintaining a modest surplus is critical for ACON's continued financial security. This surplus has had a positive impact on our accumulated funds, raising them by 5%. These funds are important to the long-term financial viability of ACON.

This year's Hand In Hand fund-raiser was again an important community fundraising event, returning a surplus of \$93,000. Other fundraising activities saw an increase of \$34,173 to \$87,376, these activities again included a joint venture with the AIDS Trust of Australia for Red Ribbon Day.

Overall these reports represent the steady state of ACON's finances. ACON continues to be a financially prudent organisation with a secure financial status, illustrated also by our decision to purchase, in the near future, a new financial system and establish a long-term finance plan.

Annette Gunnis—Treasurer

# Auditor's Report

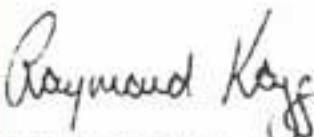
I have audited the financial statements of AIDS Council Of New South Wales Inc. (ACON) for the year ended 30 June 1998 set out on pages numbered 28 to 34. The ACON Committee of Council members are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of these financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements so as to present a view of AIDS Council Of New South Wales Inc. (ACON) which is consistent with my understanding of its financial position, the results of its operations and cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

## AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements the financial position of AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. as at 30 June 1998, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended.



RAYMOND KAZZI, BEC, CPA

Level 2  
105 Burwood Road  
CONCORD NSW 2137

Dated this 29th day of September 1998.

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 1998**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 1998**

	Notes	1998 \$	1997 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash	3	1,383,905	1,160,492
Receivables	4	71,752	126,262
Inventories	5	6,128	18,446
Other	6	20,243	35,014
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,482,028</b>	<b>1,340,214</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	7	625,316	842,624
Other	8	20,577	3,727
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>645,893</b>	<b>846,351</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>2,127,921</b>	<b>2,186,565</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors and Borrowings	8	701,089	651,919
Unexpended Grants and Grants in Advance	9	536,985	654,778
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,238,074</b>	<b>1,315,797</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors and Borrowings	8	49,345	70,056
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>49,345</b>	<b>70,056</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,287,419</b>	<b>1,385,856</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>840,502</b>	<b>800,709</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>			
Accumulated funds at beginning of year		800,709	643,796
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit)		39,793	155,913
<b>TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>		<b>840,502</b>	<b>800,709</b>

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1998**

	Notes	1998	1997
		\$	\$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Grants Received	11	6,635,698	6,841,073
Less: Grants Unexpended	9	519,725	658,003
		<hr/> 6,115,965	<hr/> 6,183,070
Add:			
Donations		233,840	212,072
Events and Activities	13	87,376	53,203
Fund Raising	12	93,015	122,043
Interest		93,841	92,315
Sales of Vitamins		62,064	93,997
Other	14	76,788	58,705
		<hr/> 646,924	<hr/> 642,335
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>6,762,889</b>	<b>6,825,405</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Accommodation		567,597	529,912
Audit Fees	15	17,835	17,753
Board and Council		31,053	13,041
Cost of Goods Sold		57,838	92,505
Donations		62,203	11,500
Financial Charges		29,055	16,264
Events and Activities	13	3,010	2,975
Office Supplies		275,564	237,968
Payroll	16	4,057,629	4,057,908
Postage, Freight and Telecommunications		208,974	218,292
Program, Resources and Client Services		605,096	621,399
Publicity and Promotion		224,669	204,654
Insurance and Professional Services		97,672	81,764
Travel and Representation		250,004	228,158
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>6,488,199</b>	<b>6,344,093</b>
Net surplus/(deficit) before abnormal and extraordinary items		274,690	481,312
LESS: Abnormal items	2A	234,897	234,897
LESS: Extraordinary items	2B	-	85,502
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER ABNORMAL AND EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS</b>		<b>39,793</b>	<b>156,513</b>

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART**  
**OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1998**

