

# interchange

INTERCHANGE NEWSLETTER | WINTER 2010



## Executive Director's Message

Earlier this year I was invited by Andrew Scipione, the Police Commissioner, to participate in his new Community Awareness of Policing Program. He had seen a similar program working in the United States and wanted to roll out his own version in NSW. The twenty participants included Cardinal George Pell, Archbishop Peter Jensen, Steve Waugh, Tim Webster, David Gallop, and other community members of which I was one. The program ran for seven Tuesday evenings and a full day at the Police Academy at Goulburn.

Participants had the opportunity to experience different aspects of police work. This included driver training where we drove highway patrol cars and discovered how easy it was to skid when you applied brakes or acceleration in different ways. We experienced the work of the Dog Squad, the Bomb Squad and the Riot and Public Order Squad. We participated in simulation exercises for rescue at sea and dealing with situations like the Cronulla and Macquarie Fields riots.

We were also involved in a mock trial, seeing the work of the police prosecutors and some of us had to

give evidence of an incident we had witnessed and were cross examined. In that exercise we learnt that not everything you see is as it really is. Through the work of the forensic staff and the training and use of weapons, including tasers, we saw how minute details and strict rules play an important part of life in the police service.

I was impressed with the way in which all the police officers I met, from Deputy Commissioners to Constables, were able to speak about their work in an articulate and committed way.

Another important lesson for me was that you do form a different view when you have the opportunity to see and experience things first hand. I am sure that this would be true of the work we do in UnitingCare.

For example, I am sure that if those people with a negative image about aged care would have their views changed if they had the opportunity to see how a modern aged care facility works. Also, they could understand how our community care program works and realise how many options there are for older people to remain in their own homes and maintain independence.

Similarly, I know that when members of the Church and the wider community have visited the UnitingCare NEWPIN program and spoken to staff and participants they have come away with a more sympathetic understanding of the challenges that face parents in disadvantaged areas. It is easy to form prejudiced judgements without the benefit of the facts. I might still be critical about some aspects of the police service, but at least I have had the opportunity to have a more informed view.

**Rev. Harry Herbert**  
Executive Director  
UnitingCare NSW.ACT



*Rev. Harry Herbert, Executive Director UnitingCare NSW.ACT pictured with Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione.*

# Healthy Partnership for UnitingCare Ageing and the Uniting Church

## Healthy Living for Seniors is an innovative day program brought to the community through partnerships with UnitingCare Ageing and Uniting Churches initially in the Gosford, Wyong and Lake Macquarie areas.

These successful partnerships commenced in December 2008 and have resulted in rapid expansion with a number of new partnerships emerging. Now spanning eleven Uniting Churches, the Health Living for Seniors program is offered in Gosford, Terrigal, Narara, Kincumber, Umina, Garden Suburb,

Toronto, Charlestown, Wangi Wangi, Toukley and Mannering Park.

Angie Robinson, Director Community and Disability Services, UnitingCare Ageing Hunter, Central Coast and New England Region, explains that the service reconnects individuals to the community and to the local Uniting Church.

"The program is benefiting all those involved, bringing joy, friendship and sharing", says Ms Robinson.

Ms Robinson continues, "we aim to support members to remain independent, have choices and improve health and well-being. We have had excellent feedback from our partnership

congregations about the programs and look forward to future opportunities."

"We are proud of and determined to continue to blend support and services with local communities and really value the benefit and strength of congregation's compassion."

The Healthy Living for Seniors program philosophy encompasses the INSPIRED CARE principles, UnitingCare Ageing's person centred approach, discovering individual and community assets. The social programs include mind your mind activities, exercise programs, creative arts, guest speakers, outings, music and most of all lots of fun and laughter.

## National Sorry Day Time for a little less conversation, a little more action

### UnitingCare NSW.ACT called for more action to address Indigenous inequities on the eve of National Sorry Day, Wednesday 26 May 2010.

