
**YACAABA CENTRE
INFORMATION & COUNSELLING SERVICE
PORT STEPHENS INC.**

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7.8.14

Addressing the question of the Yacaaba Centre having more money than they are 'letting on'

While it is true that the Yacaaba Centre does have 'spare' money we take our obligations very seriously, paying into provisions fund for long service leave, sick leave, annual leave and holding funds to pay superannuation and PAYG tax. So many services in the state have gone 'out of business' after this Reform without any 'spare' money to meet these obligations to their staff.

Our professional staff are a dedicated team and the last time we needed to introduce a new staff member was 2008. We love our jobs.

It is also true that we receive donations to the service from our generous community. It is our belief that this money should not be used for running expenses but should be for the benefit of the clients. Because of this we have been able to provide funds for many diverse extras, for example food vouchers, prescriptions, taxi vouchers, assistance with bills for the people of this community.

Addressing the question of 'what about the Trafalgar property'?

This property is owned by the Port Stephens Women's Crisis and Support Group Inc. which is an incorporated association in its own right. ABN 96 478 649 382 and will continue to provide housing to single mature aged women facing homelessness.

These properties are completely independent and will not be 'taken over' by the new service provider. The current building occupied by the Yacaaba Centre and the other two Compass properties will become part of the new service package and will be 'handed back' to them.

The Yacaaba Centre must vacate the home we have occupied for the past 19 years by the 31st October 2014, hence the push to find Yacaaba a new home and the sign out the front of our Stockton Street office.

Addressing the question that the Yacaaba Centre is a 'rampant feminist organisation'

The Yacaaba Centre Information and Counselling Service Port Stephens Inc. was formerly known as Women's Information & Counselling Service Port Stephens Inc. The name was changed to reflect that the Yacaaba Centre is **not just a service for women**.

It was formed by the local community as a result of needs in the Tomaree Peninsula primarily for women and families who were victims of Domestic Violence and subsequent trauma

The Yacaaba Centre has changed over the 25 years since inception to meet the different needs of the local community.

Yacaaba provides services to men and has done so since inception.

The Yacaaba Centre is in no way a feminist organization. One of the Yacaaba Centre's goals is to foster an environment where **any** individual who has experienced adversity is fostered and encouraged, regardless of gender, religious affiliation or ethnicity. The Centre had special project funding for men and after that was exhausted the Centre continued to see men.

Addressing the question of what Yacaaba will provide in the future

The Yacaaba Centre has a strong service footprint in the eastern end of the Port Stephens area and has been providing a valuable service of counselling, information and referral for those in need for the last 25 years. The Yacaaba Centre aims to continue to provide a physical place where those in distress can 'turn up' and can get help or a safe place to be. These services will include:

- Comprehensive assistance to clients and families in crisis due to Domestic Violence,
- Assistance to clients who have experienced abuse,
- Assistance and guidance to clients and family members with mental health issues ,
- Support for clients and their families who have a gambling or alcohol addiction,
- Counselling to those who are going through issues of grief and loss and relationship problems
- Comprehensive resource library (funded by a grant provided by the Department of Corrective Services),
- A free Legal clinic by Hunter Legal Service in conjunction with The Yacaaba Centre,
- Working in conjunction with a large number of community groups to provide relief food hampers and emergency needs,
- Referring clients in need to appropriate other services.