



ConnectGroups
helping support groups & individuals



Annual Report **2011**
2012

ConnectGroups is the Peak Body for Self Help and Support Groups in WA. Advocating for Self Help and Support Groups since 1983

Who we are

We are a Non-for-profit organisation that promotes the philosophy concept and practice of self help within Western Australia and facilitates its development and effectiveness by educating, linking and empowering individuals, families and groups to meet their specific needs.

What we do

We provide assistance to existing and emerging Self Help and Support Groups. And linking individuals affected by a wide range of life affecting Issues to them.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The ConnectGroups Board's main focus in the 2011/2012 financial year has been transitioning the organisation to Peak Body status. This strategic shift is a reflection of the maturity of the organisation as well as its capacity to provide a service and governance harbour for our diverse member groups and be the voice of the Self Help and Support Group area of the Not For Profit sector.

The Board has been in continuous strategic mode to fulfil this agenda and this work continues. That strength is reflected in the quality of the Directors on the Board including members who joined the Board in the 2011/2012 financial year. An initiative/forum provided by the Institute of Company Directors to bring together prospective Board Directors and organisations with Board opportunities provided ConnectGroups with two candidates of a high quality; one of which is Garry Jacobs (now Treasurer) whose current Financial Report illustrates the quality of fiscal management that ConnectGroups is known for.

Much activity in the NFP sector has related to the funding provisions of the last State Budget and its procurement reform. Of note is the simplification and streamlining regarding the managements of service agreements. The funding has had benefits for organisations previously stretched in their abilities to deliver services and retain good staff with much viability pressures now lifted so that NFP Boards can focus on the core functions of strategy, governance and sustainability. The work of the new ACNC will sharpen the work of Boards as it begins overseeing registration, standards, compliance and accreditation in the sector.

Our partnership approach continues to be a strength for ConnectGroups and was recently acknowledged by and supported with funds from the Mental Health Commission; who appointed ConnectGroups to broker funds to Self Help and Support Groups across WA. This is an exciting initiative that adds welcome value to our core funding from the Department of Communities and Lotterywest.

I would like to thank the Board, CEO and Staff of ConnectGroups for another year of disciplined service delivery and outstanding outcomes that keep our members at the centre of what we do.

Pearl Proud



EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

This has been a financial year filled with surprises – surprises that have humbled us. We have been formally and informally acknowledged for the contribution made in bringing to light the needs of Self Help and Support Groups in WA. We have been commended on our innovative practices and willingness to look to innovation as the way forward.

As what we would define as a small Not for Profit Organisation, ConnectGroups finds itself in a stronger position and better able to fulfil both its grass root and Peak activities. We are better equipped to address the challenges of new state and federal government reforms; such as the State Procurement Reform, as well as looking to meet the requirements stipulated by the new Federal Regulatory Body, the ACNC.

However, it has been our objective to leave a lasting impression on those that cross our path and to encourage partnerships. Our strength continues to be that we have not lost sight of what our objectives are and have kept them in the forefront of all of our decision making processes. A strong focus this year has been to address the question of “what we do” and “who our members are”, and in response, we developed a series of marketing tools which we believe will support us in getting that message across.

We have maintained our sturdy relationship with the Department for Communities, built a meaningful relationship with the Mental Health Commission and most recently with the Department of Premier and Cabinet; simultaneously exploring different avenues of working more efficiently with our members, through the establishment of a Consultative Group.

My personal thanks go to the unsung heroes: our group members, the Connect-Groups staff who work beyond my expectations, to the Board of Management for their wisdom, and to the wonderful CRS volunteer workers.

I look forward to continuing to contribute to the health and mental health wellbeing of the WA community.

