

QPASTT ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013

THE QPASTT LOGO



The QPASTT logo portrays the recovery process from torture and trauma:

- The rock on which the tree is growing represents the hardship survivors have experienced, both before and sometimes after migration;
- The tree represents the process of regrowth for the individual, families and communities. This is initially very painful but often culminates with flowering again in a new environment;
- The branches of the tree are reaching out and re-connecting with others, which in turn, if there is a positive response, feeds the tree's growth.

The Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) provides flexible and culturally sensitive services to promote the health and wellbeing of people who have been tortured or who have suffered refugee related trauma prior to migrating to Australia.

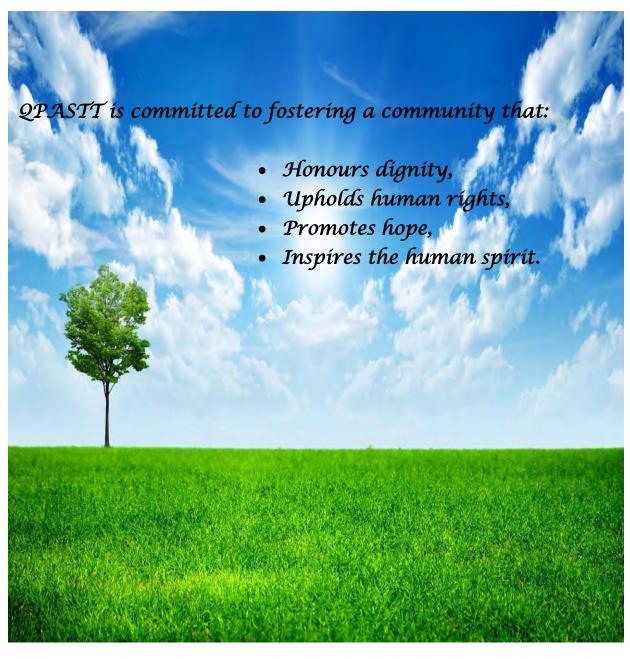
QPASTT aims to provide services which address the range of physical, psychological and social needs that survivors of torture and trauma have. Our services are free and confidential.

QPASTT is a not for profit community organisation working across Queensland.

QPASTT is managed by a committee drawn from refugee communities, human rights workers, and health and welfare workers who have experience in providing services to people of refugee background.

QPASTT is politically-neutral and non-denominational.

THE QPASTT VISION





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THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

We would like to thank the Management Committee for their hard work and dedication to the governance of QPASTT.

KEITHIA WILSON PRESIDENT / EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

Luis Melgar Treasurer / Executive Committee Member

LYNDALL KLEINSCHMIDT SECRETARY/ EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

ROBIN LONERGAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

GREG BLACKBURN COMMITTEE MEMBER (PART)

NICK MEINHOLD COMMITTEE MEMBER (PART)

DAVID YOHAN COMMITTEE MEMBER

ELIJAH BOUL COMMITTEE MEMBER

SHARON ORAPELENG COMMITTEE MEMBER

FRASER POWER COMMITTEE MEMBER (PART)

PAM DOUGLAS COMMITTEE MEMBER (PART)



THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

TRACY WORRALL **DIRECTOR**

MEGAN LEITZ DIRECT SERVICES MANAGER

LOIS WHITEMAN CLINICAL SERVICES MANAGER

LIZ GORDON CLINICAL SERVICES MANAGER

MANAGER OF FINANCE, PEOPLE & SYSTEMS VICKIE PASTELLAS

VALDA CARRINGTON CO-ORDINATOR, REGIONAL SERVICES TEAM

TERRI MCDONALD CO-ORDINATOR, COMMUNITIES TEAM

NAOMI KIKKAWA CO-ORDINATOR, CHILDREN & YOUTH TEAM

VEDRANA JOVCIC CO-ORDINATOR, COUNSELLING SERVICES TEAM

ANGIE HOSKIN

(ACTING)

(ON LEAVE)

KATHARINE KNOETZE CO-ORDINATOR, ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT TEAM

CO-ORDINATOR, ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT TEAM





THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2012/2013 President's Report on behalf of the Management Committee of QPASTT.

It is a privilege to be part of the wonderful organisation that is QPASTT and to witness the positive contribution that this service makes to the lives of people who have fled persecution and war to seek safety in Australia. Refugees and asylum seekers do not choose to leave their country, do not choose where they are settled and may never be able to return. They have experienced oppression, displacement, torture and extreme trauma which have had a profound and long term impact on health and wellbeing. However their resilience in surviving and making it to Australia demonstrates their strength and capacity to overcome such experiences. By providing appropriate and timely support and recovery focused services, people go on to positively contribute not just to the Australian community but also to Australian workplaces and the economy.

As of the end of 2012, more than 45.2 million people were forcibly displaced across the world, the largest number in almost 20 years. These figures include 15.4 million refugees; 937,000 asylum seekers; and 28.8 million internally displaced people (those forced to find refuge within the borders of their own countries). Globally, 7.6 million people fled their homes in 2012, of whom 1.1 million were refugees and 6.5 million internally displaced. This is equivalent to a new refugee or internally displaced person every 4.1 seconds (UNHCR data)

Of these people, 48% of the refugee population in 2012 were female and 46% children below 18 years. A record 21,300 asylum applications submitted during 2012 were from children unaccompanied or separated from their parents. Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia were the three major source countries of refugees in 2012 (UNHCR).

Australia receives less than .14% of those people seeking assistance across the world, yet it absorbs a disproportionate amount of negative media attention. Australia is a diverse multicultural community and Australia owes much to people from refugee backgrounds who contribute to the fabric and culture of Australia.

QPASTT remains committed to supporting individuals, families and communities from refugee backgrounds, and in particular survivors of torture and trauma. QPASTT, along with other FASSTT sister services in the other States, are funded as part of Australia's commitment to the International Convention against Torture and as such provide recovery

and rehabilitation services to survivors. We do this within culturally sensitive frameworks and our staff group reflects the cultural diversity of our client groups.

This has been my 7th year as President and as I reflect on the last seven years I am inspired by the commitment and energy of those around me, clients, staff and other committee members. I would like to acknowledge the support and dedication of all the management committee members as we have moved through the year: Luis Melgar, Lyndall Kleinschmidt, Robin Lonergan, David Yohan and Elijah Boul, Greg Blackburn and Nick Meinhold. During the year both Greg and Nick had to resign and have been replaced by Fraser Power and Pam Douglas. Together, they form a committed group of people from a diverse range of backgrounds, skills and experience

Since 2010 QPASTT has grown from a staff of less than 30 to now more than 60; from a budget of less than \$3 million to over \$6 million. The expansion of the humanitarian program to 20,000 along with the number of asylum seekers currently in Queensland has led to an increase in demand for services along with an increase in the level and complexity of client presentations. This will continue to provide challenges in the new year and I have no doubt that QPASTT will continue to meet these challenges with professionalism and inspiration.

