



# KARITANE<sup>®</sup>

Partnerships made for parents

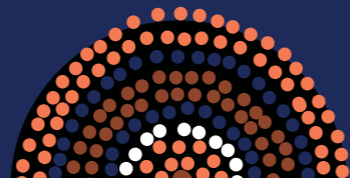


### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Karitane acknowledges the Traditional and Continuing Owners of the land and waters of Australia, and pays its respects to Elders, past and present. We pay tribute to the wisdom, richness, diversity and resilience of First Nations peoples and cultures.

### VIEW OUR RAP

The First Nations artwork elements featured throughout this Annual Report are taken from *Connected Journeys*, a commissioned piece by artist Sharen Clayton. This artwork tells the story of families and communities coming together through Karitane's services, creating a strong network of care that helps families grow and thrive together.



# Contents

Chair and Chief Executive Officer's Foreword	1
Message from our Patron	3
Parents Should Not Have to Learn Alone	6
<hr/>	
<b>ABOUT KARITANE</b>	<b>7</b>
Who We Are	7
Our Purpose, Vision and Strategy	8
Our Impact and Highlights	9
Our Reach	11
<hr/>	
<b>OUR SERVICES</b>	<b>13</b>
Continuum of Care	15
Performance and Progress	17
Overview of Our Services	20
<hr/>	
<b>OUR RESEARCH AND INSIGHTS</b>	<b>25</b>
Research and Innovation	25
Education and Training	27
Governance	29
People and Culture	31
<hr/>	
<b>FINANCIAL OVERVIEW</b>	<b>35</b>
Treasurer's Report	35
Funding and Partnerships	39

### KARITANE PATRON AND AMBASSADOR



Our Patron  
The Hon Jillian Skinner AM



Our Ambassador  
Laura Jayes

# Chair and Chief Executive Officer's Foreword

On behalf of the Karitane Board and Executive Team, we are proud to present the 2025 Annual Report – a reflection of a year defined by innovation, values-driven leadership, clinical excellence and collective impact.

At Karitane, our purpose is clear: to give every child the best start in life by empowering families, supporting parents and strengthening communities. In 2024–25, we translated this purpose into action through bold initiatives, future-focused partnerships and a steadfast commitment to equity and cultural safety.

## LEADING THROUGH INNOVATION

This year, we accelerated our Digital Transformation Strategy, expanding virtual models of care and integrating digital solutions that make parenting support more accessible and inclusive. The Virtual Residential Parenting Service (VRPS), extended through to 2030 by the Minns Government, provided 24-hour wraparound clinical support to over 520 families across NSW. This sets a new national benchmark in digital health.

Meanwhile, our integrated child and family hubs in Fairfield and Campbelltown, supported by the NSW Government and philanthropic partners, reimaged how co-designed, locally-delivered services can meet the needs of families and young parents. These hubs align directly with the Australian Government's Early Years Strategy and its recently announced Thriving Kids Initiative, as well as the NSW Brighter Beginnings Framework. Karitane has been recognised as a national exemplar in bringing these policies to life through innovation and place-based leadership.

In June 2025, Karitane's leadership was also recognised internationally through the CEO's acceptance and participation in the International Foundation for Integrated Care Summer School in Oxford, UK. This global platform highlighted the relevance of our hubs, digital care models and culturally informed practice to international best practice in integrated child and family care. The exchange of knowledge affirmed that our work aligns with and reflects global standards in prevention, early intervention and integrated place-based family support.

## THE PARTNERSHIPS FOR LOCAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (PLACE) TOUR: SHOWCASING INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

We were also delighted to host the PLACE Tour at Fairfield. This tour brought together leaders from across government, community, philanthropy and academia to experience first-hand the impact of integrated, place-based supports for families. Through a curated visit to our Fairfield hub services and programs, we demonstrated how innovation, co-design and partnerships are reshaping the system of care for children and parents. The tour not only celebrated what is working, but also sparked new collaborations. It informed the future direction of policy and investment, and we are excited about the PLACE strategy implementation.

## CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

Excellence in clinical care remains the foundation of Karitane's impact. This year, we supported 22,605 clients. Of these, 100% of parents reported improved parenting knowledge and 98% rated our services as supportive and helpful. Our stepped model of care – from prevention to intensive interventions – ensured that every family received the right support at the right time, in ways that respected their culture and context.

Research and education underpin this excellence. In 2024–25, Karitane secured \$8.2 million in partnered research funding. We published 12 peer-reviewed journal articles, and presented at 26 national and international conferences. These outputs are shaping national benchmarks in perinatal and infant mental health, toddler behaviour and integrated models of care – ensuring that the voices of Australian families influence global practice.

## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND POLICY INFLUENCE

Partnerships remain central to how we work and what we achieve. For example, through our partnerships and collaboration on the ForWhen national perinatal mental health navigation service, we supported over 3000 families this year. Our leadership in ForWhen is another example of how we shape policy and service design at a national scale. It was wonderful that this program achieved National Digital Mental Health Accreditation, and that the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing extended it for a further three years.

Karitane also contributed to several major public inquiries, including the NSW Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding, and the Tasmanian Government's Select Committee on Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric health services. We shared insights on early childhood investments, sector collaboration, care navigation and the Select Committee on Foundational and Disability Supports Available for Children and Young People in NSW.

But Karitane's work does not just align with policy – we help to shape it. Our integrated hubs, digital innovations and culturally safe practices are tangible demonstrations of the First 2000 Days Policy in action. These hubs showcase how national aspirations can translate into meaningful outcomes for children and families.

## EMBEDDING OUR VALUES AND INNOVATE RAP

Innovation, respect, excellence and collaboration continue to guide every decision and action we take. Through our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we supported 485 First Nations clients across Karitane services. Hosting our first NAIDOC celebration at the Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre was a milestone that reflected our ongoing journey of reconciliation, respect and equity.

## INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Our people are our greatest strength. With a staff satisfaction rating of 92%, a new Wellbeing at Work framework, strengthened clinical supervision and expanded leadership pathways, we are investing in the workforce of the future. Karitane's values-led, flexible culture continues to attract and empower dedicated professionals who walk alongside families every day with compassion and skill.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Karitane's strategy is fully aligned with Australian and state government priorities, including the recently announced Thriving Kids initiative in prevention, early engagement and integrated supports. As Australia advances the National Early Years Strategy and begins to implement the Thriving Kids Initiative, we not only align with – but also lead in demonstrating – how these frameworks look in practice. We will continue to scale our hubs, expand digital care and embed co-design to ensure families have timely, equitable and culturally safe access to the supports they need.

We close this year with gratitude – for our partners, our staff, consumer representatives, peer workers, volunteers, all our funders, and the families who trust us. We offer a very special note of thanks and deep appreciation to long-serving Board Directors, Scientia Professor Valsamma Eapen and Mr Garth Ross, after 11 and 25 years of service respectively. We also recognise our outgoing directors, Ms Sarah Auld and Ms Kathy Jones.

Together, we are building a stronger, more connected system of care where every family feels seen, supported and equipped for the journey of parenting.



  
Grainne O'Loughlin,  
Chief Executive Officer



  
Lee Carpenter,  
Chair of the Board

# Message from Our Patron

Karitane stands at the forefront of early parenting support in Australia – a bold, compassionate leader delivering world-class, value-based care.

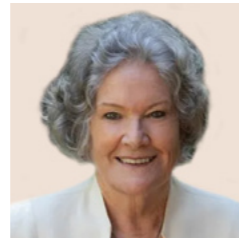
In 2024–25, Karitane once again demonstrated its unwavering commitment to families by expanding innovative, evidence-based services that deliver measurable outcomes and lasting impact. What distinguishes Karitane is not just the depth of its expertise, but also the breadth of its vision. This is an organisation unafraid to lead – setting new benchmarks in service design, digital transformation, and perinatal infant and child mental health support.

The expansion of Karitane’s integrated child and family hubs is a shining example of place-based care done right. These hubs are more than service centres – they are welcoming, co-designed spaces that reflect the strengths and diversity of each community. They demonstrate how integration, working in partnership, access and equity can be brought together in a model that is practical, personal and profoundly effective.

Equally inspiring is Karitane’s leadership in value-based healthcare – a commitment to delivering the right care, in the right place, at the right time, with outcomes that truly matter to families. Whether through virtual residential parenting programs, culturally responsive community services or sector-leading research and education, Karitane remains focused on delivering high-quality care that is both accountable and compassionate.

At the heart of all this work is a team of professionals whose dedication, empathy and clinical expertise ensure that families feel seen, supported and empowered in the critical first 2000 days. These professionals walk alongside parents during some of life’s most vulnerable moments – and in doing so, they change lives.

It is a privilege to serve as Patron to such a visionary organisation. I commend the Board, leadership and workforce for another year of extraordinary service to children, families and communities across Australia.



