

BAPTIST CARE AUSTRALIA

A voice
for hope



Annual Report

2020 — 2021

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baptistcareaustralia.org.au

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A voice
for **hope**

Baptist Care Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia, their spiritual heritage, living culture and our walk together towards reconciliation.

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About us

Baptist Care Australia is the national representative and peak advocacy body for Baptist community service organisations and their clients. We work to bring equality and opportunity to Australian communities, advocating nationally on social issues such as homelessness, aged care and domestic violence.

Our members bring life-enriching care to their clients, residents, families and communities. They contribute substantially to the economic, physical and spiritual well-being of Australian communities. With a combined annual turnover of over \$1 billion, Baptist Care Australia members employ over 11,500 staff, and engage with around 3,000 volunteers annually. Each year, their services directly touch the lives of more than 200,000 Australians.

Baptist Care Australia members serve people in aged care, affected by family violence and homelessness, on low incomes, experiencing relationship breakdown, living with disability and affected by multigenerational disadvantage. Services include crisis accommodation, social housing, out-of-home care for children, counselling,

no-interest loan schemes, and other programs that help people rebuild their lives or live independently with the right support.

Members of Baptist Care Australia are:

- Ashfield Baptist Homes
- Baptcare (VIC & TAS)
- BaptistCare (NSW & ACT)
- Baptistcare (WA)
- Baptist Care NT
- Baptist Care SA
- Bethshan Ministries
- Carinity (QLD)
- Crossway LifeCare
- Maroba Caring Communities
- The Village Baxter





**Baptist Care Australia works
to bring social justice to
Australian communities**

Chair's message



The past year has brought challenges none of us could have foreseen. I am proud and thankful to Baptist Care Australia's staff, members and partners who faced these unprecedented times with a passionate resolve, commitment and adaptability.

Despite the difficulties, we have seen much progress in a busy and productive period that will positively shape how we work and serve in the years to come.

So much has changed, and yet the core spiritual and practical principles underlying our approach to addressing the needs of the disadvantaged and disenfranchised remain the same.

After 12 months of virtual meetings our Board briefly recommenced meeting face to face early in 2021. Whilst this was short lived it enabled a number of strategic issues to be addressed through extended discussion. We were fortunate to have an in-person board meeting in April to meet with our directors and to personally farewell Ross Low, who retired after 16 years with BaptistCare NSW & ACT, including ten years as CEO.

Sadly, Ross passed away less than a month later. He will be remembered as a true servant leader who assisted us to mature our Baptist Care Australia culture and grow our influence and reach.

It is also with sadness that we report the passing of former board member and former CEO of BaptistCare NSW & ACT June Heinrich, whose pioneering work helped to strategically position the future of Baptist Care Australia and consolidate its Baptist identity.

Despite the struggles and uncertainty of the past year, we have much to be grateful for. Next year will see continuing change as we navigate this new world. The lessons we have learnt from working on key projects under COVID will surely bear fruit.

I trust the content of this Annual Report will give you a good insight into the year, the ongoing work of Baptist Care Australia and our future plans.



Russell Bricknell
Board Chair

In Memorium

Dr June Heinrich



Mr Ross Low



Executive Director's message



As the Coronavirus Pandemic stretches deep into a second year, Baptist Care Australia continues to actively bring hope to the vulnerable and support to our members on the front lines of this crisis.

It has not been an easy path. Working under the shadow of COVID-19 has required enormous dedication, courage, a clarity of mission and a sense of innovation from all of us.

COVID-19 restricted travel and person-to-person meetings but we held regular virtual CEO and board meetings throughout the year.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge the hard work, amid great stress and strain, by two of our members, Bapcare and Baptist Care NSW & ACT, who like many aged care providers were faced with community transmission, lockdowns and COVID-19 outbreaks in their respective states.

The staff of these members and all member staff in aged care have been truly amazing, giving their time selflessly despite exhaustion, restrictive personal protective equipment requirements, and the ongoing uncertainty of health advice and the State and Territory Health Directives.

The pressure on staff, residents and families has been immense. But we have witnessed an unwavering commitment to the people

our network serves and the broader Baptist movement that underpins our existence. There is renewed hope and a belief that we will learn, grow and become stronger.

As our business priorities shifted throughout the year, we focused on how we would support our members and, more importantly, how we could ramp up our advocacy in a way that ensured that those who have been left most vulnerable through this pandemic were heard and supported.

Baptist Care Australia acts to reflect God's love and justice by partnering with communities and individuals to empower hope filled, purposeful lives, while championing safe places for the marginalised and those at risk in society.

We take our lead from the book of Proverbs, which urges us to "speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Speak up for the poor and helpless and see that they get justice".