	1998	1997
	\$	\$
<b>NOTE 1—</b> <b>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES</b>		
The financial statements are a general purpose financial report that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (NSW).		
(a) <b>BASIS OF PREPARATION</b>		
The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.		
(b) <b>DEPRECIATION</b>		
Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis so as to write off the net cost of each depreciable non-current asset over its expected useful life.		
(c) <b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Fixed assets are included at cost or at independent valuation and are depreciated over the estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Only assets of substance and of material value have been capitalised and subject to depreciation.		
(d) <b>ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE—GRANTS</b>		
The council prepares accounts on an accrual basis; therefore all funds to be committed for the financial year have been recorded as income for that year.		
(e) <b>LEASES</b>		
Assets which are acquired under leases deemed to be "finance leases", that is, leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incident to the ownership of the leased asset, are capitalised as fixed assets.		
Finance leases are capitalised by recording an initial asset and liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments including any guaranteed residual values. Leased assets are amortised over their expected useful lives using the straight-line method. Lease payments are allocated between interest expense and lease liability.		
Lease expenditure relating to leases deemed to be "operating leases" is expensed as incurred. Operating lease commitments outstanding at balance date include guaranteed residual values.		
<b>NOTE 2A—ABNORMAL ITEMS</b>		
During the year ended 30 June 1995, AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. moved offices from Goulburn Street to Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills. The fitout of the new office is being depreciated over the considered life of the fitout.		
As the capital expenditure of the fitout was an extraordinary item in 1995, the ACDN Committee of Council considers the depreciation write off of this item as abnormal.		
Depreciation on fitout of Commonwealth St offices	234,897	234,897
	—	—
<b>NOTE 2B—EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS</b>		
During the year ended 30 June 1997, AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. made a payment to a former employee as a result of a legal action regarding a superannuation payout.		
	89,502	—
	—	—

# AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1998

	1998	1997	1998	1997		
	\$	\$	\$	\$		
<b>NOTE 3—CASH</b>						
Cash at Bank:						
Commonwealth Bank	<b>(101,317)</b>	33,958	Trade Creditors	<b>319,197</b>		
Cash on Investment Account:			Accrued Expenses	—		
Australian European Finance Corporation (A subsidiary of the Commonwealth Bank)	<b>1,470,013</b>	1,112,336	Lease Liability	<b>31,306</b>		
Commonwealth Bank	<b>11,309</b>	10,758	Provisions	<b>350,586</b>		
	<b>1,481,322</b>	1,123,094	TOTAL CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS	<b>701,089</b>		
Cash on Hand:			NON-CURRENT			
Petty Cash	<b>3,900</b>	3,400	Lease Liability	<b>49,345</b>		
<b>TOTAL CASH</b>	<b>1,383,905</b>	1,160,492		70,059		
<b>NOTE 4—RECEIVABLES</b>						
Grants Money			<b>NOTE 9—UNEXPENDED GRANTS</b>			
Committed and Sundries	<b>71,752</b>	126,262	Unexpended grants represent the total of grants unexpended, including grants received in advance for programs and services in future years, at the end of the period. The balance of these grants will be carried forward to the next period when the relevant expenses can then be properly matched to the period in which they are incurred.			
<b>NOTE 5—INVENTORIES</b>						
Vitamins on Hand - at cost	<b>6,128</b>	18,446	Unexpended Grants are as follows:			
<b>NOTE 6—OTHER</b>						
CURRENT						
Prepaid Expenses	<b>20,243</b>	35,014	NSW Department of Health	<b>360,220</b>		
NON-CURRENT						
Deposits - Utilities	<b>20,577</b>	3,727	Commonwealth Grants including Department of Human Services and Health	—		
<b>NOTE 7— PROPERTY, PLANT &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>						
Furniture & Fittings - At cost:	<b>1,247,547</b>	1,218,070	Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc.	<b>9,800</b>		
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<b>(893,918)</b>	(852,760)	AIDS Trust of Australia	<b>6,300</b>		
	<b>353,629</b>	565,310	NSW Department of Community Services (SAAF)	<b>72,370</b>		
Office Equipment - At cost:	<b>996,168</b>	937,131	Area Health Service	<b>27,745</b>		
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<b>(772,871)</b>	(695,064)	Legal Aid Commission of NSW	<b>7,520</b>		
	<b>223,297</b>	242,067	Law Foundation of NSW	<b>31,700</b>		
Equipment Under Lease - At Cost	<b>74,004</b>	46,705	Other Grants	<b>4,070</b>		
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<b>25,614</b>	11,458		18,450		
	<b>48,390</b>	35,247				
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY, PLANT &amp; EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>625,316</b>	842,624				
<b>TOTAL OF COMMITTED BUT UNEXPENDED GRANTS</b>						
RECEIVED			<b>536,985</b>	664,778		