In 2012/2013, QPASTT saw over 2000 individual clients, and ran more than 48 sets of groups, totalling over 545 group sessions. Clients came from over 68 different countries of origin and services were provided in 53 different languages. Services were provided in 10 different locations throughout Queensland, including:

- Weipa (Detention)
- Cairns
- Townsville
- Rockhampton
- Toowoomba
- Gatton
- Gold Coast
- Logan
- Goodna
- Brisbane.





It is the staff of QPASTT that makes the organisation such a successful and dynamic organisation. I would like to thank them all, their dedication and expertise cannot be understated and is greatly appreciated. QPASTT has a diverse and skilled, multicultural staff base with staff coming from more than 32 different ethnic communities. The Committee appreciates the extraordinary efforts of all staff in contributing to the work of the organisation. To staff who have moved on during the year, your contribution was appreciated and I wish you the best in your new endeavours. To staff who have joined the organisation in the last year, I welcome you and hope you enjoy your time at QPASTT – you will find the organisation to be welcoming and supportive.

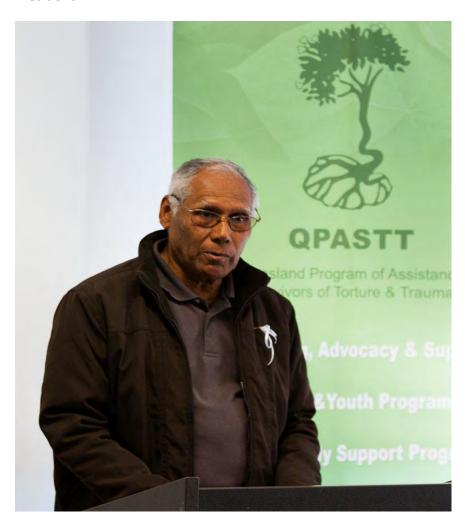
I would particularly like to thank the management staff including the Director, Tracy Worrall, the Team Co-ordinators, Vedrana Jovcic, Namoi Kikkawa, Katharine Knoetze, Terri

McDonald, Valda Carrington and Angie Hoskin and the Senior Managers, Lois Whiteman and Liz Gordon, Clinical Service Managers; Megan Leitz, Direct Services Manager and Vickie Pastellas, Manager of Finance, People and Systems for their hard work, leadership and support. They work extremely hard under challenging circumstances and provide strong inspirational leadership.

Finally to the Committee - you have all been a pleasure to work with and I look forward to working with you all again next year. I would particularly like to thank the community members on the management committee from El Salvador, Ethiopia, Sudan and the Queensland African Communities Association. These people help to keep us connected to the issues of our refugee families and play a vital role in ensuring that QPASTT remains responsive and relevant to the refugee families, individuals and communities.

Finally on behalf of QPASTT I would like to thank members of the communities with whom we work in partnership. We appreciate the involvement of community leaders and members in our service, and without their participation in the design of our services we would not be as effective. We look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Professor Keithia Wilson President



Rafael Pacheco, founding member of QPASTT, at the International Day Against Torture Morning Tea



THE TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for 2012/2013.

The past year has been one of significant growth with QPASTT receiving over \$6 million dollars in funding compared with \$4.5 million the previous year, an increase of 31%. Over the last year QPASTT has remained in a solid financial position and is able to meet all of its financial obligations and commitments.

QPASTT received funding from a range of different sources during the year with the majority coming from Commonwealth Government agencies, followed by the Queensland Government. Our core funding for the work that we undertake with refugee survivors continues to come from the Australian Department of Health and Ageing and the Queensland Health Department.

QPASTT has ended the year in a sound financial position with sufficient reserves to cover outstanding liabilities. The breakdown of expenses is in line with previous years with employee expenses representing the majority of expenditure and other major outlays including interpreters and costs associated with maintaining a regional presence across Queensland.

I would like acknowledge the expertise and skills of Mal Bowatta and the Administration Team in managing the financial affairs of QPASTT. Without their assistance and hard work my job would be much harder. I would also like to thank the members of the Management Committee, the Director and all the staff for their support throughout the year. The efforts of all staff in ensuring that quality services are able to be delivered within budget is appreciated.

I would like to draw your attention to the 2012/2013 Audited Financial Statements prepared by our Auditors, Mobbs and Co. The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and reflect the financial position of the Centre for the year ended 30 June 2012 and I recommend them to you for your approval.

In closing I would like to propose a motion to nominate Mobbs and Co as our Auditors for 2013/2014.

Thank you

Luis Melgar Treasurer





THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

QPASTT is a very special organisation and I feel immensely privileged to be the Director and to work with the communities, clients, staff and management committee members that make the QPASTT community unique.

As an organisation that works with clients across the spectrum of their settlement journey including people who arrive on a humanitarian visa and people seeking asylum (both in detention and in the community), those who are newly arrived and those who have been here for many years, it is a privilege to be part of people's lives through these stages of their journey. The stories of so many of our clients continue to inspire and motivate me.

QPASTT is committed to promoting human rights and advocating for the elimination of torture. Our work with survivors strongly reinforces why all forms of torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment must be prohibited by all governments. QPASTT remains dedicated to the provision of recovery services for refugee survivors of torture and trauma and will continue to advocate for access to appropriate services for our client group. QPASTT has continued to grow rapidly and in the last 12 months this growth has enabled us to increase services to clients both in Brisbane and in regional areas.

This year we have:

- Expanded our team structure and developed a dedicated regional services team in order to provide greater support and focus on our services across Queensland;
- Increased service provision in all locations;
- Expanded our clinical support structures with the addition of two advanced practitioners and additional clinical support hours;
- Employed a dedicated training coordinator; and
- Opened a QPASTT office in Logan.

However, this growth has also brought challenges:

- Increased capacity has also brought increased demand and this will be difficult to manage if or when capacity retracts;
- We are at maximum capacity operationally, both in terms of space, systems and managerially but reluctant to expand these areas in the face of possible retraction of resources;
- Planning for ongoing service delivery and demand is inhibited by fast growth and rapid decrease in resources.

In facing these challenges, the organisation has had to be flexible and adaptable as it strives to meet changes. We are aware of the challenges and stresses staff face in working in this area and we thank them for their dedication and commitment to doing this. I am proud of the professionalism, commitment and flexibility shown by staff as the organisation maintains a high level of professional services to clients. I thank staff for their willingness to

undertake increasingly complex and challenging work and their patience and commitment to the organisation as we move through these changes.

The Senior Management Team at QPASTT has always been incredibly dedicated and hardworking and this year has been no different. Lois, Megan, Vickie and Liz you have provided a high level of leadership, direction and support to the organisation and without you the organisation would not be able to maintain the depth and professionalism of its service delivery to clients. I thank you for your knowledge, support and care, not only of the organisation but also for me personally.

The management team at QPASTT is comprised of senior managers and team co-ordinators – all hard working and committed leaders. This team tackles issues facing QPASTT with robust debate, humour and patience. While this may not always be comfortable it is always appreciated. I would like to thank you all, without your support and input this position would be much more difficult.

This year we have also taken up the role of supporting the National FASSTT Co-ordinator and it has been a pleasure to welcome Paula Peterson back to QPASTT in this role. QPASTT is actively involved in the National FASSTT Network and we have been happy to host the Co-ordinator role within the Woolloongabba office. It is lovely to have Paula back in the agency and her knowledge and skills in supporting the National FASSTT Network are greatly appreciated.