Now more than ever it is important to champion the voice of the disadvantaged and ensure that all Australians are able to benefit from any economic recovery and that no community, group, family or individual is left behind.

Member Services

Last year, while experiencing the ongoing impact of the pandemic, we were forced to cancel our National Conference, but we still found a way to connect. In November we hosted our first ever virtual End of Year event and were joined by over 500 of our Baptist Care Australia colleagues across the nation.

That half-day event – with the theme ‘Courage through Crisis’ - was a wonderful opportunity for the Baptist family to reunite, and for us all to be motivated to continue our mission.

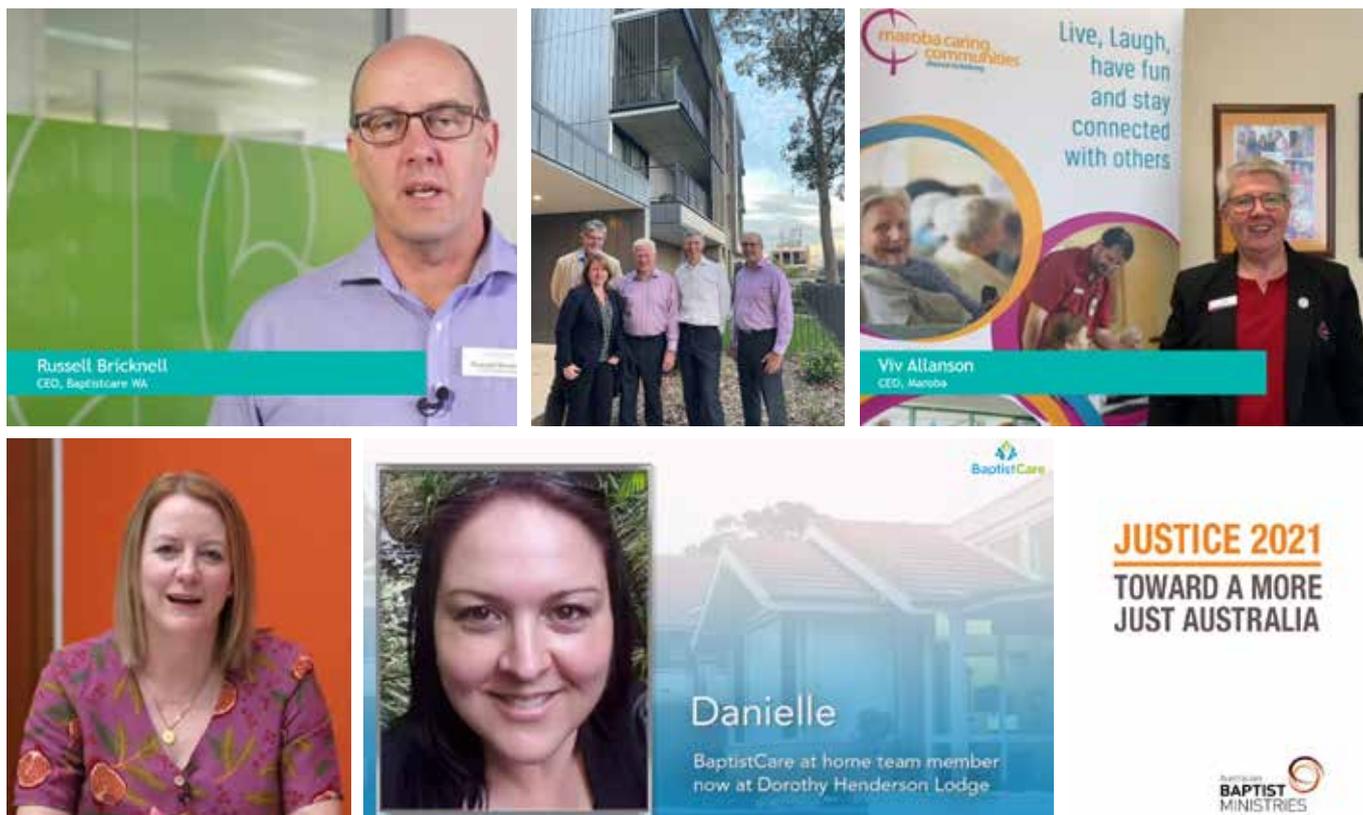
We were particularly inspired by the event’s virtual trip around the nation - to hear each of our members talk candidly of challenges and triumphs and reveal how they had displayed courage through the crisis.

Online meetings with various groups, such as the CEO group, provided an important forum for prayer and support – especially during the serious outbreaks. There were also several one-to-one catch ups online during the COVID outbreaks last year in aged care facilities in NSW and Victoria. Our meeting during the online end-of-year event in November attracted wide interest and discussion around the need for spiritual care during the COVID crisis.

