

29. UnitingCare West

<i>Chairperson</i>	Peter Fitzpatrick AO
<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	Amanda Hunt
<i>Members</i>	Dr Glenda Campbell-Evans
	Dr Ron Chalmers
	Dr Chris Ford
	Alison McCubbin
	Michael Brady
	Chris Hunt
	Deborah Marshall
	Lisa Fini
	Mark Webb
	Laurel Sellers

I. OVERVIEW

UnitingCare West (UCW) was formed in 2006 as a broad Uniting Church WA multi-functional agency to provide a diverse range of holistic programs and services that support, serve and empower more than 30,000 West Australians every year.

Over the past 12 years, UCW, like many organisations, has evolved to better meet the needs of the people we exist to serve. Since our last Synod Report, the speed of change and transformation both internally at UCW and externally, has accelerated rapidly.

The changes in our environment have included the first stage transition of disability services across to the NDIS under an individualised funding model and the commencement of a State Government Service Priority Review to meet the McGowan government's new funding protocols.

In addition, UCW has initiated a major project to relocate our head office to the Inner City Service Centre (ICSC) in East Perth, including the refurbishment of the office space upstairs and the Tranby Centre on the ground level which supports people experiencing homelessness.

The UCW Board facilitated the purchase of the WA Deaf Society offices which adjoin the current ICSC space, which will accommodate staff in an iconic, purpose-fitted building, where we will proudly be closer to the people we exist to serve.

2. UCW BOARD UPDATE

The UCW Board has again provided great support and direction to the organisation as we navigate the rapidly changing not-for-profit landscape. We pay particular thanks to Board Chairperson Peter Fitzpatrick AO who was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to the community.

Over the past year, there have been a number of changes in the Board structure, with David Thomas (10 years), Ian Jackson (nine years) and Anton Ferreira (four years) leaving the role in late 2017.

In August 2018, Glenda Campbell-Evans steps down after 12 years of service and Chris Ford after 10 years. We sincerely thank these UnitingCare West Board members for their significant contributions to the good governance and oversight of UCW, since our inception as an organisation.

In addition, we want to recognise Laurel Sellers, CEO of Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation, who joined the UCW Board for a short period in 2018.

The UCW Board is keen to ensure that we engage another strong Aboriginal leader as part of our governance structure to bring Indigenous cultural perspectives and wisdom to Board discussions and deliberations.

3. OUR RENEWAL PROCESS

UCW is now adopting a multi focused approach to provide opportunities to make sure that all people achieve the life they deserve.

As a result of this, over the past 12 months, UCW has been in a renewal process that has created a new way of working and redesigned our service ‘directorates’ into integrated and collaborative service pathways. This process has been driven by CEO Amanda Hunt and Deputy CEO Kim Brooklyn, with support from the leadership team.

UCW’s model is focused on providing holistic solutions for the people we serve, in partnership with other providers, and or the community.

Our goal is to transition the existing service areas and program structures to a more collaborative and complementary model of operating where workers are supported to plan and deliver a wider range of services that meet the overall needs of clients.

The 2017–18 year has seen enormous transformation at UCW and the journey will continue as we work towards meeting the objectives of our strong and robust strategic pillars, detailed below.

4. DELIVERING POSITIVE IMPACT

In 2018, UCW created a new Chaplaincy role within the organisation and we formally welcomed Uniting Church Minister, Rev Sophia Lizares to the team at an induction ceremony held in March.

Sophia has provided a ministry of presence among the staff in a time of transition and renewal, including delivery of pastoral care, particularly for people working at Wyn Carr Women’s Services and the Tranby Centre. She also participates in UCW’s Mental Health Working Group and has brought theological perspectives into the drafting of a policy paper on Personal Relationships, Sexuality and Gender Identity.

Our Executive Cultural Architect, Josey Hansen, continues to lead UCW’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as we strive to become as a ‘Stretch’ organisation, implementing longer-term RAP strategies, with defined measurable targets and goals.

Our staff participated in a number of activities over the year, recognising significant events including NAIDOC Week, Sorry Day, Apology Day and National Reconciliation Week. NAIDOC Week events were held at all our service hubs, including head office. The Inner City Service Centre (ICSC) team held a different activity for each day of the week, while at Merriwa an Indigenous-themed mural painted by students at St Stephen’s School was unveiled.

Key fundraising activities in 2017–18 included the Winter Appeal, where UCW raised \$176,454 to ‘Turn on the Lights’ at Tranby Centre to open on Saturday mornings.

The 2018 Winter Appeal saw the launch of the ‘Transform Tranby’ project, to redevelop the centre as a multi-purpose engagement hub to better support people experiencing homelessness. UCW is particularly thankful for the significant funding Uniting Church in the City has provided towards this ambitious long-term project.