Antonella Segre



Strategic Direction

The Present

- Establish and maintain clear and simple strategies to guide the organisation through future growth
- Ensure significant and relevant services are provided to key stakeholders
- Increase membership in regional and rural WA
- Announce funding opportunity for self help and support groups
- Launch Certificate IV facilitation pilot
- Develop a social enterprise model



The Future

- Ensure sustainability of organisation and key stakeholders
- Increase partnership opportunities with the Government , Corporate and Philanthropic sectors.
- Increase level of service delivery in regional and rural WA
- Secure future funding for support group members
- Secure accreditation of facilitation qualification
- Foster a Self Help and Support Group hub

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Balance Sheet	2011-2012	2010-2011
ASSETS	\$494,117	\$162,728
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities	\$350,862	\$34,426
Payroll Liabilities	\$16,550	\$13,598
Total LIABILITIES	\$367,412	\$48,024
Net Assets	\$126,705	\$114,704
EQUITY		
Retained Earnings	\$111,859	\$86,656
Current year profit/loss	\$14,845	\$28,048
Total EQUITY	\$126,705	\$114,704

Profit and Loss	2011-2012	2010-2011
INCOME		
Grants	\$371,906	\$353,455
Operations	\$7,674	\$4,928
Other Income	\$8,212	\$11,047
Total INCOME	\$387,792	\$369,431
EXPENSES		
Personnel Expenses	\$236,709	\$156,380
Operations Expenses	\$20,074	\$22,985
General Expenses	\$116,164	\$162,018
Total EXPENSES	\$372,947	\$341,382
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	\$14,845	\$28,048

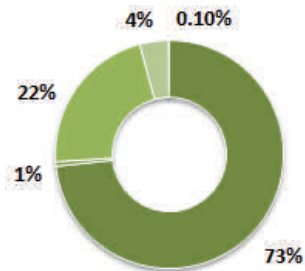


Revenue Resources

Funds Description	2010-2011	2011-2012
DFC- Main Funding	\$237,852	\$284,471
DFC- Grants	\$7,500	\$2,500
Lotterywest Grants	\$73,240	\$84,545
Other Income	\$1,182	\$15,886
Health Department Grant	\$33,682	\$390
Total Funding	\$353,455	\$387,792

2012 Revenue Resources

- DFC - Main Funding
- DFC - Grants
- Lotterywest Grants
- Other Income
- Health Department Grant



Summary of Activities

	2011	2012
Grant Applications Submitted	6	7
Total registered calls	543	810
Hits to ConnectGroups Website	1,358,954	1,815,998
Web Directory Visits	45,092	62,997
Workshops Delivered	8	8
Newsletters distributed	6	6
Newsletter readers	2,079	2,105
Stakeholders attending training	123	94
Members	460	611

2011 Commonwealth People's Forum - WACOSS

On the 25th October ConnectGroups ran a Learning Journey session for the CHOGM delegates. The Learning Journey presented the nature and role of support groups and the positive impact they have and/or have the potential to have on “Culture, Identity, Peace and Security” at both a community and individual level.

This interactive session aimed to “promote the philosophy, concept and practice of self-help within Western Australia and to facilitate its development and effectiveness by educating, linking, and empowering individuals, families, and groups to meet their specific needs.

The Pay It Forward Plan - Mental Health Commission

Based on the results of the 2011 National Awareness Day Symposium, ConnectGroups initiated conversations with the Mental Health Commission around accessing funds and engaging in a brokerage role which would see a system of funding driven by the ‘grass-root’ needs of Self Help and Support Groups as well as being centrally processed in an equitable way. The Mental Health Commission also recognised the significance that:

- Self Help and Support Groups require recurrent funding for their security and sustainability; and
- Mental health issues are overarching issues that impact on all Self Help and Support Groups, their members, families, friends and carers.

Self Help & Support Groups Care Package - Mental Health Commission

This study opportunity is being offered to ConnectGroups members who are currently facilitating Self Help & Support Groups. ConnectGroups, together with the Mental Health Commission will be offering 20 full scholarships to those individuals who would like to formalise their facilitation skills.