The theme of this year's National Sorry Day was: 'SORRY. Still Living on Borrowed Time!' and Reverend Harry Herbert, Executive Director, UnitingCare NSW.ACT, completely agreed given progress to date.

"As an organisation committed to addressing injustice we were incredibly moved by the apology which acknowledged the irreparable harm to Indigenous families who had their children forcibly removed.

"Unfortunately, past injustices mean that our Indigenous population still suffers inequities such as higher mortality rates with Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander peoples dying 10 to 17 years younger than other Australians.

Reverend Herbert said, "UnitingCare is committed to the well-being of Indigenous Australians and advocating for greater action to achieve equity with others in the community. More action is still needed."

UnitingCare NSW.ACT is dedicated to being a corporate leader in Indigenous Employment, signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in July 2007.

An Indigenous Employment Strategy providing employment, learning and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all occupation levels has been implemented across the organisation and Mary Day, Indigenous Employment Officer,

said it was important for organisations like UnitingCare NSW.ACT to promote National Sorry Day.

"Everything has to start somewhere by someone taking the first step up, extending the hand of kindness to the next one in line. UnitingCare NSW.ACT has taken that first step by working towards being a corporate leader in Indigenous Employment.

"By acknowledging National Sorry Day, UnitingCare NSW.ACT recognises that the First Australians also have a history that needs to be shared."

National Sorry Day emerged following the release of a report in 1997, "Bringing Them Home – Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families". National Reconciliation Week in 2010 began Thursday 27 May and finished Thursday 3 June.

# Time-out room a first for NSW gamblers

**As part of Responsible Gambling Awareness Week UnitingCare Unifam Counselling and Mediation Service launched two innovative services in Gosford on Monday 17 May to help support people whose lives have been adversely affected by gambling.**

The first initiative is a time-out room which is a joint project between the Gosford RSL and UnitingCare Unifam Gambling Addiction and Family Service.

Director of Unifam, Clive Price, said, "The time-out room is a first for NSW and will allow gamblers the opportunity to take a break from gaming in a safe and respectful environment. They can have a free coffee or tea, reflect on their behaviour and explore options for support and tools for recovery."

A qualified counsellor will also be on hand from time to time and staff from Gosford RSL will constantly monitor the room.

UnitingCare Unifam also launched a self-advocacy project for chronic gamblers that will help them tell their stories and identify the sort of support and services they require for their recovery.

Executive Director of UnitingCare NSW.ACT and Chairperson of the Responsible Gambling Fund, Reverend Harry Herbert, said "UnitingCare Unifam has long recognised that teaching people to advocate on their own behalf can have real and positive effects on their lives."

"Self advocacy gives people the confidence to explain their situation and their needs to family, the wider community and decision makers. By advocating for themselves, people can change their lives and help others in similar situations."



## Responsible Gambling Awareness Week (May 17-22)

Responsible Gambling Awareness Week is an initiative of the NSW Government and aims to promote Gambling Help Services. You can contact Gambling Help on 1800 858 858 or visit [www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au](http://www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au) Counsellors are available by phone or live online 24 hours a day.

To take part in the self advocacy project contact UnitingCare Unifam Gambling Addiction and Family service on 4325 9666.



*Lincoln Poole, Counsellor Unifam Gosford, Ross Seabrook, General Manager Gosford RSL, Chris Hartcher, Shadow Minister for the Central Coast, Rev. Harry Herbert Executive Director UnitingCare NSW.ACT and Deborah O'Neill, Labor candidate for Federal seat of Robertson at the launch in Gosford.*

## A Conversation – UnitingCare NSW.ACT Congregational Community Services Conference Resources now available

UnitingCare NSW.ACT hosted an inaugural conference for Uniting Church congregational auspiced and operated community welfare services throughout NSW and the ACT on 26 March 2010.

A number of resources from the conference are now available online including presentations from the conference speakers: [http://www.unitingcarenswact.org.au/resources/community\\_services\\_conference](http://www.unitingcarenswact.org.au/resources/community_services_conference).