During the 2017 Target UnitingCare Christmas Appeal, Uniting Church congregations distributed toys and hampers to families in need in their local communities. Funds were also used for financial counseling and emergency relief services, material assistance and back to school packs for families experiencing hardship.

5. BEING INNOVATIVE AND ADAPTABLE

In November 2017, a partnership was initiated between the Uniting Church WA and UnitingCare West to share people and resources to progress implementation work related to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

UCW has had representation on the Synod Royal Commission Task Group since the Group's inception in 2013, and is committed to working closely with the Synod through the Royal Commission/Safe Church Team. Work being undertaken by the Royal Commission/Safe Church Team at the WA Synod includes:

- Safe Church training to equip congregations to ensure child safety in all religious activities;
- Implementation of the National Child Safe Policy Framework in the WA Synod, and participation in the Church's National Safe Church Framework Implementation Network;
- Fulfilling requests for information from people whose personal records are held in the Uniting Church Archives, including those seeking to make a legal or redress claim;
- Legal and redress claims – administration, research and records management; and
- Integrating the UCW/Mofflyn care leaver records into the Uniting Church Archives to ensure ongoing access to the records throughout the term of the National Redress Scheme and beyond.

In addition, the UCW Child Safe Working Group was established in May 2017 to engage with the implementation of the Uniting Church's Child Safe Policy Framework. In that time, it has:

- Crafted UCW's Child Safety Statement – *“UnitingCare West is committed to providing a nurturing environment where all children feel safe, valued and heard”*;
- Responded to the Uniting Church National Task Group's 2017 audit process to monitor implementation of the National Child Safe Policy Framework within UCW; and
- Reviewed UCW's child safe policies and procedures.

UCW's Board Chair will make a public commitment to child safety at UCW's Annual Public Meeting on 18 September 2018, and the board will receive regular reports on the child safety implementation work being progressed within UCW.

UCW has also committed to providing early intervention services to Kinship Connections Aboriginal Corporation, which works to secure better futures for Aboriginal children, their families and the community.

There have been changes to UCW's Food Rescue operation in 2018, with the supermarket collection part of the service going across to SecondBite, which already operates in other states and has Coles as a major partner.

UCW's Cargo Carts program, which collects unsold food from Perth CBD cafes for delivery to the Tranby Centre, remains with UCW and is operated in collaboration with volunteer partners.

6. BEING SEEN AND HEARD

UCW continues to partner with a number of community service organisations to make a collective difference in the lives of those most vulnerable in our community.

UCW has been active on the speaking circuit, presenting at eight national conferences over the past year, with a focus on mental health, families and homelessness.

CEO Amanda Hunt and Deputy CEO Kim Brooklyn have been influential in the child protection sphere, participating in a number of round table meetings and forums, along with working groups to review and amend statewide policy and service standards.

UCW played a significant role in the founding and launch of the #EndHomelessnessWA campaign in early 2018, providing strategic input into the development of a 10-year strategy to end homelessness.

In May 2018, UCW welcomed LotteryWest funding for the 100 Families project, which is a collaboration between nine community sector organisations. The project aims to develop a comprehensive evidence base of the causes and structure of entrenched disadvantage in WA and what needs to be done differently to give families doing it tough a hand up.

Uniting Church Schools:

In 2018, UCW engaged the Uniting Church Schools for the Annual Student Forum 'Connection to Culture'. ICEA (youth reconciliation education) facilitated a cultural competency workshop, the 'Trump Takeover', which gave over 80 students and teachers a very different perspective on the historical inadequacies of how the Government has treated Australia's first people.

UCW's Community Connections team also hosted the inaugural Community Connections Forum in 2018. It was the first time that UCW had invited all of its stakeholders to participate in a conversation about moving forward and developing ideas for connecting our communities.

7. BEING EFFICIENT AND PERFORMANCE FOCUSED:

With UCW's renewal well underway, we are continuously considering how we can improve and realign our systems, challenging our teams to make sure that we have an engaged and high performing workforce that delivers the best possible services to those we serve.

The year ahead will demonstrate UCW's commitment to be present in the lives of those experiencing vulnerability in our community. The relocation project to be close to our Tranby Engagement Hub in Aberdeen Street will remind us every day of why UCW exists – to strengthen opportunities for children, individuals and communities to be resilient and connected.

Alongside the Uniting Church WA, UnitingCare West will have the opportunity to truly embody our unique value statements:

- We walk with people experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage
- We listen intently, care deeply, and passionately respond to individual and community need
- We amplify the voices of people who would not otherwise be heard
- We provide innovative service responses tailored to individual needs, service gaps, and the priorities of communities and government
- We work in partnership with other organisations and communities to leverage resources and maximise our collective impact
- We help people move from isolation to connection and contribution.

These actions will help guide us to a future with a thriving community, with all people having a life of hope, belonging and purpose.

Peter Fitzpatrick AO

board@unitingcarewest.org.au

Amanda Hunt

amanda.hunt@unitingcarewest.org.au