Due to the disruptions of the past year, the transition of the Circles of Excellence to the new working group format was stalled. Yet despite this, a number of groups continued to meet virtually. The Spiritual Care and Integrity National Working Group continued work on their Spiritual Maturity in Leadership paper. This resource will assist our member organisations, who are grappling with faith/spirituality/integrity issues as they play out in recruiting leadership and in the challenge to maintain mission integrity and connection to faith heritage.

The Property and Facilities Working Group also met a number of times over the year. Discussions focussed on comparing our design guidelines and property developments (particularly in residential aged care), the impact and implications of Covid on our existing and proposed aged care facilities, and broader business implications of the virus.





We are looking forward to re-establishing these groups as ‘Collaboration Groups’ in the coming year. Members play a key role in advocacy. We want to harness the passion, knowledge and dedication of our member employees to broaden the reach of our advocacy message. It is the grassroots activation of our member network that will bring about change.

The Baptist Care Australia Collaboration Groups will enable us to hear the voices of those we represent. It is with the support of these groups and our engagement with members that we are able to inform our policy advocacy and speak from a position of authenticity.

These groups are the glue that connects Baptist Care Australia with its member organisations and, through them, with the marginalised people and groups we advocate for.

Baptist Collaboration

Our Baptist roots run deep. We are committed to uniting the advocacy of Baptists. We work with other Baptist agencies and Baptist Unions to provide opportunities for Christians to act on God’s call to seek justice, overcome oppression and to help more of God’s children experience life in all its fullness.

During the 2020 year, we participated in the ‘Advocacy Roundtable’ led by Scott Higgins, Director of A Just Cause. The group has been working together to mature and unify advocacy work across the Baptist network. A subcommittee of the roundtable has been meeting to organise the annual Converge event. Converge is an opportunity for leaders from the Baptist movement across Australia to speak with our Federal politicians about justice issues that concern us, and to build a reputation as a faith community that offers constructive and thoughtful contributions to our national life. This year the event will be held virtually, with Baptist Care Australia continuing to support Converge by providing a secretariat function. The Baptist Care Australia team have completed an event project plan with the help of the organising committee and will continue to drive the project forward in a timely manner.

A key component of this year’s event is the Justice 2021 report. Co-written by the collaborating Baptist agencies, the report will provide a resource for Baptist agencies to unite on social justice issues with common advocacy campaign goals, activities and communication throughout the Baptist network.

Advocacy

Advocacy in the 21st century is a serious business. We believe we must have a business-like approach to this vital work and possess the ability to be highly adaptive and innovative.

Baptist Care Australia is recognised as an organisation with a strong reputation for being active in our advocacy for social justice, having policies based on sound evidence, and having the resources and expertise to help bring about evidence-based solutions.

Organisations like ours play an important role in supporting disadvantaged people and in advocating with them – as well as speaking up against the systems and structures that create disadvantage. We are committed to working together with others who share our mission.

We are currently working on a new three-year strategy and advocacy framework which refreshes our approach to advocacy. With this will come a greater focus on increasing unity across the broader Baptist movement. It involves a strong partnership approach and ongoing collaboration with other like-minded organisations to realise the changes we all want to see.

The strategic plan aims to strengthen what is working well, understand the emerging context in which we are working, identify the opportunities and challenges we face and determine our priorities together. Our next three to five years will see significant reform in a number of key advocacy and service delivery areas at state and federal level. We are well placed as we look to prepare for the future

Our partnerships with agencies such as the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) have been vital. Being linked in with ACOSS has been vital in providing regular snapshots of how a

broad range of disadvantaged groups have been coping and how we can prioritise and partner together in our advocacy.

Baptist Care Australia continues to support the ACOSS 'Raise the Rate for Good' campaign to improve the nation's social security safety net. We support the campaign through our social media activities and specifically this year by making a submission to the Inquiry into the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Strengthening Income Support) Bill 2021 and aligning key points of with the 'Raise the Rate for Good' campaign statements.

Housing & Homelessness

Baptist Care Australia is partnering with the Everybody's Home Campaign which is seeking an end to the homelessness crisis in this nation by advocating for governments to implement strategies to ensure every Australian has a home. The current primary task is a push for Australia to build 30,000 new homes over the next four years. The campaign puts increasing pressure on the Federal Government to undertake a leadership role in this process. This has been difficult with government representatives attempting to shift responsibility to the states. We continue to circulate assets and information to Advocacy Roundtable members.





Families, Youth & Children

Baptist Care Australia has consulted with members as we look to grow our advocacy in this area. One focus is on the needs of First Nations People, as they are often the most disadvantaged. We are also exploring potential partners to support advocacy in this area.