The Hon Jillian Skinner AM  
Karitane Patron





# Parents Should Not Have to Learn Alone

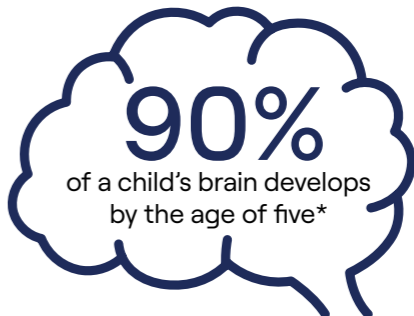
## THE NEED

The first 2000 days of life shape a child’s future, with 90% of brain growth occurring before they are five years old. At birth, the average baby’s brain is about a quarter of the size of the average adult brain. Incredibly, a baby’s brain doubles in size over their first year, achieving almost full growth by age five.

This is a critical time for a child’s physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. Positive early experiences and secure attachment lead to optimal brain development, as well as providing the foundational skills children require for lifelong learning and wellbeing. A child’s developing neural pathways, connections and wiring are all influenced by how parents and carers interact with them. In other words, these early years are critical for a child to reach their full potential.

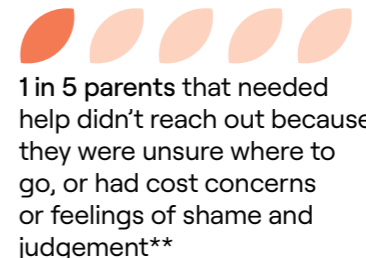
Karitane supports families through this critical time by providing world-class, evidence-based services, education and support aligned to the principles in the National Early Years Strategy and the NSW Brighter Beginnings First 2000 Days Framework.

Our support services cover sleep and settling, feeding and nutrition, establishing routines, toddler behaviour, emotional dysregulation, and perinatal infant and child mental health.



**85%**  
of parents say they have a moderate-to-high need of support\*\*

**42%**  
of all parents wish they had asked for help sooner\*\*



**♀♂**  
1 in 5 mums and 1 in 10 dads experience postnatal depression or anxiety\*\*\*

## HOW PARENTING CHALLENGES MAKE PARENTS FEEL

Parents’ descriptions of their feelings can be broadly grouped into three themes: guilty/like a failure, stressed/overwhelmed or helpless/lonely\*\*

**GUILTY/LIKE A FAILURE**

“Felt like a failure”

“Guilty about the choices I was making – particularly about how other people and family would perceive me”

“I wasn’t good enough”

**STRESSED/OVERWHELMED**

“I felt overwhelmed and stressed, and had no idea how I was going to navigate the world of feeding”

“Stressed, exhausted, unhappy”

“I felt drained and exhausted – I also felt like I wouldn’t be able to get through it”

**HELPLESS/LONELY**

“Felt trapped without support”

“Like I didn’t know what I was doing and a little bit helpless”

“Really alone, beyond tired and no support, no breaks, waking up eight times a night – hopeless”

\* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development - NICHD Study \*\*Karitane Parenting Today Survey, 2021  
\*\*\*Australian Government Productivity Commission

# KARITANE®

## Who We Are

INNOVATION IN ACTION – FOR FAMILIES, BY FAMILIES



For more than a century, Karitane has redefined what it means to support families during the foundational early years. As a pioneering not-for-profit and affiliated health organisation, we deliver future-facing, trauma-informed, culturally responsive care that enables every child to thrive.



We empower families with support – from digitally enabled consultations to community-embedded integrated hubs – delivered by our multidisciplinary team of expert health professionals. Whether it's navigating sleep, behaviour, perinatal mental health or parenting transitions, our care is anchored in empathy, excellence and clinical best practice.



At Karitane, research, education and frontline care converge in a powerful ecosystem. Our stepped model of care ensures every parent receives the right support at the right time – from early engagement to intensive interventions. With every interaction, we advance health equity, dismantle barriers and walk alongside parents on their journey toward confidence and connection.



## Our Strategy

### LEADING WITH PURPOSE, GROWING WITH IMPACT

Karitane's strategy reflects our unwavering commitment to reimagining parenting support in the first 2000 days of life. Our roadmap is bold, scalable and grounded in community co-design, clinical evidence and innovation. We aim not just to respond to demand, but also to shape a system where prevention, early support and equity are the norm.

- |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>  | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| Drive sustainable, adaptive growth to meet evolving community needs | Champion co-designed, consumer-led innovation in service delivery | Forge enduring, high-impact partnerships across sectors | Nurture a values-driven, future-ready workforce | Embody excellence as a high-performing, purpose-driven organisation |

Our strategic direction is not just aspirational – it is operational. We are setting new benchmarks in virtual parenting support, culturally responsive practice, integrated care and digital transformation. With a whole-of-family lens and a national reach, Karitane leads the sector with clarity, compassion and courage.