Finally I would also like to thank the members of the Management Committee. It is easy to undervalue the contribution provided by Management Committee members to organisations, but the willingness of QPASTT's Management Committee members to contribute of their time and skills is very much appreciated. They are a wonderful group of committed, hardworking and caring people who have supported me and the organisation throughout the year. Their role in ensuring the organisation is well governed cannot be underestimated.

As a service primarily concerned with supporting people and communities to settle, I would like to thank our clients and the community we work with for their ongoing support. This is a vital, vibrant and compelling area of work and your contribution to it is as important as it is appreciated.

Tracy Worrall Director



THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST TORTURE MORNING TEA



... together, we can advocate for appropriate, holistic rehabilitation for torture victims.

A morning tea was organised at QPASTT on the 26th June in acknowledgement of the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

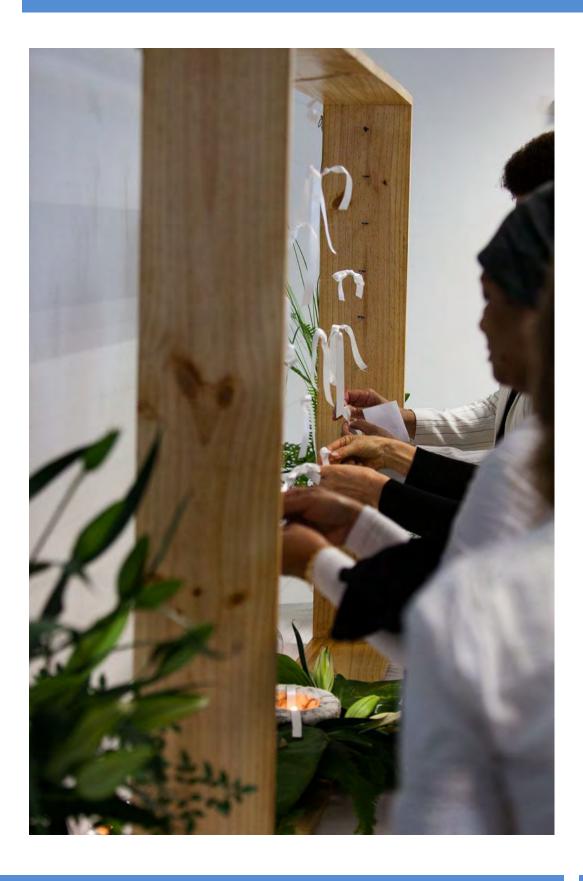
The Right to Rehabilitation was the theme for the 2013 campaign. In coming together at QPASTT and standing united on this significant day, we wanted to send a strong message of solidarity, and a potent reminder that torture is a cruel violation of human rights. On the day, there was a strong sense of hope as everyone joined in honouring these victims, to show that they are not alone, and to together renew our mission to work for a better future, for a world without torture.

Joining us for this memorable event was a number of dignitaries, including Her Excellency the Governor, Penelope Wensley. At the ceremony, two IDAT 2013 posters were launched by Rafael Pacheco, there was a poetry reading by Magdalena Kuwang, a performance by musicians Aleathea Monsour and Simon Monsour, of the "Scattered People" (Refugee) Choir and a presentation by QPASTT staff of a message distributed globally by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), addressing the 2013 International Day theme of rehabilitation for torture survivors.

A central part of the occasion was the ceremonial tying of a white ribbon onto a frame by all guests and QPASTT staff, each ribbon representing a message of hope for a better, more humane future for all.



THE INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST TORTURE MORNING TEA



When Mrs N from Iran first attended the group activity, she dressed very plainly, was very quiet, withdrawn and reluctant to share her experiences with the group or for her son to leave her side.

At the end of 9 weeks, she presented as outgoing, was wearing make-up, sophisticated clothing and had her hair plaited in long hair extensions which completely transformed her appearance. She had also begun to dress her son in colourful bright clothing, and her son's mood was noticeably more extraverted. She engaged fully in activities and has started inviting others so they can have the same experience.

She has shared that she feels more confident and trusting and although she has had a recent death in the family, she feels more supported and told her counsellor "it is essential I continue to attend the group during this time of difficulty." Through the activities that we have organised in Women's Space, Mrs N has identified a number of skills she can share with the group, including music and singing.

LIVES CHANGED ...

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT GIRLS' GROUP?

- You don't have to be scared to talk here.
- Everyone is happy, friendly, kind and respectful.
- I learned about being myself and not being affected by what I see on TV
- There is community with each other and no judgment.
- All treated equally, doesn't matter the background.







THE CLINICAL SERVICES REPORT

"That which is to give light must endure burning" Victor Frankel (1969)

The Clinical Service Managers are responsible for ensuring that the organisation has strong clinical frameworks and clinical governance arrangements. QPASTT has a commitment to the ongoing development of the skills, knowledge and dedication of workers so that they are best able to support our clients in their recovery from experiences of torture and trauma. The Clinical Service Managers endeavour to encourage this by participating in training development and delivery, policy and resource development and the provision of professional supervision.

This year saw the continuation of Lois Whiteman as Clinical Services Manager and the return of Liz Gordon from maternity leave at the beginning of 2013 in the other Clinical Services Management position which had been held by Kristy Date and Meg Leitz in the interim.

Under the organisational restructure this year the Clinical Services Managers have also become responsible for the development and management of the two newly created Advanced Practitioner (Supervision) positions.

Training

An important opportunity provided to staff at QPASTT are the 3 offline weeks held each year allowing time sequestered away from direct service delivery to focus on team building, strategic planning and internal professional development and staff training. With the assistance of the Direct Services Manager, Meg Leitz, the Clinical Services Managers organised the following training:

- The Impacts of Detention Guy Coffey, Foundation House
- Attachment and Building Relationships
- Pain Management Dr Symon McCallum, & Michael Dean, Qld Gov't
- Working with Aggressive Clients Kent Smith
- Personal Safety Workshop SDVMA
- * Trauma and the Avoidant Client Dr Robert Muller
- Neurobiology of the Adolescent Brain



The Clinical Service Managers also developed and delivered the following training:

- Clinical Induction Training. This involves routinely delivering a half day induction training to new staff and students in relation to topics such as the refugee experience, the core components of the trauma reaction, ambiguous loss, cross cultural frameworks and the recovery model. Our aim is that this training will ensure that staff start their work with a solid grounding in our key frameworks.
- Assessment: Speaking the Same Language. The development of this training involved a quality review of all counsellor/advocate assessment reports to determine areas of strength and weakness in relation to client assessment, report writing and data collection. This information provided the foundation for feedback into the quality of these processes and the development of training to further strengthen the assessment process and our contribution to the Forum of Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (FASSTT) national minimum data set. The counsellor/advocates willingness to participate in this process was a strong indicator of their commitment to a high standard of service delivery.
- Therapeutic Dream Workshops. Each off-line week dream workshops have continued to be facilitated by Lois Whiteman to develop skills in the thoughtful and purposeful exploration of client's dream material as an important process towards recovery.