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART**  
**OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1998**

	1998	1997		1998	1997
	\$	\$		\$	\$
<b>NOTE 10—LEASE LIABILITY</b>					<b>NOTE 12—FUNDRAISING</b>
Finance Leases			Hand In Hand Party:		
Finance Leases capitalised and included in Plant and Equipment (Note 7)			Gross Proceeds	263,550	272,310
Lease Commitments			Less: Tickets Commission	349	2,596
— Not later than one year	40,532	36,115		263,201	269,712
— Later than one year but not later than two years	39,236	36,115	Less: Expenses		
— Later than two years but not later than five years	16,287	45,649	Venue Hire	12,978	9,184
— Later than five years	—	—	Production Costs	168,735	134,765
	—	—	Other Costs	11,973	18,865
Minimum Lease Payments	96,055	117,881	Total Costs	193,686	162,814
Deduct Future Finance Charges	15,404	22,615		69,515	106,898
TOTAL LEASE LIABILITY	80,651	95,265	Add: Community Sponsorship and Donations Received	23,500	15,145
LESS: CURRENT LIABILITY	8	31,306		93,015	122,043
NON CURRENT LIABILITY	8	49,345			
<b>NOTE 11—GRANTS RECEIVED</b>					A portion of the net proceeds of this fundraiser are to be disbursed during the year ended 30 June 1999 in the form of small grants to community organisations who are ineligible or unlikely to receive government funding for services directly beneficial to people living with HIV/AIDS. The balance of fundraising income will be spent on activities which are ineligible for or unlikely to receive government funding or are most likely to enhance ACON's service provisions for its clients.
Grants received include unexpended grants and grants in advance from the previous financial year:					
NSW Department of Health	6,180,200	6,419,360	<b>NOTE 13—EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES</b>		
Federal Government	—	664	Income obtained from a variety of miscellaneous events and activities including branch activities and "Queens for a Weekend" ticket sales.		
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc.	26,830	19,000			
AIDS Trust of Australia	13,090	89,018	<b>NOTE 14—OTHER INCOME</b>		
Area Health Service	96,671	68,326	Rental Income	4,679	2,438
NSW Department of Community Services (SAAF)	117,680	76,425	Sales of Materials	52,426	38,430
Legal Aid Commission of NSW	100,136	97,062	Membership Fees	11,118	3,879
Law Foundation of NSW	40,633	47,748	Wages Reimbursed	—	4,515
Other Grants	60,450	23,470	Buyers Club	—	200
	—	—	Blue Phone Income	225	198
	6,635,690	6,841,073	Positive Retreat/Treatment Workshop Fees	1,940	3,880
	—	—	Project: Male Cell Reimbursements	—	15,165
	—	—	UNI Survey - SWOP	6,400	—
	—	—		76,788	58,705

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**NOTES TO AND FORMING PART**  
**OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1998**