## Our Purpose

We are trusted early parenting experts empowering families and children to be healthy, confident and resilient.

## Our Vision

Our impact will enable children to have the best start in life.

## Our Values

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <br><b>RESPECT</b><br>Our Relationships | <br><b>INNOVATION</b><br>Our Future Focus | <br><b>EXCELLENCE</b><br>Our Standards | <br><b>COLLABORATION</b><br>Our Partnership Approach |
|--|--|---|---|


# Our Impact and Highlights

## CHANGING LIVES, STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

 **22,605**  
clients supported  
by Karitane

**100%** of parents  
found their  
parenting  
knowledge  
improved

**98%** of parents  
found the  
service  
supportive  
and helpful


 ForWhen achieved National Digital Mental Health Accreditation, recognising the high-quality support delivered to over 3000 new and expectant parents.



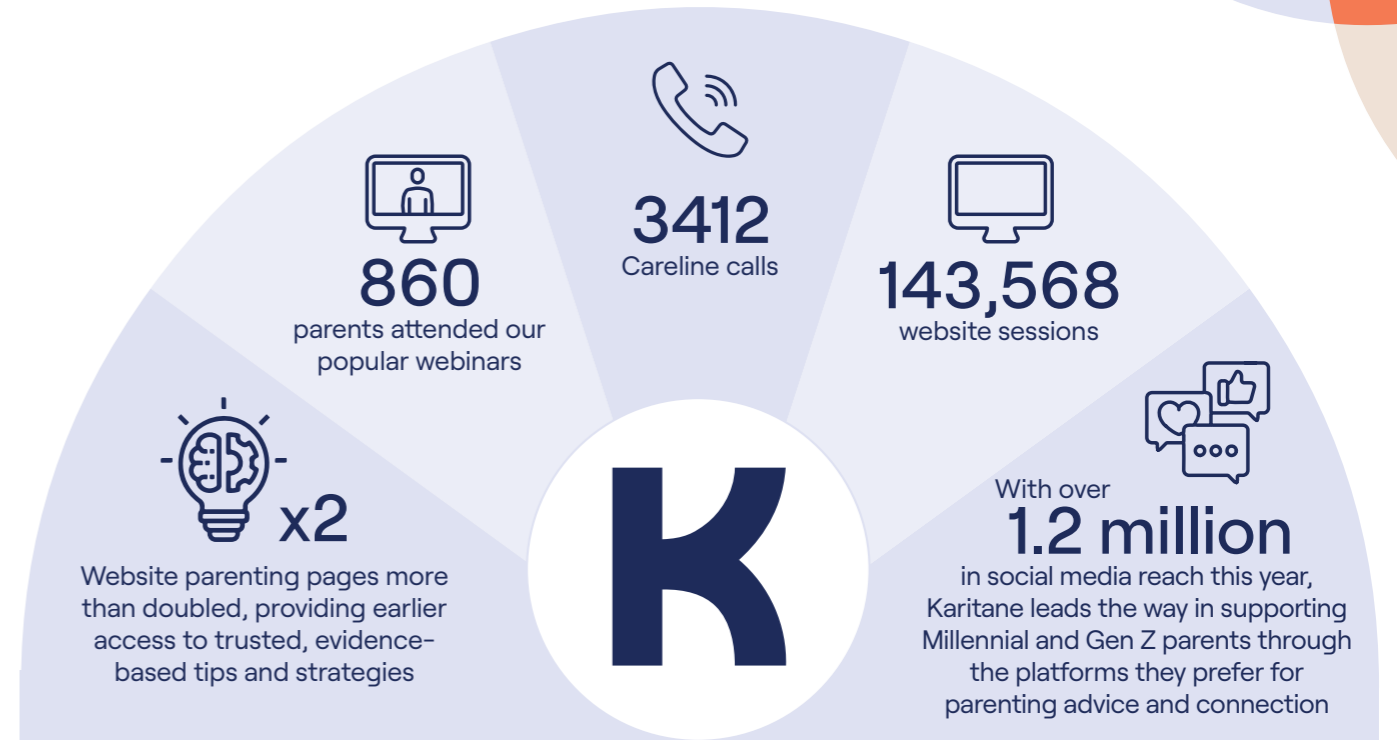
## INTEGRATED CARE HUBS – BRINGING SERVICES TOGETHER FOR FAMILIES

 Two regional centres relocated to enhance accessibility and strengthen engagement with communities in need