Policy and Resources

- Professional Development: The Professional Development Policy has been reviewed and updated to clarify processes for workers in applying to attend external training opportunities to further develop their skills and knowledge in line with organisational objectives.
- QPASTT Framework and Assessment Guidelines for Family Work: The past year has also seen the development of guidelines for work with families across QPASTT, particularly those workers undertaking family assessments and family counselling. At QPASTT we are challenged to consider the field of family work taking into account trauma and its effects, family and individual life before the war trauma, culture (including the settlement experience) and the influence of other societal systems.
- Supervision Contracts: A process of contracting around professional supervision has been developed and is currently being implemented with staff. This serves the purpose of communicating the importance of supervision while also clarifying expectations and encouraging a collaborative process between supervisors and supervisees.

Clinical Supervision

The provision of regular professional supervision has continued as an integral part of the Clinical Services Managers role. This includes monthly supervision for experienced staff and fortnightly supervision for new staff, as well as ad hoc supervision in relation to crises and critical incidents. With the increase in demand for professional supervision as QPASTT grows it has been with some relief that the two Senior Practitioners (Supervision) commenced in their roles in May, 2013. Kali Lohman and Kristy Date were successful in applying for these positions with Nadine Littledale, in her capacity as a consultant, filling in for Kristy during her maternity leave. These positions involve an expansion of their

counsellor/advocate roles to include a component of professional supervision provision. This recognises the high quality of these practitioners' clinical work with clients and provides an opportunity for their skill development in the area of professional supervision at QPASTT. The Clinical Services Managers will continue to provide individual supervision to staff while also supporting and encouraging the development of the Senior Practitioners in the supervisory component of their work.

Monthly group supervision is also held for the Asylum Seeker Team by Nadine Littledale and for people working with families. Paul Gibney continues to provide bi-monthly supervision on adult and family cases and Libby Moreton provides bi-monthly supervision for staff working with children and young people.

Liz Gordon and Lois Whiteman, Clinical Services Managers





THE DIRECT SERVICES REPORT

As the Direct Services Manager, my role is to provide service delivery governance to help maximize client outcomes across the organisation.

Over this past year our focus in the Management Team has been to develop a response to an increase in demand for services. We have responded to this increase in two major ways.

The first way we responded to the demand was to increase the number of positions and also shift the existing team structures to position complementary programs together and to place workers who share similar client groups or common service delivery challenges in the same teams.

We shifted the Counselling Services Team to provide long-term torture and trauma services solely for adults and families through our PASTT program and early intervention and parenting with families through our POUCH program. We shifted the Communities Team to emphasize capacity building, community development and mental health respite. The team works within the PASTT program, CAMS and RESP-ECCT programs.

The Children and Youth Team has remained relatively the same as it also contains a component of the PASTT program, but torture and trauma services are provided exclusively to children and young people up to the age of 24. The Children and Youth Team also continues to provide services within our National Suicide Prevention Program, UCAN2, Homework Club, Youth Voice, and our YSC program, which is finishing in December 2013. The Asylum Seeker Support Team has retained the original service delivery structure, but the number of Counsellor/Advocates has increased considerably.

The most considerable change to the teams has been the addition of a regional services team. This came out of the need for a Logan-based office to provide more accessible services to the Logan area and for regional workers to support each other whilst providing services in the regions. The programs we are currently able to provide in the regional areas are primarily our core PASTT program and counselling for people seeking asylum.

The second major way we have responded to this year's increase in demand for services has been to provide more group work. This strategy has been useful for reducing waitlists and to allow people to connect with others who have had like experiences or who are in similar circumstances. Each of the five teams has been designing and delivering groups through a variety of different approaches. The group work has included social groups, psychoeducational groups and therapeutic groups to suit various ages, genders and visa types.

On a final note, I would like to mention a highlight this past year for myself and the Coordinators. QPASTT offered us an opportunity to participate in several Team Development Workshops as well as individual management and leadership skills development sessions with Peter Forday. In February we began working with Peter by looking at leadership styles, building our teams' capacity and performance and strategies for managing opportunities and challenges. We then worked with Peter individually on how to hone our individual strengths, how to manage change within our teams and within the organisation and how to manage and contain our workloads, workflow and stress. Our work with Peter Forday came at the ideal time to help us develop the skills and reassurance we needed to tackle the challenges we have faced over this past year.

Megan Leitz Direct Services Manager





QPASTT OPERATIONS & THE ADMINISTRATION TEAM

The year has passed in a whirl of activity.

The overall increase in staffing has meant that the Administration team has had to provide operational support for more people. This translates to more equipment and resources as well as the need for more work stations. Sometimes it's hard to find the space, but the team has become quite adept at creative space management, and so far, new staff are always accommodated and welcomed. From the point of view of technical assistance, our IT Consultant, Peter Fletcher, works hard to make sure QPASTT systems are operating optimally, that staff needs are met and that our systems are never compromised.

The increase in staff has also put a strain on cars and counselling rooms in Brisbane. This year, we have instigated an electronic room booking system to replace the original paper version. This has streamlined the process and made things easier in terms of staff time. Car bookings are to follow which will allow Counsellors to simultaneously book rooms and cars for appointments. So watch this space.

Operationally, a big achievement has been the fit out of the new QPASTT premises at Logan. This has involved organising the necessary systems and equipment, but has also required the space to be furnished in such a way as to make it inviting. The premises have now been up and running for a number of months and both clients and staff are enjoying its relaxed ambience despite the fact that it is getting busier by the day.

Much of the successful day to day running of an organisation of this size is reliant on proper processes and protocols being in place, and from an operations perspective, a concerted effort has been made to review and update policies, and develop new ones to meet our evolving current reality. There are also a number of administrative requirements under agreements between the funding bodies and this organisation. Recently, one of these requirements has been to create a suite of documents that addresses organisational risk. The creation of documents like a risk management strategy, disaster recovery plan and business continuity plan make good sense in terms of forward planning and management in an uncertain world.

This year we have seen the Administration Team expand to accommodate three new members. We welcomed Alex Burmester as Information & Systems Officer in January, Rhonda Pundi joined us in the role of Administration & Finance Officer in April and our latest recruit is Laks Jambulingan who is the Administrative Officer at our Logan office. Earlier in the year, we also said good bye to one Administration Team member, Gloria Ortez. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

As is often the case, the admin workload has expanded to fill the available roles, so everyone in the team is very busy with the daily administration of a range of tasks which support the Counsellors and managers in their important work at QPASTT. The members of the Admin team are the first point of contact for clients, and they are all very good at

responding to client needs compassionately and respectfully, often in the midst of competing demands on their time. I would like to formally thank the team — that is, our newer members, along with Mal, Saira, Jacki and Marcela - for their hard work and dedication throughout the past year. The team works very well together and there is a real connection between them which creates a wonderful working environment.

Vickie Pastellas Manager of Finance, People & Systems



QPASTT OPENS ITS DOORS IN LOGAN

When QPASTT decided to open its doors in Logan, we correctly predicted that the move would be welcomed by many in our client group.