HAVoC Hope After Violent Crime - Lotterywest

This study was established to look at the support services available to victims of crime in WA. The aim of HAVoC is to develop a Best-Practice Model of Group Support for Victims of Violent Crime in Western Australia.

Initially conceived by Dr Ann O'Neil, founder and director of angelhands, the project is being managed by ConnectGroups with a consortium of 5 organisations participating in the collection of data.

Road Trauma - Direction

After participating in the research around existing Aboriginal Road Trauma Services in WA and as part of its participation in the Road Trauma Support Service Research reference group, ConnectGroups decided to direct a Road Trauma Support Group . This Support Group is open to anyone who is affected by Road Trauma – directly or indirectly. This includes survivors, family members, friends, Emergency Services Officers (as individuals) and anyone who feels they are affected by any Road Trauma incident. The group offers support, information & advocacy around road trauma issues.

2012-2013 CONNECTGROUPS STRATEGIC PLAN

Key Strategic Priorities - Our Goals

Organisational Sustainability

- Ensure that ConnectGroups is a strong, viable and sustainable organisation

Linkage and Coordination

- Ensure ConnectGroups is a key link and conduit in the relationships between Government, service providers and the Self Help and Support Group sector

Information Dissemination

- Ensure that ConnectGroups is recognised by the sector and the community (consumers) as the primary source of information about and for Self Help and Support Groups

Sector Development - Training

- Acknowledgement and Recognition of ConnectGroups as a Centre of Excellence for Self Help and Support Groups training

Sector Development - Infrastructure

- Ensure a comprehensive range of support is available to Self Help and support groups to enable them to survive, prosper and grow

Advocacy and Representation

- Community wide recognition of ConnectGroups role as the Peak Body for Self Help and Support groups

2012-2013 CONNECTGROUPS STRATEGIC PLAN

Key Strategic Priorities - Our Strategies

Organisational Sustainability

- Foster new business partnerships, sponsorships and opportunities
- Conduct ongoing assessment of financial resources
- Grow the business within the available operating revenue structure
- Diversify ConnectGroups funding base
- Strengthen relationships with ConnectGroups members and funding providers
- Ensure that appropriate business standards and clear operational procedures are in place
- Develop quality evaluation systems to measure our effectiveness

Linkage and Coordination

- Maintain an efficient Self Help and Support Group referral system
- Foster and support networks of Self Help and Support Groups with similar interests and conditions
- Provide effective local links with key state and national bodies in a consultative capacity

Information Dissemination

- Research and implement best governance practice
- Foster and develop consistent information streams to members throughout the state

Sector Development- Training

- Provide training to start new Self Help and Support Groups in WA
- Develop and deliver specialised training to group members

Sector Development- Infrastructure

- Provide resources to start Self Help and Support Groups
- Provide mentoring and other support to existing groups
- Foster development of a diverse range of Self Help and Support Groups
- Identify and demonstrate best practice models
- Research and identify gaps group sector sustainability

Advocacy and Representation

- Advocate on behalf of our members on issues affecting the sector
- Raise the profile of ConnectGroups as a peak body
- Provide sector-wide responses to government policies

ConnectGroups Consultative Group

The Consultative Group was established in 2012, in line with CG's 2011 Blue Print "Towards Good Practice" and Consumer engagement strategy. The role of the Consultative Group has been to advise and make recommendations as to our service delivery and policy development for the benefit of our member groups. It has been working closely with us, contributing with input into our research projects, events, advocacy programs and grant initiatives. Essentially representing Self Help and Support Groups at a grass root level bringing to our attention their needs and any opportunities which we could then action.

Act Belong Commit

In 2012 ConnectGroups became a local partner of the Act-Belong-Commit Program. ABC is a community-based health promotion campaign that encourages people to take action to improve their mental health and wellbeing. This evidence-based campaign was developed primarily from research undertaken by Curtin University into people's perceptions of mental health and the behaviours they believed protected and promoted good mental health. The campaign is directed by Mentally Healthy WA at Curtin University, and implemented through health services, local governments, women's health services and not-for-profit groups.

