

Mental Health and Counselling Services

Wesley Mission's Mental Health and Counselling Services promote mental health and resilience, inclusion in family and community, and empowering people through the development of life skills. Our two mental health hospitals offer a range of in-patient and day patient services and our nursing and therapeutic teams work in close consultation with the psychiatrist. Our counselling services offer free and confidential assistance for those in need of financial, gambling and legal assistance, including Lifeline and LifeForce for critical personal counselling and suicide prevention.

Genuine commitment

For many years Wesley Mission has been delivering mental health care through Wesley Private Hospital Ashfield, and Wesley Private Hospital, Kogarah.

These hospitals provide care for those suffering from depression, anxiety and psychotic disorders. We also have specialist units serving those with eating disorders and substance abuse disorders.

With funding through the Department of Health and Ageing, we are building our capacity to manage clients with mental health and drug and alcohol issues. Originally under Wesley Rehabilitation Services, this project was expanded in March 2009 to assist all Wesley Mission staff and services.

Among Wesley Mission's excellent counselling services, Lifeline Sydney and Sutherland provide a 24-hour crisis telephone counselling service, delivered by over 200 skilled volunteers.

LifeForce, part of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing, has undergone significant growth and aims to educate, empower and resource Australian communities so they are aware of the issue of suicide, recognise the signals, and are sufficiently resourced to refer those at risk to appropriate support services.

Committed to succeed

Wesley Mission Gambling Counselling Services was successful in negotiating two new contracts with clubs in Western Sydney to provide further assistance for those with a gambling problem or those affected by someone with a gambling problem. Through our contract with Castle Hill RSL we have been able to extend our service into the Hills District. We have also entered into a new

contract with Penrith Panthers, to provide a 24-hour telephone counselling service for patrons, as well as face-to-face counselling for patrons of their 14 clubs in NSW.

Creditline received an increase in funding from the Office of Fair Trading. Employment of additional financial counselling staff met some of the higher demand for appointments but 39 per cent of eligible referrals had to be turned away. The service saw a total of 3975 referrals during the year. There has been greater media awareness of the impact of financial stress, due to the local impact of the global economic crisis. Financial counsellors and client stories have featured in various newspaper articles, radio and television interviews and two of our counsellors contributed to the Wesley Mission Report on financial stress released in May 2009.

We have experienced steady growth in our Lifeline Face-to-Face Counselling service. Our counsellors have addressed a range of issues including family and relationship problems, depression and anxiety, trauma, interpersonal conflict, workplace issues, dealing with retirement, grief and loss. They have been able to make a difference in the lives of those they counsel.

The need for courage

Lifeline Telephone Counselling Services witnessed a significant increase in the number of calls received in 2008-2009. The Sydney service took 16,393 calls last year compared with 12,612 in the previous year with roughly the same number of volunteers. Even with a strong volunteer workforce, we are unable to answer all the calls.

We have recognised the need to make Mental Health First Aid Training available for all Wesley Mission staff, with a particular emphasis on administrative or ancillary staff without formal training in managing people who are distressed.

Ongoing commitment

At every level Wesley Mission is seeking opportunities to continue and enhance quality mental health care and counselling. We have received approval to run a pilot Psychological Services in current Wesley Mission operational areas. This will utilise Medicare "Better Access to Mental Health Care Initiative" to further support current clients receiving support from Wesley Mission. This service will include clinical assessment, individual therapy and group therapy.



Lauren summons the courage to face her debt.

Lauren came close to losing everything before turning to help from Creditline. Six months behind in mortgage repayments because of illness, she used four credit cards to pay utility bills, rates, strata fees and food, which grew to a total of about \$15,000. "I thought I was going to be homeless. I didn't even have a car to sleep in," said Lauren, aged 41. "I was eating nothing but toast and rice."

After the first mortgage foreclosure letter arrived in January, Lauren went online to seek help. She found a Wesley Mission financial counsellor. As part of a strict budget, she now pays a small amount fortnightly through direct debit to reduce the arrears on her electricity, water, strata levy and rates bills. Her advice to others is to ask for help before it's too late.

Counselling Services

Mental Health Support Services

Suicide Prevention Services

Wesley Hospital Ashfield

Wesley Hospital Kogarah

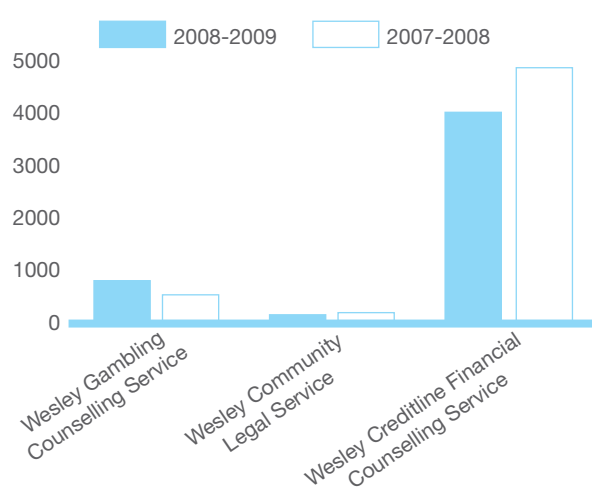


Mental Health and Counselling Services

Counselling services

Clients assisted

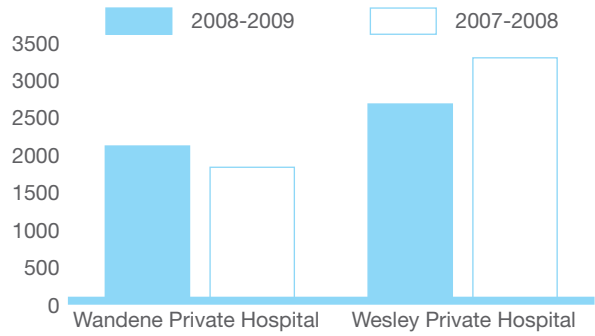
Total number of referrals in counselling services in 2008-2009 was 4848



Hospital services

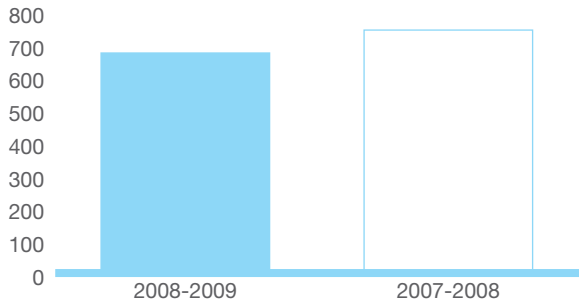
Hospital admissions

Total number of hospital admissions in 2008-2009 was 4765



LifeForce suicide prevention training workshops

Total number of LifeForce suicide prevention training workshops in 2008-2009 was 681



Hospital bed days

Total number of hospital bed days in 2008-2009 was 20,018

