

**Senior Counsellor / Team Leader report to AGM
1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016**

Once again it is my pleasure to be reporting to you about the last financial year at Grief Support Services. I acknowledge the commitment and skills our Board Members Peter, Debbie, Megan (since retired), Bronwyn, Eddie, Jill and Colleen bring to steer GSS in a direction to meet our community's needs. Thank you to our staff Ali, Denise, Paul, Denise, Te Aomarama, Michelle and Kent, all of whom generously share their time, skills, energy, passion, dedication and good humour, day to day, in our Service and with the people who come through our door. Thanks also to our student counsellors, currently Steve and Anna, for their commitment and all they bring to our Service and clients.

Client numbers

We had 369 new clients in this period, a total of 478 clients (new clients plus those continuing from the previous year). 1714 sessions were attended in this period.

	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Sessions	1793	1769	1767	1714
First sessions	375	400	399	369

The decline in first sessions happened during the second half of the financial year. During this period, due to less volunteer hours, leave and some clients not wanting to work with a student there were more referrals that didn't translate to first sessions than usual. During this time our waiting list grew and some clients had quite long waits for an appointment. We now have two more volunteers and the waiting list is at a more appropriate level. Overall the average wait time was 12.5 days.

The average number of sessions attended is 4.6.

Non attended sessions: 5% (6% 14/15); nonattendance with less than 24 hours' notice: 10% (10% 14/15) and rescheduled appointments 10% (8% 14/15). We are now texting appointment reminders to clients two days before their appointment so we have enough warning of non-attendance to be able to offer the appointment to someone else.

54% (51% 14/15) of clients were seen by staff, 23% (25% 14/15) by volunteers and 23% (24% 14/15) were seen by students.

Feedback from clients about their experience of GSS continues to be very encouraging.

Staff and volunteers

Congratulations to Ali who has now graduated with her Bachelor of Counselling. Ali continues to work three days per week and as well as her work with adults she also works with the children who come to our Service. While there have been some changes to our volunteer hours during this period Paul Julian and Denise Panther continue as part of our team. Karley Martyn left to pursue paid employment and Te Aomarama Robinson,

Michelle Burling and Kent Smith have joined us. Te Aomarama and Michelle have both had placements here and return as counselling graduates. Kent comes from Wellington and brings a wealth of experience. Kent is working in Katikati and Te Aomarama is working mostly in Te Puke. This means less travel for me and more continuity of support in these areas.

Megan Gamble continues to volunteer in the capacity of Co-facilitator of the After Suicide Support Group. Megan has also organised the Memorial Service for the last few years and the 2015 Service was her last. She will support Liz Temperton into the role for the 2016 Service. We are most grateful to Megan for bringing these Services together for our clients.

Sue Clemens also spent some time promoting Grief Support Services and our 'Bereavement in the Workplace' brochure during contact with the business community during this period.

Counsellors in training

Our current students are Anna Ormsby (BTI) and Steve Gore (U of Waikato). Jenny Watson (BTI), Te Aomarama Robinson (BTI) and Arthur Bruce (U of Waikato) had placements during this period.

After Suicide Support

Megan and I have changed the format of our group from a closed, 8 week group, to an open group that meets once per month. We have been offering the monthly, evening, meeting since April and 5 – 6 people have been attending (9 different people). We will also be offering a daytime group in the near future. We will be offering the WAVES programme later this year. This is the programme that the DHB require us to deliver. It is an 8- week, closed group with a specific educative component.

Megan organised her third, and our sixth, Memorial Service for World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10. Due to the rain it was postponed for a week and, for the first time, was held indoors. Legacy Funeral Services kindly allowed us to use their facilities. The speakers were Rangi Ahipene, Ellis Bryers and David Hurn. As well as these speakers Megan organised members from the Tauranga acoustic guitar club to play and a Fire Poi dancer to perform as balloons were released.

Points of interest

- DHB contract: Renewed for two years, to 31 December 2017, with FamilyLink remaining as the contractee.
- NGO ALLIANCE – Allied Potential Group. Representatives from Turning Point Trust, Family Link, LINC, Dalcum, Vincent House and Grief Support Services have been meeting regularly to lay the foundations for the alliance. Initially this will be an umbrella organisation that will facilitate the DHB contracts. There is potential, in the future to share backroom functions and for negotiating further contracts.
- I represent Grief Support Services on the Suicide Prevention Plan Governance Group which is overseen by Maori Planning and Funding, DHB. The group is in its early days and will support the work of a yet to be appointed Suicide Prevention Co-ordinator in taking the plan into the community.