# UnitingCare reports to Synod

**At the 2010 meeting of the Synod of NSW and the ACT, Uniting Church in Australia, UnitingCare had the opportunity to report and share our stories of courage and compassion with the attendees.**

This year, the presentation made by Rev. Harry Herbert, Executive Director, UnitingCare NSW.ACT, included a DVD focussed on social justice and the important work of service that UnitingCare undertakes on behalf of the Church.

The DVD features services from UnitingCare Ageing, UnitingCare Children's Services, UnitingCare Disability and UnitingCare Children,

Young People and Families through the voice of our staff, our partners and the people we serve.

Members of Synod also received copies of the five UnitingCare Annual Reports and a recent discussion paper that was completed on climate change.

With the theme for the Synod is "Generous ... as God is", this meeting is a time when key church members from across NSW and the ACT consider a variety of reports and proposals, elect a new Moderator and vote on a nominee for General Secretary, receive input and discuss themes such as engaging with community, engaging in worship, rural ministry and multicultural ministry, and discuss a review of Synod structures and processes.

## New Director, Corporate Finance and Strategy, joins the UnitingCare team

David Makinson has been welcomed to the team at UnitingCare as he embarks on the role of Director, Corporate Finance and Strategy, UnitingCare NSW.ACT.

A chartered accountant, David has extensive experience in the banking and financial sector. David was the Chief Financial Officer for Fleet Partners when he spotted the opportunity to work for UnitingCare and saw the job as a chance to make a much thought about shift to the not-for-profit sector.

Having commenced visits to services, David is gathering information to enable him to make informed



decisions about next steps. David derives enormous satisfaction from creating an effective shared service but stresses that "any change needs to pass the test by making services better".

Already enjoying the diversity UnitingCare provides, David brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to UnitingCare and is looking forward to "trying to do some good in the world" through his new role.

## THE grand PLAN

A NEW VISION FOR THE CARE OF OLDER AUSTRALIANS

UnitingCare Ageing would like to introduce The Grand Plan, a campaign brought to us by the Care of Older Australian Group (CCOA). CCOA is made up of the peak bodies and faith-based national service providers of residential and community aged care currently serving the overwhelming majority of older Australians needing care and support.

The Grand Plan aims to unite Australians to help solve issues facing aged care. It's a plan that allows all people of a grand age to choose to live a quality life with dignity either in their home or in a residential setting. The Grand Plan is a warm, engaging, optimistic campaign highlighting the value of older people and the unique and important place they hold in our community.

Involving mass media, public relations and community and social media activation, The Grand Plan is aimed to inspire members of our community to support some of the most important and beloved people in their lives.

UnitingCare Ageing's key objective is to engage our staff, volunteers, Churches and local congregations to support this campaign and understand the value of their unique contribution and how it will help drive the overall success of this campaign.

A full breakdown of how you can participate in this worthy cause and the activities we would like you to join in will be listed on The Grand Plan website. Take a look and get involved by going to [www.unitingcareageing.org.au](http://www.unitingcareageing.org.au) and clicking on The Grand Plan window.

# Framing the future for children's services

At the UnitingCare NSW.ACT Board meeting on 22 April 2010, it was agreed that the proposal for UnitingCare Children's Services (UCCS) to become part of the UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families Service Group (UCCYPF) would begin from 1 May 2010. The proposal with its 34 recommendations and transition plan was accepted. UnitingCare NSW.ACT will also provide financial support to assist with the transition and integration processes over three years.

Trish Brown (pictured right) has been appointed as the new Director, Early Childhood and OSHC and began in this role on 1 June 2010 following her role as Acting Director since December 2009. Whilst in this role, Trish has created a very positive environment for the integration of children's services into UCCYPF. She brings to the new position experience and reputation at all levels of early childhood practice and management plus an extensive knowledge of both the UCCS children's services and the early childhood services and programs within UCCYPF.