 **2324**  
clients supported,  
and 40 playgroups  
provided, in our  
integrated care  
hubs

 Karitane's Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub was nationally recognised as part of the PLACE Listening Tour, showcasing South West Sydney as a leading example of community-driven, place-based family support

## EARLY ENGAGEMENT AND PREVENTION IN PRACTICE



## DRIVING EQUITY THROUGH TARGETED SUPPORT

 **1427**  
Culturally and Linguistically  
Diverse (CALD) clients



Launched our Innovate RAP, reflecting our commitment to respecting First Nations cultures and building a stronger, shared future

**485**  
First Nations clients



**158**  
young parents supported to realise their potential and create positive, long-term outcomes for themselves and their children

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF PARENTING SUPPORT

 **\$14 million**  
commitment from the NSW Government to extend the Virtual Residential Parenting Service for another five years, ensuring families across NSW continue to receive timely, flexible parenting support.

 **\$10.1 million**  
in federal funding confirmed by the Australian Government Minister for Health, Disability and Ageing to continue the ForWhen National Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Navigation Service for three more years, supporting Karitane's leadership in this national consortium.

 **\$852,700**  
in federal funding announced by the Prime Minister through the Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program to co-design a new Shellharbour child and family hub.

# Our Reach

## EXPANDING ACCESS TO EARLY PARENTING SUPPORT ACROSS AUSTRALIA

Karitane delivers specialist early parenting services through place-based, virtual and hybrid models of care, designed to meet families where they are. Through these services, we support families across NSW. In addition, through our leadership of the ForWhen program, families nationally can access vital support during the perinatal period. This expansion ensures more parents – especially those in vulnerable or hard-to-reach communities – can access trusted, timely support.

Our growing national reach reflects a deep commitment to making quality care equitable, accessible and inclusive, so every family has the opportunity to give their child the best start in life.



Key  
 ● PLACE-BASED SERVICES  
 ● VIRTUAL SERVICES (STATEWIDE)



**CARELINE**  
Statewide



**INTEGRATED CHILD AND FAMILY HUBS**  
 Campbelltown  
 Fairfield  
 Newcastle  
 Oran Park  
 Randwick  
 Shellharbour  
 Wollongong  
 Warrarong



**RESIDENTIAL SERVICES AND VIRTUAL RESIDENTIAL PARENTING SERVICES**  
 Campbelltown



**PERINATAL INFANT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
 Campbelltown  
 Carramar  
 Randwick

**ForWhen** FORWHEN  
National



**TODDLER CLINICS**  
 Carramar  
 Campbelltown



**COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**  
 Bankstown  
 Camden  
 Campbelltown  
 Fairfield  
 Forster  
 Liverpool  
 Macarthur  
 Miller  
 Shellharbour  
 Taree  
 Wollondilly



**VOLUNTEER FAMILY CONNECT**  
 Fairfield  
 Liverpool  
 Macarthur  
 Shellharbour  
 Taree  
 Wollondilly

As we work in partnership with parents, we listen deeply to their needs, guide them to their goals, and train and advocate on their behalf for greater support.

PROVIDING SERVICES NATIONWIDE

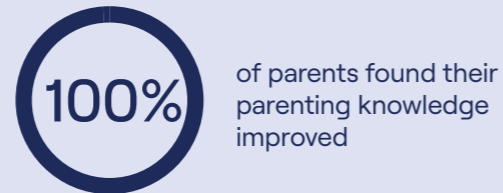
**ForWhen**  
 Guiding new and expecting parents to mental health care

Source: aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia

# Our Services

Karitane pioneers place-based services across NSW, as well as a nationwide 'virtual village', which together allow us to develop effective hybrid models of care to support families with children from birth to five years.

Our world-class, evidence-based services are championed by a highly trained, multidisciplinary team of child and family health nurses, perinatal infant and child mental health nurses, paediatricians, general practitioners, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, cultural and community support workers, and volunteers. Our dedicated team works with each family, with a robust triage system in place to ensure we match the right service to their individual needs.