Further development work will be undertaken in this area as part of the 2021-22 Business Plan.

Family & Domestic Violence

We are exploring potential partners to support advocacy in this area and how we might focus some of our activity. Further development work will be undertaken as part of our Business Plan.

Aged Care

Baptist Care Australia is one of six foundation aged care peak bodies making up The Australian Aged Care Collaboration.

Together, we represent more than 1000 organisations that are responsible for about 70 percent of the services delivered to the 1.3 million Australians receiving aged care, either at home or in communal residential settings.

The group came together when its members decided they could become stronger advocates by speaking with one voice. All member CEOs became directors of the collaboration.

The AACC launched the It's Time to Care About Aged Care campaign to raise community awareness about the key issues facing older people, particularly those requiring aged care services.

The collaboration lobbied strenuously for action on the government response to the Aged Care Royal Commission, releasing a formal response setting out urgent steps to improve the delivery of aged care services. The report outlined a 15-point plan in the following four key areas: 1. Human rights, access and choice 2. Workforce 3. Transparency 4. Sustainability.

The result was that aged care sector received its largest funding allocation ever in the next Budget - nearly \$18 billion. The power of collaboration has achieved much.

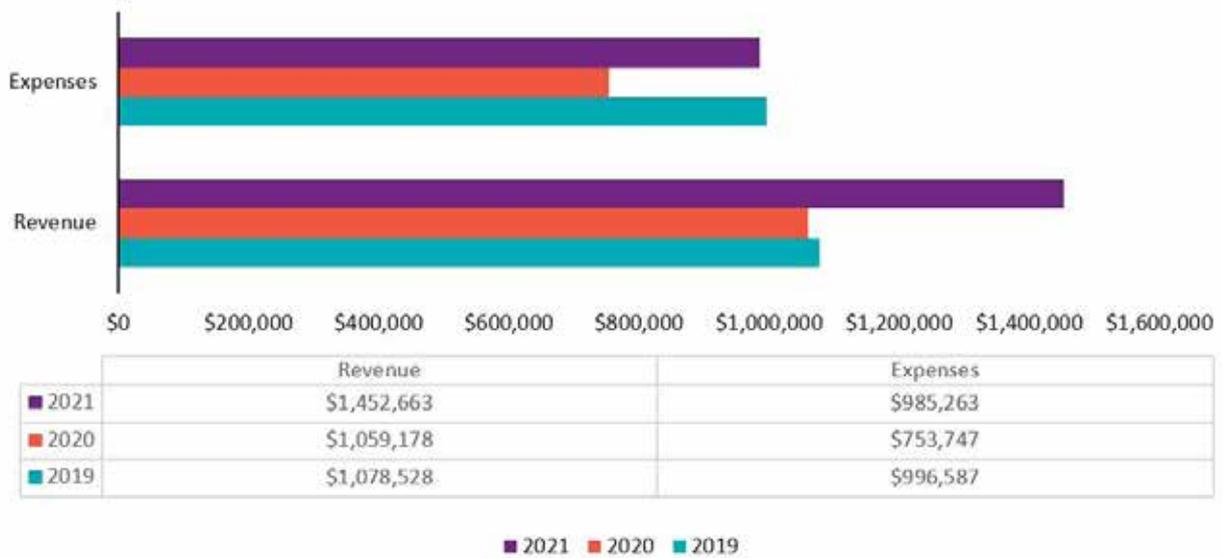
Of course, more work needs to be done in the aged care sector and Baptist Care Australia continues to lobby hard and to strengthen partnerships as part of our advocacy approach.

We anticipate a strengthening of our advocacy work as our Collaboration Groups are re-established which will allow for improved engagement with member staff.

Nicole Hornsby
Executive Director

Financial summary

For the year ended 30 June 2021

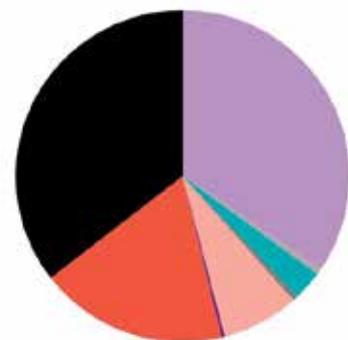


Note:

Revenue and expenses for the 2020-21 FY are low due to the cancellation of the annual conference as a result of COVID-19.

Expenditure breakdown

- Salary expenses (\$340,092)
- Training and Conferences expenses (\$5,115)
- Website and IT expenses (\$28,555)
- Amortisation expense (\$5,024)
- Administration expenses (\$73,574)
- Conference expenses (\$0)
- Consultant expenses (\$3,353)
- Membership Fees (\$179,550)
- Member project expenses (\$350,000)



Financial position



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