Trish will head up a team that will support both directly provided and locally managed children's services. This team will also support early childhood workers within UnitingCare

Burnside, building on the gains achieved by Trish over the last three years.

In addition, a new Memorandum of Understanding between locally managed children's services and UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families is also being developed. It is anticipated that this will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Church Council, the Management Committee, children's services Directors and Coordinators, and UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families. The consultations are ongoing throughout June.

UnitingCare would like to thank all the staff and consultants involved in the development of the proposal and we look forward to working together on nurturing confident and creative learners.



## UnitingCare welcomes new Director, UnitingCare IT Services Centre

Welcome to Greg Naimo, who has joined UnitingCare NSW.ACT in May as the new Director of the UnitingCare IT Services Centre.

Greg brings 25 years of information management and technology experience to the role, from a variety of sectors including tertiary education, health insurance and manufacturing. Having already started service visits, Greg is using his first few weeks to

develop a deeper understanding of UnitingCare's structure, culture and service delivery. Drawn to the organisation because of its solid vision, Greg says that he views the UnitingCare IT Services Centre as a facilitator to help staff devote more time to helping the people we care for.

Special thanks to Chris Grover, Director, Finance and Development, UnitingCare Ageing, who has ably assisted the UnitingCare IT Services Centre as Acting Director prior to Greg's appointment.



# UnitingCare Share Appeal 2010

UnitingCare would like to share with you a story about a young boy who attends one of our UnitingCare Preschools.

Jaden's Gift is just one of the many stories of courage and growth that demonstrate how we work on behalf of the Uniting Church as an expression of faith in action. We need your support to provide services for more children like Jaden and others in need in the community.

We are seeking your support to help us to continue to change lives by making a donation to the UnitingCare 2010 Share Appeal. A small amount together can make the world of difference. Please filling out the donation slip below.



## Jaden's gift

Jaden just loves his Preschool days where he gets to play all sorts of fun puzzles and paint some masterpieces for the fridge at home. His energy and enthusiasm for life is infectious.

Proud parents Julie and Phil are thrilled to have Jaden at a UnitingCare Preschool knowing he is loved and cared for while special attention is provided to assist him develop his learning skills and encourage independence.

"He loves dancing and he has no inhibitions" says mum Julie, "and he has a special way of bringing joy into people's lives. God created diversity and chose to make Jaden the way he is for a purpose."

Jaden has Down Syndrome and placing him into a mainstream Preschool was a big decision for Julie and Phil. For Preschool Director Kylie there was no decision to make, just plans and programs to welcome Jaden into his new learning environment.

"We are so happy with the Preschool and really believe Jaden's presence is helping others in the community to

appreciate the love and skills each child has to offer."

Since attending Preschool, Jaden has become more independent, with the staff and his family working in partnership to support Jaden as he learns to make friends.

UnitingCare believes all children deserve the right to quality early childhood education and care to achieve their goals in life.

Please support UnitingCare in delivering services for children with additional needs and helping them to be the best they can be by donating to the Share Appeal.



## Help UnitingCare change lives

Yes I would like to support the work of UnitingCare NSW.ACT with a donation.

First Name ..... Surname .....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Telephone number ..... Congregation.....

Please enclose your cheque/money order payable to UnitingCare NSW.ACT or complete the credit card details:

Payment method:  Cheque  Bankcard  Visa  Mastercard

Amount:  \$25  \$50  \$100  Other \$.....

Card Number

Name on credit card..... Expiry date / /

Signature.....

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.

Address all donations to UnitingCare NSW.ACT GPO Box 9961 Sydney NSW 2000  
Donations can also be made online at [www.unitingcarenswwact.org.au](http://www.unitingcarenswwact.org.au)

I would like to join the UnitingCare mailing list.  
My email address is:  
.....

Please send me details on how I might consider UnitingCare in my Will.

UnitingCare respects and values your privacy and will not disclose any personal information without your written permission.

## Thank you for your support