Conveniently located in the middle of Logan Central and close to the train line, staff and clients are enjoying the flexibility our new office provides in terms of service provision.

Logan is home to more than 280,000 people from more than 185 different cultures. 72,618 people living in Logan City were born overseas and 21% arrived in Australia within the last 5 years. Logan is also a very young city with around 50 per cent of residents aged 30 or younger. This adds energy and enthusiasm to the diverse community and generates a real vibrancy.

The QPASTT office became fully operational in March of this year and is increasingly busy. Currently, four permanent staff are based there: the Coordinator of Regional Services, two Counsellor/Advocates and one Administrative Support Officer. The office is also used regularly by Counsellor/Advocates, who are based in the Brisbane office, as a convenient place to see clients.

The Logan office has provided QPASTT with a greater presence in the area. It has allowed QPASTT to continue to assess the needs of clients who are based outside of the Brisbane area, allowing us to work collaboratively with other services in the area to ensure that clients receive the necessary support which will ease their transition into a new life.

According to Valda Carrington, the Coordinator of Regional Services, "Clients are enjoying the relaxed ambience of the Logan office. They find it much more accessible because many of them actually live close by."







THE COUNSELLING SERVICES TEAM

The Counselling Services Team provides psychological support including counselling, advocacy and psycho education for people who have experienced torture and/or trauma as part of their refugee experience.

This year we continued to support clients across Brisbane primarily from our Woolloongabba office but also from our outreach locations in Goodna, the Gold Coast and Logan. Due to increased demand for our service in those areas we have established a full time office in Logan with at least 4 staff based there on any one day. We have also increased our outreach visits to Goodna and the Gold Coast to once a week.

Predominantly as a way of managing our waitlists, we have run a large number of groups with great success. We were once again part of the X Men, Women's Space and Rohingyan groups run in partnership with the RES-PECCT Program.



Additionally, we ran a Women's Fellowship group in Goodna. This group was a thirteen-session program, of three hour stand-alone topics, adapted according to the needs expressed by the participants and delivered between February and June, 2013. The target group was adult women of African background living in the Goodna-Inala area, who were also on the Counselling Services Team waiting list. The aim of group programs is to create a safe and relaxed environment where sharing and therapeutic work can transpire, establishing and gaining the clients' trust and thus, assisting with recovery from symptoms of PTSD, anxiety and depression. Other benefits also flow from the program – for example,

it assisted in the women's acculturation through their discussion of the cultural and religious differences they encounter. Furthermore, it encouraged a social network for women with similar experiences, which in turn helped with ongoing personal healing, advocacy and social support.



Capacity Building

The capacity building position continued to develop relationships with mainstream services, improve partnerships and establish networks with other agencies. In particular, QPASTT has worked extensively in the last year with Medicare Local, the Mater Hospital and MDA on Refugee Health systems in Queensland. In partnership with QTMHC, QPASTT ran training for MDA to support case managers in their work with people from refugee backgrounds who are highly traumatised. Regular clinics to give advice in relation to referral pathways to MDA and Refugee Health, Logan were also run. Resources were enhanced with a couple of languages added to the Relaxation CD (Tamil and Burmese).

Advocacy

QPASTT has participated in a number of advocacy initiatives including:

- Consultations re the establishment of a Mental Health Commission for Queensland;
- MHiMA consultations on a Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia: Towards Culturally Inclusive Service Delivery;
- Access to Interpreters Working Party Queensland based government and community services;
- Child Protection Commission of Inquiry;
- Submission to the Parliamentary Committee looking at the introduction of a Multicultural Recognition Bill;

- Submission to the Parliamentary Committee reviewing the Queensland Mental Health Act;
- Input into the development of Partners in Recovery (PIR) models for Brisbane North and Brisbane South;
- Feedback in consultation undertaken by the Mental Health Sector in relation to input into the Health and Hospital Boards;
- Queensland Government Consultations on the recommission of services both in the youth sector and in the mental health sector;
- Feedback, in collaboration with other agencies, on the Bilateral Plan for Primary Health Care Services in Queensland.

POUCH Program

The POUCH program offers early intervention family counselling and group work to strengthen family relationships and promote social inclusion. POUCH provides a very important opportunity for families from a refugee background to access specialist, systemic and culturally relevant programs around families and parenting. POUCH effectively supports families to manage the impacts of trauma and cultural transition, promoting their recovery and successful settlement. Across cultures, all parents want their children to be safe and secure with access to education, housing and health care, so they can grow into responsible, respectful citizens.



To effectively respond to families POUCH works in close collaboration with a wide range of government and non-government organizations including schools, Neighborhood Centers, Child Safety, GP's, specialist Child Youth and Mental Health Services, community groups and cultural leaders.

In the last year POUCH has developed and facilitated a number of specialist parenting discussion groups, family fun days and community information sessions for families from Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Burundi, The Congo, Rwanda, South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia and the different ethnic communities from Burma. These groups and information sessions were done in collaboration with The Salvation Army Goodna, Anglicare, Kids-in-Mind and Centrelink. These information sessions provide opportunities for families to consider their new environment and its potential impact on family relationships.

These groups and community information sessions are very well attended, providing a safe place for parents to share ideas, develop skills, ask questions and gain information about Australian resources and systems. These groups, held in neighborhood venues, also provide a way for families to find out how they can participate in and contribute to the local community

Vedrana Jovcic Coordinator





THE COMMUNITIES TEAM

The Communities Team came into being in 2012, comprising Community Development, RESP-ECCT (Respite for Emerging Communities in Cultural Transition) and regional counselling for refugee survivors.

Community Development

Community development is funded through CAMS (Community Action for a Multicultural Society) and PASTT (Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma) and has continued to provide opportunities to refugee communities in Brisbane, Caboolture, Toowoomba and Gatton. A broad range of activities were undertaken including information sessions for communities, capacity building for service providers, linking communities and service providers for consultation and collaboration.

Some of the highlights for this year included:

- Working in collaboration with Communify, Australian Securities and Investments Commission, Home Energy Saver Scheme (HESS), African Seniors and QACC, four money management workshops were organised. These workshops enabled 41 participants on low incomes to better manage their money. Participants mentioned increased awareness of money management and ability to make informed decisions in regard to financial matters.
- Working with the Queensland African Communities Council (QACC) on the development of both their strategic plan and improved communication to its member communities
- Enabling 104 people of refugee backgrounds to participate in 3 major health-related consultations with the Queensland University of Technology, University of Queensland and Medicare Local.
- Developing a Leaders dinner program to enable consultation with Community Leaders which has greatly influenced our next 12 month plan as well as our strategic plan as an organisation. The Leaders have requested more regular dinners and further information sessions for the new financial year.





The RESP-ECCT Program

The RESP-ECCT Program (Respite for Emerging Communities in Cultural Transition) focuses upon supporting individuals and families of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that support a person with mental illness, or children and young people 'at risk' of mental illness and their families.

The program is delivered in partnership with Communify and MDA. Each organisation contributes to the delivery of a flexible service allowing carers, family and community members of the person with a mental health concern to participate. We deliver a range of group activities and intensive support to families who support someone with a mental illness. QPASTT is the lead agency in this consortium.

