

# Decisions taken in 2010/11

created significant changes which now place Wesley Mission on a firm footing financially and organisationally for the future. They will underpin our continuing commitment to express Christlike servanthood as we work with disadvantaged and marginalised people in our society, and enable us to show unfailing integrity in the important work of shaping communities.

## Shaping the organisation

Wesley Mission took a number of important and pivotal steps in 2010/11 to position the organisation for the future.

We continued to examine our financial viability and to build a platform of sustainability to ensure Wesley Mission remains an effective Christian charity. A forum in February with board members, senior managers, clients and donors re-evaluated the strategic direction of the organisation.

Participants examined a wide range of issues, including our Christian faith, financial viability, what services we should offer, how to implement an integrated approach to service delivery, and how we are and would wish to be perceived in the community. That work continues.

Wesley Mission also took the first tentative steps towards incorporation in response to a new environment where government funding bodies want to deal directly with us rather than through our parent, the Uniting Church in Australia. We treasure our accountability to the Uniting Church, but realised that change was needed.

## Constructing facilities

In a truly exciting development in November, we began construction of 16 new independent living units at Alan Walker Village in Carlingford, as well as a new 74-bed, ageing-in-place residential care facility to be known as Wesley Rayward.

This facility will increase the care options available to residents at the village by enabling them to move into assisted care options when necessary without having to leave their spouses and friends.

During the year Wesley Mission also received funding to construct new training facilities at our Ashfield and Kogarah hospitals, which will further boost our reputation for excellence.

## Expanding services

We officially welcomed into the Wesley Mission family the highly respected child mentoring program Aunties & Uncles, after we were approached to take over its operations when the service became at risk of closure.

Wesley LifeForce held suicide memorial days in Sydney, Newcastle and Hobart, and expanded its suicide prevention networks to include indigenous communities in the Northern Territory.

We also began negotiations with St. George Bank on a possible expansion of our financial counselling relationship to include a new community training program on financial literacy. This has subsequently become a reality.

## Creating efficiencies

Wesley Mission launched an internal initiative during the year called the Synergy project, aimed at streamlining our finance, payroll and human resources management processes. The finance component was completed in 2010/11 and the initial part of the complex payroll changes was accomplished.

The year also saw our training team make big strides in the provision of new online learning options for staff.

## Sharing faith

A highlight for our Christian community was the growth of our Wesley International Congregation established at Ryde in 2010, which now has a weekly attendance of more than 270.

Another highlight for 2010/11 was the growing success of Wesley Mission's Easter Mission. The Easter Sunrise Service, which celebrated its 50th year, drew a larger national television audience on the Seven Network and the previous year's service was repeated on the Australian Christian Channel later in the day. Once again, the Easter Sunrise Service was also simulcast on Christian radio stations around Australia.

During the year our Sunday morning TV program *Rise & Shine* was renamed as *Wesley Impact! TV*, in accordance with the branding of our other internal and external communications. This will also enable the program to be broadcast at times other than early morning around the world.

### Making an impact

Wesley Mission raised its community profile during the year with the launch of two authoritative and well-received reports—*Making ends meet: Financial stress is not just about money* and *More than a bed: Sydney's homeless families speak out*.

With the change of government in NSW, I was gratified to be invited to play an even larger role in the Premier's Council on Homelessness, of which I was already co-chair. I see this as an indication of the high regard in which Wesley Mission is held.

Wesley Mission was invited to provide input into a national enquiry into gambling, and also to give evidence before a Federal House of Representatives public hearing into proposed national consumer credit protection measures and an enquiry into mental health and the workplace.

The inaugural High Tea event in Newcastle and the Sports United lunch in Sydney also signalled innovative new approaches to profile-building and fundraising by Wesley Mission.

### Responsible stewardship

Our financial situation stabilised in 2010/11 and we came in near budget. Although we were not “out of the woods”, the result was a considerable improvement on the previous year. With changes put in place during the year, the goal of a \$1m cash flow and operating surplus by 2013 remains an achievable target.

During the year it was also pleasing to note that Wesley Mission significantly reduced its expenses without any negative impact on delivery of services.

### Thanks

Finally, I would like to thank my two fellow Officers, Mr David Greatorex AO and Mr Mark Scott AO, for their fantastic support of Wesley Mission ... and also my senior colleagues who have each shown commitment to the work to which God has called us. In addition to their contribution, the involvement of thousands of staff, worshippers and volunteers has ensured Wesley Mission remains a Mission which is both Christ-centred and people-focused as we enter a year when we celebrate 200 years since the first Methodists gathered in Australia.



Rev Dr Keith V Garner  
CEO/Superintendent

