

Partnerships: Working together to improve participant outcomes.

Partnerships form an integral part of the Gateways philosophy, both in our approach to our participants and staff but also with our communities.

Over the last year, Gateways Support Services have formed key partnerships with several organisations within our communities that share our vision.

Gforce

- This partnership aims to develop a cooperative relationship that will assist in improving employment outcomes for those participating in Job Quest Employment Programs, ultimately providing a pathway for Job Quest participants to transition to Gforce DES ESS.
- The program provides a balance of skill development activities and practical volunteer skill development opportunities, supporting participants to identify skills and interests, and then build capacity in those areas.

BCYF – Stronger Families

- Our expertise in working with families with disability who are involved with children and family services has been recognised further. Our existing targets will be increased so we can assist more families. We have also been asked to provide an officer for a 12 month period to assist to build expertise and awareness in the family service space about working with families with disability
- This is currently under design and will be implemented shortly.

BCYF – Disability Practitioner

- The secondment of a family disability practitioner has been implemented. We are now working with BCYF to further expand this model in response to new funding for 12 months from the State. This aligns strongly with the strategic priorities for expanding our services and support for families and positions us well in response to new research which shows strong outcomes in directly training parents to manage anxiety in children.
- The Bethany Project (Family Preservation and Reunification Program) (where we are consulted for disability-related “at-risk factors” for children) is generating sound referrals and we have now been able to offer rapid response for speech and occupational therapy assessments. There remains a need for urgent cognitive assessments – see Autism assessment centre proposal. Gateways is the Disability advisor arm of the project. We have been liaising with staff, organising assessments both internal at Gateways and external.

The **Westfield** partnership resulted in fundraising of \$4236.75 which is better than expected given the COVID impact on shopping hours and processes.

Partnerships cont.

We connected with **Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative** to explore embedding therapists into their health services to understand assessments and to provide regular services. This would be through a contract for service and thus enable us to dedicate a resource. We are in the process of signing a 3-year lease for Albert Street. In forming a collaborative relationship we have met several times with the CEO and we will now work together to build partnerships to share expertise.

Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) partner visited Warrnambool, Camperdown, Geelong and Western Melbourne as the first step to kick off a number of sites which will result in 5 new houses over the next 10-18 months.

A new partnership has been established with **Give 4 Tomorrow Foundation** which will provide us with the opportunity for furnishing several houses for residents. It also provides us with a potential research partner.

We are exploring working with **Bear and Scoobs Cafe** to manage sensory packs for children to make the café more suitable for those with sensory needs.

Multicultural Aged Care Services (MACS) sublease commenced Monday 3 May. This provides a great opportunity for partnerships with the CALD community relating to disability and with the aged care sector for ageing specific expertise.

Cohealth

- Gateways Western Melbourne is now partnering with Cohealth to support parents living with a disability. This partnership is a new and exciting collaboration designed to offer parenting support through a disability lens. Cohealth, as a leading service provider on the Childfirst Alliance in Western Metro Melbourne, has partnered with us to support warm referrals so that we can be part of a multi-disciplinary support team.
- This partnership has started out in a very positive way as Clare Barrett, Executive Manager, Western Melbourne, and Mo Conolly, Justice Response Leader, Cohealth, have already been exploring opportunities for further collaboration to support families across Western Melbourne.