### TOP PRIMARY REASONS FOR REFERRAL

1. Sleep and settling
2. Toddlers' behaviour
3. Adjusting to parenting, and mental health



### SHRADA'S STORY

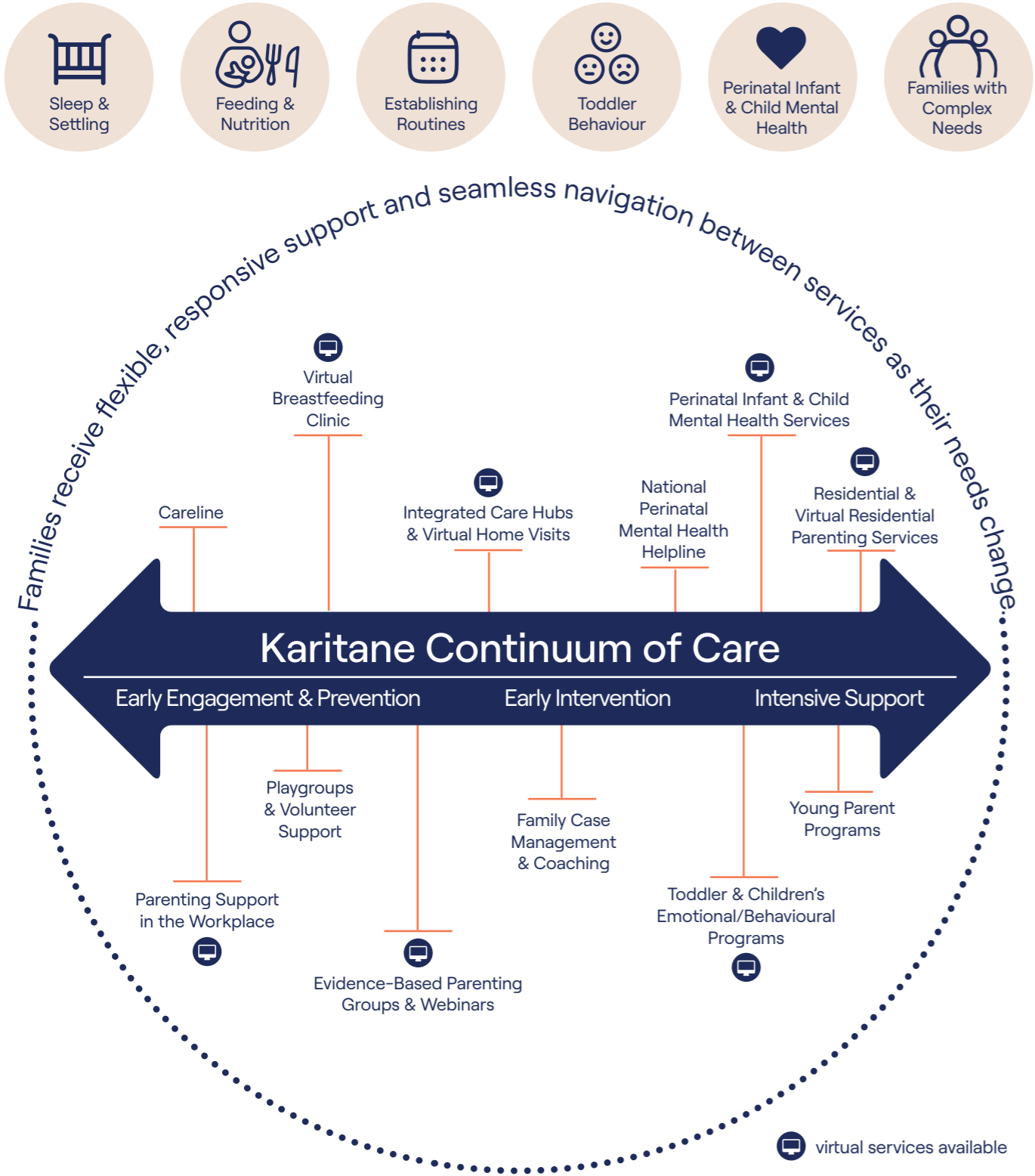
"Nothing can prepare you for motherhood – it's a big adjustment. I was excited to have the bundle of joy, but I wasn't ready for the challenges. I wasn't aware of what would come: big sleepless nights, a lot of feeding and mood changes, things adjusting, not just for me but for the baby and the family. The first year just felt like I was in survival mode. A lot of struggles started from not really getting much support or sleep for myself. At that time, I just wanted someone to say it was going to be OK – that what I was doing was OK.

This is very normal, but I thought there was something wrong with her, or maybe something wrong with me. I wasn't enjoying motherhood, to a point where I realised one day that I was maybe in a place I didn't want to be. And if I wanted to move on – to enjoy my kids and spend time with them – I needed to do better, be better, and get help and support.

