

## Grief Support Services AGM Chair Person's Report 2017-2018

Grief Support Services has had a successful year, building upon the strengths it has in providing counselling services for those suffering from grief and loss.

The Board has worked steadily to implement the strategic and business plans signed off in July last year. A recent review of the plans, conducted in August, showed good progress against many of the objectives. The plan can be found here,

<http://www.griefsupport.org.nz/vdb/document/20> for anyone who would like to read it.

Peter Gibbs retired as Chair Person in January 2018. His legacy lives on in the many hours of work he did for Grief Support and the improved seating in the meeting room.

It is especially pleasing to see the updated web site coming into its own. My thanks to Philip and the team at Moca for the hard work to get the web site looking so nice. We are monitoring hits and most visited pages. There is some good traffic coming to the web site, and visitors are staying to read the content.

There has been extensive work improving the information systems to capture client data and report to the Ministry of Health on our activities. Staff now have tablets to record client information, removing the need for large paper files.

Grief Support Services supports the community through grief counselling. We also hold a contract with the Bay of Plenty DHB to support people affected by suicide and suicidality. An increased government focus on suicide prevention and support following suicide might yield more opportunities for Grief Support Services, in our community.

A lot of preparatory work has been done to collate information on our community needs and resources, led by Yvonne. The coming year will see us systematically connect and build relationships with our funders and service users using the information we have gathered.

Fundraising has been a busy area for us. This year we sought support from the community grants for our services and raised \$140,732. This compares with \$73,960 in 2016-2017. My thanks to Jacqui who oversees this area for us, and Sue, who has the Board responsibility for reporting on fundraising.

An especial thanks to the generous community donors who have supported us throughout the year. The service would not exist without these grants. We are aware there is more demand for funding than there is money to go around, and are grateful we have your support to remain relevant and valued in the community.

Clients are now also asked for a donation to support the services. This year we raised \$3000 less than 2016-2017 from this source. We will continue to ask clients to pay when they are able, so we can provide services to those who cannot afford to pay anything. It is important to us to ensure our services are accessible to all.

Eddie is Board Treasurer. He has spent a lot of time since taking the role to get the books in order and onto Xero. The Board can now place good reliance on the financial reporting of Grief Support Services.

Without the staff of Grief Support, under Janet's leadership there would be no service for our clients. This year we have had some new staff members, students and volunteers. The volunteers are fully qualified counsellors and give their time free. Our volunteers, Dave, Demise and Te Aomarama are an integral part of the Grief Support team. We also have Elizabeth who volunteers in the office on Fridays. Our paid staff, Frank, Karen, Ruth, Jacqui and Denise C keep the service active and busy. Husbands and partners of the staff have also contributed significant help to Grief Support Services over the last year. The support given by all staff, in whatever role, has seen Grief Support Services support 458 people in the 2017-2018 year.

Grief support has been active this year in forming a collaboration with others in the sector. We are members of APG (Allied Potential Group). APG will hold and administer future DHB contracts on behalf of all APG shareholders. This will make working collaboratively with the DHB easier in the future.

I am looking forward to the coming year, which will see us grow and develop more services for the community, using our skills as an accessible, professional and active part of the health sector.

Bronwyn Jackson  
August 2018