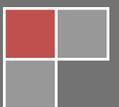


2012

# Operations Manager Report

Year end 30/6/2012

Report outlining Eastern Refuge Societies business and outcomes for the financial year ending 30/06/2012



It is with pleasure that I present the Operations report for the financial year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2012.

The past few years have been tenuous for the organisation financially, whilst demand remains on the increase for Refuge and its related services. The previous financial year saw us finish up the year at a considerable loss, although it is forecasted that EWR will break even in the coming financial year, if no other costs are incurred or staff increases are deemed necessary.

Staffing and staff salary bands have remained static for the previous eight years and where Eastern Refuge used to remunerate its staff at competitive rates, this has decreased considerably over time and the feasibility to increase salaries or include a CPI increase to staff in this financial climate are exceedingly limited. At the end of 2011, both the Maori Services Manager and the Operations Manager took voluntary pay cuts in order to retain valuable front line staff to the organisation. This equates to \$22,000 saving by the organisation and was successful in ensuring that the retention of our child advocate and community advocates was successful and that those critical services remain viable to our communities.

It would be fair to assume that staff employed by the organisation operate largely from a premise of good faith. From an organizational perspective, it is appropriate to remunerate good staff in order to maintain them and whilst we have been unable to remunerate our staff, they show considerable commitment in choosing to remain with the organisation, when they could well be in paid employment, earning considerably more than what our organisation can afford to pay in salaries.

Added to this is the fact that staff employed by the organisation, under alternative government contracts, receive a greater salary, due to the nature of those contracts, whilst EWR staff are supporting and maintaining the analysis and management of those positions and receiving less than those employed to undertake the contracts. This has, at times, a negative impact on EWR specific staff in that they often feel their role and expertise, as NGO's is undervalued by the Government funders.

In NCIWR (our national office) accepting the funding round from MSD and NCIWR in the 2011-12 year it is noted that this contract has decreased and includes reductions to the following portfolios.

- Reduced funding to Residential services
- Reduced volume for residential services
- Reduced funding to community based services
- Reduced volume to community services

Irrespective of these reductions to funding, demand for services supplied by Eastern Refuge still continue to increase, with more agencies coming directly to our service for support with their clients or making referrals to the organisation where they may not have the skills, expertise or analysis to work effectively with domestic violence incidences.

Below is a table outlining the baseline funding for the financial year and it is easily identified that Eastern Refuge operate services well above what they are currently funded to supply,

Year	Total funded:	2011	2012
Residential National	27	97	53
Community National	84	638	818
Crisis Line	417	6237	9115
Education National		85	64
POL 400 hui	49	49	49
No contract applicable		260	295
DVA – Protected persons programme	Pro rata - MOJ	25	39
Individual counseling			32

Residential services have seen a decrease, largely due to women remaining in residence for longer. This can be attributed to the lack of housing in the area, longer waits for Housing New Zealand housing and completion of the Stepping Stones programme; for which women tend to remain in residence until they have completed this. This is particularly important for those women who do not have access to transport and otherwise would not be able to complete the programme. This can also be attributed to the complex needs of women and children requiring safe house services and their need for safety and anonymity.

Community social work has been increasingly on the rise over the last four years. The demand for services in the community, where women and children wish to remain in their home environment are critical. Our ability to provide services that are inclusive and meet the needs of families is integral to ensuring that we achieve success in facilitating non violent environments and create inclusive relationships with both victim/s and perpetrator.

Because staff are visible in the community, the perception of Refuge amongst male perpetrators of family violence has shifted and as a result Eastern Refuge receives a number of calls from partners of our clients to seek help and support for their behavior.

The DVA – Protected persons portfolio consistently runs at a financial loss and this can be attributed to the quantity of client groups where the organisation was previously funded to provide programmes through baseline MSD funding for education. This contract has been discontinued by MSD and is no longer part of the national contract under NCIWR. Whilst the Stepping Stones programme is funded through the Ministry of Justice, Eastern Refuge refuses to turn away any participant looking to complete our programme, irrespective of whether or not they currently have a protection order.