Through the RESP-ECCT Program, QPASTT has provided intensive support to a number of families and worked with the Counselling Services Team to deliver a number of groups. This has included X-Men (Men's psycho-educational exercise group), Rohingyan Women's Group (wellbeing and recreational group), Girls Group (therapeutic group for young women run in the school holidays) and Women's Space (therapeutic women's group). We have started to also work in partnership with MDA in the delivery of X-Men, adding a new flavour to our group.

Women's Space started in August 2012, providing an art therapy approach to wellness and recovery. This has been very well received and some participants that have been waiting to see a counsellor have found that the group has greatly reduced their symptoms to the extent that they have not required individual counselling.



Regional Counselling

Our regional counselling program has seen growth in our referrals in each of the regional areas and our hours of delivery in each location. We having been working hard with local settlement and asylum seeker programs and have been seeking to build greater connections with local mental health services as changes to funding of local services has impacted health and mental health service delivery.

In Toowoomba we have seen a shift in our work, as the women at risk intake has seen an increasing number of women and their families from Afghanistan. Previously we have seen settlement predominantly from Sudan (North and South) and Congo. QPASTT has worked with our Local Area Coordination partners to create a supportive environment.

Cairns has had a number of people in community detention residing in the region and we worked with the Salvation Army to provide services until the program finished in April 2013. We have also seen a dramatic shift in our local networks which has reflected the local changes to funding.



Rockhampton has seen a change of worker and a greater engagement with our local settlement and asylum seeker services. We have increased our capacity building and networking focus in this area as settlement has increased.

In Townsville we have increased to full time hours as referrals have increased. We are seeing an increasing number of self-referrals as good word of mouth spreads around our work in Townsville.

Some of our highlights have included participating in Walk Together in both Toowoomba and Rockhampton in June for World Refugee week and our Toowoomba counsellor acting as Master of Ceremonies for the launch of "Getting Settled: Women refugees in Australia". We would like to thank our host agencies, MDA (Toowoomba), Centacare (Rockhampton and Townsville) and Uniting Care (Cairns), along with our local regional settlement and asylum seeker services, MDA, TMSG, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Access and Centacare.

Terri McDonald Coordinator







THE ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT TEAM

The Asylum Seeker Support Team provides individual counselling and group work services to asylum seekers living in the community on bridging visas and in community detention, as well as to those detained at Scherger Immigration Detention Centre (Far North Queensland) and the Brisbane Immigration Transit Accommodation (BITA).

Our team expanded over the last 12 months to respond to the rapidly growing need for trauma informed therapeutic support services within this population.

In the Asylum Seeker Support Team, we remain aware of the impact that politics and the media have on the mental health and sense of well-being of our clients. One of the most significant occurrences during the last 12 months has been the Expert Panel Report. While this Report contained many positive recommendations, implications for asylum seekers (such as commencement of offshore processing, halting the lodgement of protection claims and lack of access to family reunification through the Special Humanitarian Program), as well as perceptions generated by this, heightened anxiety and exacerbated the distress of many of our clients.

We have noticed an increase in clients whom we consider to be at chronic elevated risk. We recognise the importance of working collaboratively with our partners in the field in order to provide quality care to this vulnerable population. We continue to provide regular training to case work staff working for Red Cross and Red Cross subcontracted agencies, and in July 2013 we presented on our work with Unaccompanied Minors at the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network's National Forum in Sydney.

Over the last year we have facilitated three series' of group work processes from our Brisbane office. Our weekly "Friday Group" for current and waitlist clients continues to attract large numbers and provides individuals and families living in the community with opportunities for meaningful social engagement, physical activity and, where necessary, incidental counselling. Based on his experience of connectedness within this group, one of our participants has suggested that we "please change the name of QPASTT to House of Hope".





Our other two group processes have been structured therapeutic groups. One developed to support clients detained at the BITA and run from our office at Woolloongabba. The other designed to support women on our waiting list using The Tree of Life to address the following recovery goals:

- To develop empowerment and connection
- To restore attachment and bonds to others who can offer support and care
- To develop meaningful relationships within a social context
- To restore or build hope, trust and self-worth
- To restore dignity and value which includes reducing excessive shame and guilt
- To reduce disturbing or troubling thoughts related to their past traumatic experiences

For all our groups, participants are regularly asked to provide feedback so that we can determine how processes may be adapted and enhanced in order to maximise the benefits for our clients.



At Scherger Immigration Detention Centre this year we have had a constant flow of referrals for torture & trauma counselling. Over this period, our clients have demonstrated a consistent elevated risk level which is exacerbated by the uncertain period residing within this remote detention facility. We have been able to successfully engage clients into group programs including the Tree of Life and Pain Management (in partnership with IHMS). We have also delivered training sessions with on-site key stakeholders (DIAC, IHMS and Serco) around working within a detention setting with asylum seekers who have survived torture and trauma. On the International Day against Torture, QPASTT hosted an awareness-raising morning tea onsite.

Our team would like to recognise the courage of all our clients and the commitment of our partners in the field.

Katharine Knoetze & Angie Hoskin Coordinators





THE REGIONAL SERVICES TEAM

QPASTT provides counselling, advocacy and support services across 6 regions in Queensland including: Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Toowoomba, Logan/Gold Coast and Ipswich.

Demand in all of these regions has continued to grow over the past year.

As a result of this increase QPASTT moved to the creation of a Regional Services Team and the decision to open an office in Logan which is now where the Regional Services Team is based. The office became operational in March 2013 and is getting busier by the day.

The Logan office currently has four permanent staff, the Coordinator of Regional Services, two Counsellor/Advocates and one admin staff member. The office is also used by Counsellor/Advocates who are based in the Brisbane office to see clients in the Logan region.

The Regional Services Team includes all other QPASTT services in regional areas, including Counsellor Advocates based in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Toowoomba. Outreach work to additional locations is also undertaken where appropriate – for example, to Gatton.



All the regional counsellors are based in the offices of other established agencies. This enables them to have their own space to work with clients but also have support from other local agencies. It also enables us to increase the capacity of local services to work with refugee survivors. All Regional Team members work closely with like agencies within their communities in creating awareness and providing support and training to mainstream services to ensure that everyone is working collaboratively for those individuals of a refugee background who have experiences of torture and trauma.



Opening the office in Logan has proved to be a progressive move for QPASTT and enabled the agency to have an increased presence in the area. The office has continued to become busier as more people become aware of the service. The Regional Team will continue to assess the needs of clients who are based outside of the Brisbane area and will work collaboratively with services in the respective areas to ensure that the outcomes for clients are positive and that their journey is supported to ease the fragility of settling into a new life in a new country

Valda Carrington Coordinator





THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH TEAM

The Children and Youth Team provides a variety of services tailored for children and young people.