*"Karitane is my village, supporting me through this journey. Motherhood is challenging, and it's OK to reach out for help."*

When I reached out to Karitane, I got the mental health support to be a better mum. Along this journey, I also made friends and got help with our sleeping routine. It was the help, support and encouragement I needed. Karitane is my village, supporting me through this journey. Motherhood is challenging, and it's OK to reach out for help. There is a lot of support out there and we don't have to do this alone."

# The first 2000 days shape a child's future



- Sleep & Settling
- Feeding & Nutrition
- Establishing Routines
- Toddler Behaviour
- Perinatal Infant & Child Mental Health
- Families with Complex Needs



Research, education and family partnership are the foundations of our blended, stepped model of care.

# Performance and Progress Across Our Services

At Karitane, we are committed to empowering parents and strengthening families during the critical first 2000 days of their child's life. In 2024–25, our services continued to grow and evolve to meet the changing needs of families – especially those experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. Guided by our values of innovation, respect, collaboration and excellence, we have delivered high-quality, world-class, evidence-based care across clinical services, the National ForWhen perinatal mental health navigator program, and our expanding suite of community-based programs. Our work this year reflects our dedication to whole-of-family wellbeing, culturally responsive practice and strengthening partnerships that extend our reach and deepen our impact.



Tess Gordon, Chief of Staff, PLACE; Andrew Davitt, Director of Collaborative Solutions, PLACE; Grainne O'Loughlin, CEO, Karitane; Sean Gordon AM, Board Chair, PLACE

## CLINICAL SERVICES: DELIVERING EXCELLENCE WHERE IT MATTERS MOST

Karitane's clinical services continue to redefine how families engage with health and parenting support. We deliver gold-standard, trauma-informed, culturally safe care through a stepped-care model that is accessible, responsive and outcomes-driven.

Our integrated child and family hubs are truly innovative – blending clinical excellence with local insights, data and needs. In 2024–25, our hubs offered more than just services; they also created a powerful space for healing, connection and culturally embedded care. Over 2324 clients accessed individual consultations for sleep, feeding and behavioural concerns, supported by over 40 playgroups as essential soft-entry points. This year, Karitane's Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub was nationally recognised as part of the PLACE Listening Tour, showcasing South West Sydney as a leading example of community-driven, place-based family support.

The Virtual Residential Parenting Service (VRPS), now extended through to 2030 by the Minns Government, is setting a national precedent for 24-hour, wraparound digital care. This revolutionary service offers families intensive, real-time clinical support in the comfort of home – dismantling barriers like distance, stigma and cost.

This year, at our Residential service, we enhanced our father-inclusive practice, supporting 195 fathers through the service. We also welcomed 58 First Nations clients into the service. Guided by family feedback, we introduced a group program schedule, delivering 227 sessions on topics that included responsive settling, sensory play, toddler behaviour and parent wellbeing.



Grainne O'Loughlin, CEO, Karitane; Shrada Singh; Dr David Saliba MP

Karitane's perinatal mental health team continues to deliver life-changing outcomes for parents and infants. This year, we deepened our partnership with UNSW to develop a new long-term outcomes framework that will shape national benchmarks in early parenting support.

We have been progressing the \$6.5 million redevelopment of the Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub, co-funded by the NSW Government and Paul Ramsay Foundation. This future-focused space will provide a 'one-stop-shop' of parenting services, including mental health, Toddler Clinics, digital health support and wraparound supports from community, health and early education partners.

Co-design remains at the heart of this work, with six multilingual community sessions engaging over 80 local participants, including children. Monthly partnership and co-design workshops with up to 15 local organisations are now shaping how this hub will meet the needs of the community for years to come. We look forward to opening the doors of this beautiful, exciting new space in early 2026.

## FORWHEN: NATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MENTAL HEALTH NAVIGATION

In 2024–25, ForWhen supported over 3000 families: a 9.7% year-on-year increase and a testament to our expanding national footprint and trust. With \$10.1 million in renewed federal investment, we are now scaling to reach more families through the Australian Government's Digital Mental Health Grant.

Our leadership includes developing the world's first Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Clinical Navigator Competency Framework: a landmark in workforce development. This year, we also embedded two Aboriginal Family Support Workers, who – guided by our Yarning Lead – are delivering culturally safe wraparound care to First Nations families, with extraordinary impact. Their presence has deepened trust and expanded equitable access for First Nations families across Australia.

This year, ForWhen gained significant national attention, featuring in ABC National News TV, regional radio and digital news outlets. A standout piece highlighted the vital role of supporting dads during the perinatal period. This increased media coverage has raised awareness of the service, helping more expectant and new parents know where to turn for trusted perinatal and infant mental health support.