It is noted that throughout the process, many of those women who do not come with funding or a protection order, to the Stepping Stones programme, invariably apply for and receive protection orders as a result of their time with the programme, their education and insight into their and their children's safety. Unfortunately the ministry does not pay retrospectively and any funding that might have come from the Ministry is lost at this time. EWR maintains however, that the safety of Women and Children is

paramount and that as long as orders and safety are sought and considered a priority, we have a measureable outcome of success.

Further to this there is a large proportion of clients where there is no contract applicable and whereby Eastern Refuge provide services that are not funded under current funding streams, but where there is still a necessity to provide support services because of the nature and manifestations of abuse. These include support with other services such as support services to children, daycare facilities, child advocacy and liaison and support to other services which current client groups might be utilizing.

The inception of three counselors has seen a number of clients undertake specific Domestic Violence counseling within the agency. This is a non funded, yet free service, provided voluntarily by qualified members of the Eastern Refuge collective, who are practicing counselors within the community. They access Eastern Refuge resources and provide an essential service to both community and residential clients to which feedback has been positive and demand is growing. It would be our aim to ensure that we could in future employ two counselors on staff and will be working toward this in the coming strategic planning process.

Eastern Refuge has retained the Family Safety Team contract with Police National Headquarters for the coming financial year and as yet there are no assurances from Government that this project will continue post 2013. It is the opinion of management however, that this contract will continue and that the investigation of new reporting processes and data collection procedures will ensure that the overall future of the team appears secure. Eastern Refuge have held this contract since its inception to Counties Manukau and consider the retention of this contract, where other agencies throughout the country have been unable to, as a clear measure of success for both our management and those staff employed under the project.

Men's caucus continues to develop their structures and meet on a regular basis. The process for their development has been slow, as funding sources are limited. At this point in time they have three key areas in which they will be developing; the inception of a men's specific respite and clinical service, an 0800 number to support men in the community, the development of a facilitator and programme database for use throughout the wider Auckland area and ensure that all cultural groups have access to effective and mana enhancing programmes that propagate non violence and non violent methodologies.

It has been the experience of EWR that a large proportion of our women return to their abusive partner. This is the time when violence within families often increases in its intensity, bringing the family full circle back into the cycle of violence. It is our objective to ensure that perpetrators of violence can also seek to be empowered, educated, challenged and given the opportunity to make positive change in support of their family's long term safety and in effect breaking the cycle for future generations

Men's Caucus seeks to change this by providing men with the same opportunities that women seeking refuge services have been afforded over the last 37 years, with the main focus being about changing behaviors and providing effective wrap around services that are complimentary to those of Women's Refuge, whilst being effectively monitored by the organisation as a whole.

Sadly, Men's Caucus lost one of its founding members this year. Riki Paniora was instrumental in the inception of the caucus and vision. Through his conversations with the Operations Manager, the name of Hiko te Korero, was derived and for this it is important that the entire organisation celebrate his life and his knowledge. Riki was a lecturer at MIT, a community leader, an expert in family violence prevention and a husband and father. He will be sadly missed yet his legacy will live on through his whanau, his work, his commitment to the vision of the caucus and his wisdom and humble, unassuming manner.

The funding environment has been a difficult one, with less money being able to be accessed by community organisations, particularly from usual funding sources and the philanthropic trusts, as the demand throughout the sector has increased with need right across the sector.

Despite this, Eastern Refuge should be able to alleviate the current financial deficit in the coming year and break even by the end of 2013. This does not however, account for any increases in salaries to staff and other funding sources will have to be identified and accessed in order to provide any increases to staff. This is planned for the 2012/2013 financial year.

Again, it is a privilege to work for an organisation that values its staff and volunteers and is committed to creating effective social change for the communities we serve based on what the community tells us they want from our service.

Mauri Ora,

Rhonda Cox-Nissen  
Operations Manager  
Eastern Refuge Society Incorporated.