All programs within the Children and Youth Team aim to deliver a holistic, inclusive service and work collaboratively with key people in the lives of children and young people such as family, guardians, schools, support workers, communities, carers etc. Given the great diversity of experiences amongst the children and young people we work with, there are various programs that aim to engage and offer support in a way that best suits the individual. Some of the programs offered are:

Children's Counselling Program:

This program offers support to children aged 4-12. There are currently two Children's Counsellors providing support in the Brisbane and Logan areas. The counsellors mostly work one on one with the children, but also provide psycho-education and support to families and individuals involved with the child. The counsellors work collaboratively with the schools to create a safe, nurturing environment for the children where trauma recovery can occur. This year one of the Children's Counsellors has successfully run groups at the Australian International Islamic College in Durack, including The Tree of Life which was run in collaboration with SKATTLE Ltd. The aim of the groups is to build the resilience and capacity of the children affected by significant losses and trauma.





Youth Counselling Program:

Youth Counsellors work with 12-24 year olds. There are two Youth Counsellors in the Brisbane area. Like the Children's Counsellors, the Youth Counsellors work systemically with families, the community and schools to support recovery and successful settlement. Youth Counsellors are able to see young people at schools, at home or at the QPASTT offices (Woolloongabba and Logan).

Youth Work Support:

There are two Youth Workers that provide outreach services to a number of schools including Milpera, Woodridge, MacGregor and Kedron State High Schools. The Youth Workers provide student support, referrals to relevant services, family inclusion and liaison between school and families. Youth Workers gain valuable insight in the schools and provide feedback to QPASTT to ensure our services are easily accessible.

Youth Support Coordinator:

At QPASTT, the Youth Support Coordinator (YSC) works with young people from refugee backgrounds at high school who are at risk of disengaging from school or employment pathways. The YSC visits Sunnybank State High School, Nyanda State High School and Coorparoo Secondary College.

School Holiday Program:

School Holiday Activities are an integral part of the Children and Youth Team and they run each school holidays. We aim to provide at least one activity per week during the school break.

These services focus on youth participation, youth engagement, support and community development that promote the safety, growth and wellbeing of young people. The program aims to create opportunities for positive social interaction and social development of local youth and to help promote their mental and physical wellbeing.

In the last year, some of the school holiday activities run were:

- Youth Exposed stop, motion, animation, art and multimedia workshops for young people aged 12-24
- A day of soccer and music with Zorva
- Cinema and Picnic Day
- Glow in the dark bowling
- Stand up paddle boarding
- Three-day camps (boys and girls separately)

Feedback from the Girls Camp 2012:

- "I just want to say to everyone that we all are lovely princesses and we are beautiful in our own ways!!
- "This was a great journey in fact, such a beautiful journey within. The people were great, even though we had our ups and downs, we were all here to enjoy the fun at the end of the day"

Feedback from the Boys Camp 2012:

- "I would like to come again to motivate each other, help each other and make friends."
- "Thanks so much for having a lot of fun, and I'm feeling when I'm with my family when I'm with QPASJJ thanks. ©"

Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Recreational Group:

The purpose of this group is to provide regular recreational activities for Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors. The goals of the group are to increase connectedness and strengthen social skills. The activities also provide the young people with the opportunity to become familiar with various sporting and recreational sites and develop stronger networks in their wider communities.

UCAN2

UCAN2 is a program designed for 18-24 year olds who are completing their English Certificates. The UCAN2 program runs for 16 weeks and focuses on employability skills combined with emotional wellbeing and increasing meaningful connections. A significant component of the program is the volunteer participation. This provides the students with information and insight regarding the broader Australian community.

In the last year, QPASTT ran two UCAN2 programs in partnership with Loganlea TAFE and Southbank Metropolitan Institute of Technology.





Girls' Group

During the year, two workers from the Children and Youth Team, supported by team members from RESP-ECCT, POUCH and a worker from Harmony Place, planned and facilitated the young women and girls groups during the school holidays.

This group was informed by action research principles, culturally safe and relevant practice as well as considering gender issues and addressing issues of justice and equity. Approximately twenty young women attended every session.

The issues identified and addressed included:

- Breaking isolation and connecting with each other
- Self-care and psycho-education about menstruation
- Self-esteem and self-image
- Addressing bullying: how to stand up and respond
- Having fun and sharing cultural practices and skills for building resilience

This group offers a very innovative and safe therapeutic space for isolated and vulnerable young women within diverse refugee communities

Homework Club

In the past year, Homework Club has grown and is very well attended with sometimes up to 40 young people in the space seeking support with their school or TAFE studies. Due to the high demand, students and tutors have also used the lunch room for extra space. New laptops were purchased with one off funding to help support the demand for access to the internet via computer.

Youth Voice



A worker from the Children and Youth Team supports a committee of young people from many different backgrounds, but most of whom are from a refugee background. The Youth Voice Committee is funded by the Queensland Department of Communities but supported by the Children's and Youth team at QPASTT. Staff from the Youth team supported the initial consultative forum which led to young people self-nominating to form the Youth Voice committee. The committee works on issues that are important to them and are supported by QPASTT to address these issues.

In the reporting period the Youth Voice Committee has been involved in:

- 1. A second forum focused on employment (held in conjunction with MDA) at which over 120 people attended. The forum aimed to
- Provide the opportunity for young people from diverse backgrounds to voice their experiences of finding work in Queensland
- Harness the energy and interest of young people who are keen to share their ideas about helping other young people into work
- Link participating employers with young people keen to work
- 2. Clear Thinking Cube event held in the Brisbane City Mall in conjunction with Mental Health Week.
- 3. A forum to raise awareness around issues of discrimination, racism and bullying for young people. Approximately 30 young people attended.

Dare to Dream

Given the success of the original groups, another multimodal therapy group using a combination of art, music and drama was run during the reporting period, in partnership with Dream facilitators. This time a separate group was run for the boys and girls (eight in each) before bringing them together for seven joint sessions. The group celebrated their successes with a performance for the QPASTT Annual General Meeting in November 2012.

Karate

In the second half of the year, the Children and Youth Team ran Karate classes in partnership with Okukan Karate School, once a week during school terms 1 and 2. The group has naturally become an all-women's group who come together to learn Karate, a disciplined form of self-development and self-defense. The benefits have been increased fitness, focus and concentration. It has also helped to build the young women's self-confidence. Recently three of the young women passed their first belt testing and successfully progressed to the next level.

Feedback:

The Children and Youth Team actively gathers feedback in each of the programs. We hope you enjoy some of the feedback given to us by children and young people.

Naomi Kikkawa Coordinator

Why is it good to attend the QPASTT Holiday Program?

"Because we all get together and had a good time."

"It's a school holiday period and I wanted to make new friends"

"QPASTT is good because we meet each other from different country and tribes."



THE LANTERN PARADE

Each year, QPASTT staff participates in The Lantern Parade Walk for Refugees held by the Multicultural Development Association (MDA).

This colourful event is now being organised to coincide with Queensland Day each year and acts as a clear positive message of welcome to all refugees. It unites communities, nationalities, men, women and children as everybody joins the vibrant parade which culminates at Southbank Parklands.