Multicultural Mental Health Service Providers Group

The Committee's main focus is information sharing specific to Multicultural Mental Health Services. The committee members are primarily from agencies whose core target group are those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds. 2012 saw the development of a 'Mental Health Needs and Spirituality in Diverse Communities' document following a consultative process with spiritual leaders from different religious groups.

AWARDS

2012 ICCWA

ConnectGroups, in partnership with Curtin University won the ICCWA 2012 Research Award - for its research around existing Aboriginal Road Trauma Services in WA and as part of its participation in the Road Trauma Support Service Research reference group.

2012 CRS Australia Employer of the Year - Finalist

Polytechnic West - Certificate of Appreciation

Cambridge International College - Certificate of Appreciation

2012 Aim Management Scholarship

CONTRIBUTIONS

2012 The Medical Forum WA 'Doc of the Swan' Fundraising Event fun sailing race

The Medical Forum WA 'Doc of the Swan' charity fun sailing race was held at the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on Sunday, on March 2012.

The organisations that participated in this fundraising event where: WA Special Families, Childlimbs and Defence Special Needs Support Groups.

WA Charity Direct

Seed funding was received through the Charity to support 2 new emerging support groups.

2011 SolarisCare Symposium - Presenter

2012 Asia Pacific Mental Health Conference - Presenter

Acknowledgements

ConnectGroups Board and Staff thanks and acknowledges the Department for Communities, its Director and Staff: Ray Peters, Helen McGinty and Kay Channer for their constant support and belief in the work that we do and in their ability of sharing our vision.

It extends its thanks and gratitude to all of the organisations whose support have been a key to its growth and development. A special mention to:

Mental Health Commission

Commissioner Eddie Bartnik

Mark Cowie

Louise Howe

Lotterywest

Lee Grmas

Jo Wilkie

WACOSS

Irina Cattalini

Charity Direct

Peter Carter

Medical Forum WA

Rob McEvoy

CRS

Noelene Spinks

Central Institute of Technology

Stephanie Chan

Department of Veterans Affairs

Jumae Atkinson

Developmental Disability Council of WA

Taryn Harvey

Fremantle Multicultural Centre

Vlasta Mitchell and her team

Linkwest

Jane Chilcott and her team

Department of Premier and Cabinet

Maxine Drake

Simone Main

North & South Metropolitan Health Services

Adina Quattrini

Karen Bishoff

Our Consultants and Friends

Nancy Pierce

Elda Kingston

Dr Lauren Breen

Dr Catherine Ferguson

Dr Di McKillop

Tashi Wolf

To our lovely CRS Volunteers and Tafe Students - Gary Thompson, Ambrose Scaffidi, Bron Parry, Karl Dyktynski, John Barker, Jacqueline Rea, Sit Hoon Ling & Mui Ling Ku.

2011 - 2012 Board of Management

Board Executives

Chairperson

Pearl Proud

Vice Chairperson

Sumit Dutta

Treasurer

Garry Jacobs

Secretary

Kirsten Tannenbaum

Service Delivery Portfolio

John Burrell

Funding Portfolio

Faye Baxter

HR/Policy and Procedures

Sara Trown

Members Advocacy

Alison Flanagan

Ann O'Neill

2011 - 2012 Staff

Antonella Segre: Executive Officer

Ivi Sanchez

Juanaili Hultzsch

Tracey Brooke

Juliet Nota

Lisa Barrett

Aimee Van Dyun

Miguel Beaumont



Government of **Western Australia**
Department for **Communities**

Building Strong, Vibrant Communities



Government of **Western Australia**
Mental Health Commission



WA charity direct
giving 100% to charity



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helping support groups & individuals

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E: info@connectgroups.org.au

Support Groups Association WA Inc (previously WISH)

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