	1998	1997	1998	1997
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>NOTE 15—AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION</b>				
Amounts received, or due and receivable by the Auditor for:				
Auditing the main and project accounts of AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.				
Auditor's fees	17,085	17,753		
Other Accounting Services	750	—		
	17,835	17,753		
<b>NOTE 16—PAYROLL</b>				
Wages and usage-related expenses				
Superannuation	3,847,379	3,857,712		
	210,250	210,196		
	4,057,629	54,067,908		
<b>NOTE 17—PROVISIONS</b>				
Annual Leave				
Leave Loading	223,303	242,828		
Long Service Leave	39,078	42,495		
Workers Compensation	88,205	104,904		
	—	13,680		
	350,586	543,907		
<b>STATEMENTS OF CASHFLOWS</b>				
<b>FOR THE YEAR ENDED</b>				
<b>30 JUNE 1998</b>				
Cash flows from operating activities:				
Receipts from customers & grantmaking bodies	6,849,606	7,677,354		
Payments to suppliers & employees	(6,535,445)	(7,361,592)		
Interest received	93,841	92,315		
Interest and other costs of finance paid	(5,474)	(4,429)		
Unpresented cheques written back	21,122	—		
Net cash from operating activities	5	423,650	403,648	—
Cash flows from investing activities:				
Payments for furniture & fittings, and plant & equipment acquired	(162,304)	(118,248)		
Proceeds from plant & equipment sold	2,599	2,080		
Net cash from investing activities	(159,705)	(116,168)		
Cash flows from financing activities:				
Payments reducing lease liability	(40,532)	(38,655)		
Net cash from financing activities	(40,532)	(38,655)		
Net increase in cash held	223,413	248,825		
Cash at the beginning of the year	1,160,492	911,667		
Cash at the end of the year	A	1,383,905	1,160,492	—

**AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.**  
**NOTES TO THE STATEMENTS OF CASHFLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 1998**

	1998	1997
	\$	\$

**NOTES TO THE STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

**A. Reconciliation of Cash**

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments. Cash at the end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

Cash on hand	3,900	3,400
Cash at bank	(101,317)	33,998
Deposits at call	1,481,322	1,123,094
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>1,383,905</b>	<b>1,160,492</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**B. Reconciliation of net cash from operating activities to operating profit/(loss) after income tax and extraordinary items:**

Operating profit/(loss) after income tax and extraordinary items	39,793	156,913
Depreciation and Amortisation	358,255	369,489
Lease Interest	12,164	12,211
Loss on Disposal of Assets	32,512	192
Decrease in Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	-
Decrease in Provision for Employee Entitlements	(53,321)	35,838
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>349,610</b>	<b>417,728</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Changes in Assets and Liabilities:**

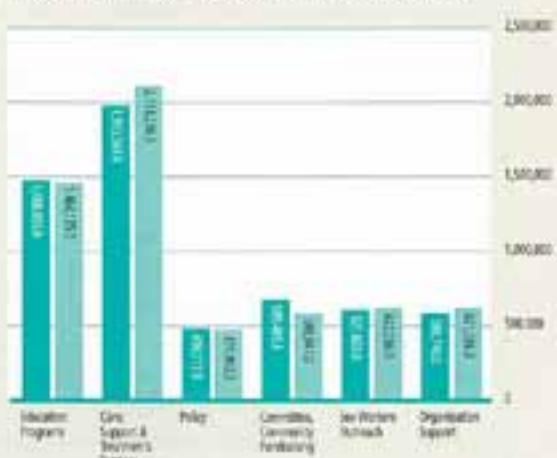
Decrease in Receivables	54,510	50,614
Decrease in Other Current Assets	14,771	2,687
Decrease in Inventories	12,318	3,293
Increase in Other Non-Current Assets	(16,850)	-
Increase in Trade Creditors	101,337	(122,261)
Decrease in Accruals	(4,846)	(8,716)
Decrease in Unexpended Grants	(127,793)	(95,610)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>34,247</b>	<b>(170,993)</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Net cash from operating activities	423,650	403,648
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**C. Non-Cash Financing and Investing Activities**

During the financial year, equipment with an aggregate fair value of \$13,407 was acquired by way of finance lease. These acquisitions are not reflected in the Statements of Cash Flows.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAM AREA**



**HOW WE SPEND OUR FUNDS**



- Education Programs
- Care, Support & Business Services
- Policy
- Committee, Community Fundraising
- Sex Workers Outreach
- Organisation Support



CSN

For some ACON projects, a logo helps to establish a presence in the community.