QPASTT staff gathered outside the Woolloongabba office for the short walk across the Victoria Bridge to Southbank. The parade featured an amazing collection of lanterns including animals from all corners of the globe and over 8,000 participants.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge our patron: Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Ms Penelope Wensley AC

QPASTT would like to acknowledge the following funding agencies for their support in 2012/2013

- Australian Department of Health and Ageing
- Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- QLD Department of Communities
- QLD Health
- QLD Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs

We would also like to acknowledge our partners:

- Brisbane City Council
- Multicultural Development Association
- CentaCare
- Lifeline
- Multilink
- Red Cross
- Life Without Barriers
- Communify
- Qld Transcultural Mental Health
- Refugee and Immigrant Legal Service
- Child & Youth Mental Health Service



CLIENT FEEDBACK

The POUCH Family Counsellors facilitated a weekly series of African Parenting discussion groups at *Sound Point - The Salvation Army Youth & Community Centre* in Goodna. The sessions culminated in a Family Day for parents and children - sharing stories, music, dancing, games and craft activities.





We received some very positive feedback

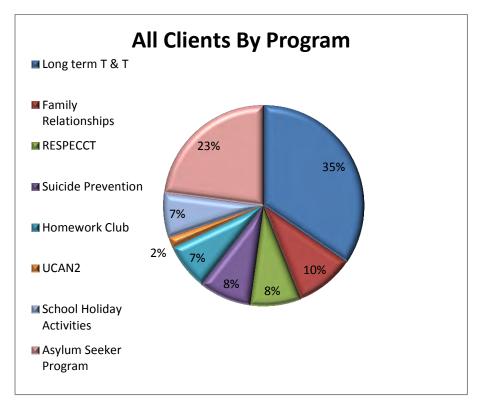
'It has helped my communication with my children, I have started to show my appreciation whenever they help with housework or do their homework."

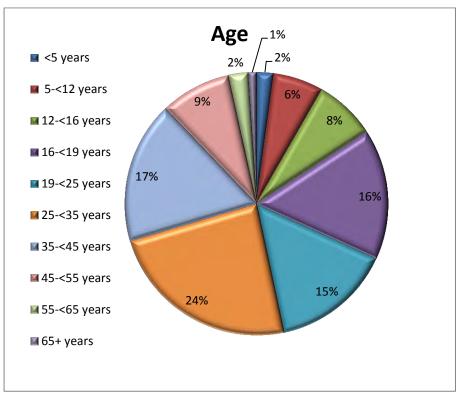
"When we are talking we now use good words, no yelling and no using physical punishment."

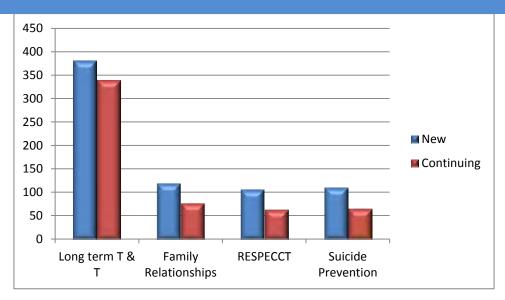
"Family relationships have been improved by us talking together, using tolerance, understanding each other and us parents working together to raise our children."

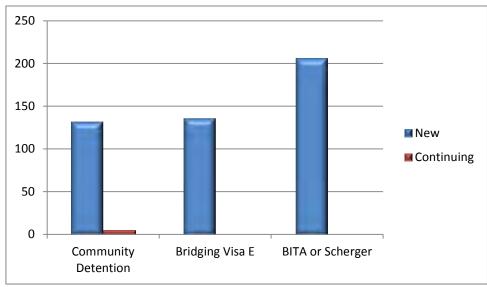
"Now if there is a family issue I bring everyone together in a family meeting, seek everyone's opinion before making a decision."

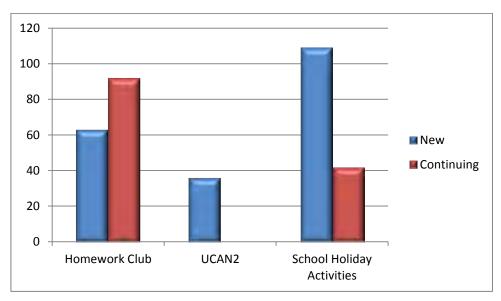
"We are all so busy with appointments, TAFE, school ... but we have now started to have family meals and meetings together, just like we did back home"

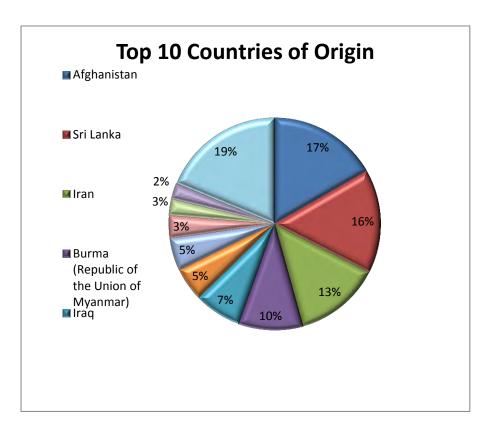


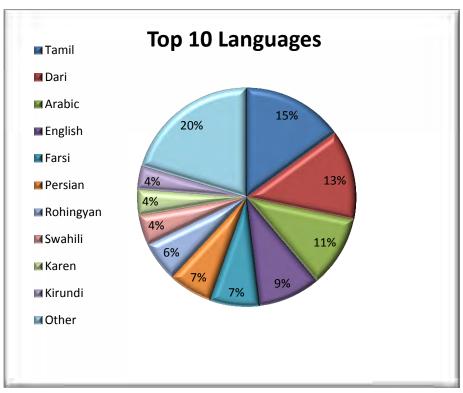












Group related Activity 2012-2013				
Activity type	Blocks	Number of sessions	Ave attendance	
UCAN2	2	32	25	
UHM boys group	4	23	17	
Girls Group	5	5	7	
Karate	2	20	10	
Family Fun Day	5	5	70	
Dare to Dream	1	15	12	
Islamic school group	1	8	9	
X-Men	4	31	5	
Women's Space	4	29	6	
RWG	3	6	7	
Women's Fellowship	1	13	10	
Social Group	4	48	20	
Bita Group	4	36	3.6	
School Holiday Activities	4	15	30	
Parenting Group Work	3	16	13.6	
Homework club	4	108	30	
Hip Hop	2	16	22	
Computer Workshops	3	18	10.6	
Total	48	545	17.1	

Information sessions with communities/forums 2013-2013				
Activity topic type	Blocks	Number of	Average	
		Sessions	attendance	
Parenting/family	2	2	55	
Community work driven workshops	5	8	20.9	
Leadership sessions	1	1	15	
Youth Voice Forum	1	1	120	
Total	9	12	52.7	

WHERE TO FIND US

QPASTT Brisbane

28 Dibley Street Woolloongabba 4102

QPASTT Logan

90 Wembley Road (cnr Benz Street) Logan Central 4114

QPASTT Rockhampton

C/- Centacare 10 Bolsover Street Rockhampton 4700

QPASTT Toowoomba

166A Hume Street Toowoomba 4350

QPASTT Cairns

C/- Lifeline Mooroobool Community Centre 2 Rambutan Close Cairns 4870

QPASTT Townsville

410 Ross River Road Cranbrook 4814