- Bereavement in the work place brochure. This was printed in time for launching during Loss and Grief Awareness week. Elliotts Funeral Service's kindly paid for the design and printing of the brochures.
- Community Awards –Tracy Stockman nominated GSS for the health and wellbeing category of the community awards.
- 'Subsidised' not 'free'. Asking clients if they would like to 'pay it forward' by making a donation has made a significant difference to the value of donations received. They have increased from increased from \$2,818 last year to \$6,411 this year.
- Capability building support. We were successful in an application to the Tindall Foundation for a limited package of capacity-building support and are currently meeting with a consultant to document our strategic plan and work on specific areas of that.
- Change of bank from SBS to ASB
- Xero: We are now doing our own accounting after ATAXZ accountants doing this work, pro bono, for many years. We are most grateful to Alex and his team for the generosity they have shown our Service. We are also doing our own payroll work using 'Thank you' payroll.
- Consult One – Computer software. It has been decided that we will wait until next year before transitioning to this software. The intention is for a smooth start for the 2017/2018 financial year using Consult One

Presentations / participation in expos

- Greerton Lions Club. Re the work of GSS
- Victim Support. Re the work of GSS and making referrals to us.
- BTI new intake of counsellors and social workers. Re GSS and Agency life in general.
- FamilyLink Support Group. Re our Service and facilitated a discussion about 'self-care'.
- Age Concern Tauranga, Men's Health Promotion Expo.
- Health and Wellbeing Expo, Katikati.

Networking and group meetings attend by various staff / volunteers/ board members

- Jenny Steadman, Internal Affairs Community Advisor visited re our Lotteries funding application.
- Bay Trust, Annual Public Meeting.
- Acorn workshop re bequests.
- Acorn Foundation: Presentation to account for the \$4000 we were given by the Acorn Foundation.
- TECT function to acknowledge recipients of their funds.
- WBOP Health Emergency Response Key Stakeholders group meetings.
- Regular monthly meetings with Brian – Family Link.
- PHO Providers quarterly meetings.
- Attendance of the launch of the book "The Tree of Life" by the Heeni Morehu.
- Meeting with Shelley Gilmore, hospital Chaplin.
- Attendance of hui at Te Paamu Marae, putting the spotlight on depression and suicide prevention.

- Strengthening Families Community Network. Speakers from:
 - Plunket
 - Salvation Army
 - Support Net
 - Kidz need Dadz
 - Tga Community Housing Trust
- Meeting with Waipuna Hospice staff Nadine Rogers, Social Worker and Hayley Barnes, Intern Psychologist.
- Conference: 'Getting in front of suicide korero'. Facilitated by the Social Sector Innovation. We set up a static display with brochures and information about GSS.

Training attended by various staff / volunteers / board members

- Ali graduated with her Bachelor of Counselling.
- Cheryl Hemmingson, Team Leader at CYFS presesnted to our July team meeting
- Catherine Buckley from BOP Sexual Assault Services presented to our November team meeting.
- Barbara Buckley, BTI presented to our April team meeting re note taking.
- 'Crafting the questions which make a difference' workshop, facilitated by Dr James Arkwright.
- Understanding Borderline personality disorder, facilitated by Family Link
- Family Therapy workshop which was followed up with three individual sessions with the facilitator, Les Simmonds
- Psychosocial Forum: Tina Richards & Kiera Follas, Field Officers, ME/CFS BOP Support.
- Psychosocial Forum: Colleen Kendrick, Palliative Care Nurse
- Psychosocial forum: Melanie Gilbert De Roos, Waipuna Hospice. Play therapy and working with children.
- Psychosocial forum: Ruth Thomas, Dementia: 'Do the kind thing'
- 'The Social Brain and the Neuroscience of Social Relationships'.
- "Working together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children", facilitated by 'Child Matters'.
- 'NZQA Level 3 Certificate in child protection'.
- Webinar: PTSD following traumatic bereavement in children and young people.
- Jackie Clark, chartered Physiotherapist re natural sensitivities and their relationship to natural tendency to anxiety.
- Resilience and Selfcare for Health Professionals'. Hosted by PONZ (Psychosocial Oncology NZ),
- WAVES facilitator training.
- Workshop for facilitators of after suicide support groups.
- U of Waikato graduate peer supervision group.
- Health and safety legislation update seminar.
- Marketing on a shoestring.

Thanks to all of the members of our Team for your participation and commitment to providing this unique and much needed Service to our community.

Janet Baird

Senior Counsellor / Team Leader