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS: STRENGTHENING CONNECTION AND CAPABILITY

Karitane's community programs continued to expand our reach and impact, offering inclusive, world-class, evidence-based parenting support across metro Sydney and regional NSW. From playgroups to peer-led programs, these initiatives reflect the strength and resilience of families and communities. Karitane's community programs are structured around three key pillars: Young Parents, Family Support and Community Connections. These ensure we meet families where they are, with tailored, culturally inclusive and accessible support across the early years.

### EMPOWERING YOUNG PARENTS

Our support for young parents remained a cornerstone of our work in 2024–25. Village Connect (VC) secured renewed funding through to 2026 and expanded its clinical and allied health capacity, including speech pathology and occupational therapy. VC and the Karitane Young Parents Program (KYPP) partnered with TAFE and digital inclusion specialists to ensure young parents could achieve their goals. Several of the participants became peer facilitators, who then delivered parenting programs to others.

### FAMILY SUPPORT FOR BRIGHTER FUTURES

This year, Karitane Linking Families (KLF) recognised the unique needs of the communities we serve, providing over \$150,000 in family support – kindly donated by Goods 360 – to support local families. Through generous partnerships and donations, we distributed essential care items and provided inclusive excursions for families, creating opportunities for connection, play and belonging. These experiences helped to ensure that families with children of all abilities could participate fully and parents could feel supported in their journeys.

Our Volunteer Family Connect (VFC) program extended to four locations and launched a new promotional video in partnership with Western Sydney University. Our 61 volunteers again played a critical role in extending connection and support, especially in areas of need, such as Fairfield, Macarthur and regional areas including Shellharbour and Taree.

### BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Through our partnership with First Steps Count in Taree and Community Hubs Australia, we continued to walk alongside families, particularly those impacted by adversity. Our Community Hubs program supported nine schools in South West Sydney and enabled new initiatives such as Fairfield Fitness Hub: an inclusive sport and wellbeing program that empowers women from CALD backgrounds.



## CHRISTINE'S STORY

"I became a mum later in life: I was in my late 30s when I had my first child. With two kids under 2 and juggling the demands of work, I honestly didn't even think to focus on myself. Their sleeping was so bad, but I had accepted the fact that it was something I just had to wait for them to grow out of. Before coming to Karitane, the boys' nighttime routine was really chaotic, and they'd constantly get out of their beds. But we now have a better routine – a lot calmer, and the boys sleep better in their beds.

*"Reaching out to Karitane is not a sign of weakness. It's a sign of love and care for yourself and your kids"*

For me, having the nurses here 24/7 was such a blessing. I'm so thankful because it allowed me to just focus on the boys and their sleeping. I didn't have to worry about cooking or cleaning or any of that. It was good to have the support and the understanding – they genuinely showed their care for both my wellbeing and the boys'. If you and your child are struggling with a sleep routine, you don't have to accept it. Help is out there. Reaching out to Karitane is not a sign of weakness. It's a sign of love and care for yourself and your kids."

## Overview of Our Services

Across all of Karitane's programs and services, we remain grounded in our purpose and values: walking alongside families, listening deeply and adapting to whatever each community needs. Whether in a consultation room, a community setting or a parent's living room, our team continues to provide trusted, compassionate care in the moments that matter most. Together, we are supporting more children, families and communities to thrive.

### WEEKLY PARENTING WEBINARS

We offer regular, free online parenting workshops. These practical webinars, each led by an expert child and family health nurse, give parents and carers tips and strategies on such issues as sleep and settling, toddler behaviour, feeding, introducing solids, nutrition and fussy eating.

● 860 parents attended webinars

### CARELINE

1300 CARING (1300 227 464)

Our friendly, experienced child and family health nurses provide over-the-phone guidance and encouragement on a transformative suite of topics. These include sleep and settling, establishing routines, toddler behaviour, breastfeeding challenges, and education on solids and nutrition for older babies and toddlers.

● 3412 Careline calls received this year

### FORWHEN

ForWhen is a free national perinatal and infant mental health care-navigation phone service for new and expectant parents. It is delivered in partnership with host sites in each state and territory to connect parents with the services and supports that best match their needs. Karitane acts as the lead agency for ForWhen, with consortium partners that include the Australasian Association of Parenting and Child Health Board (AAPCH), the Parenting Research Centre and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

- 3085 clients this year, +10% vs last year
- 22% clients from rural and regional Australia, +40% vs last year
- 13% CALD clients, +7% vs last year
- 4% First Nations clients, +6% vs last year

### PARENTING SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

As a founding partner of the Family Friendly Workplaces Initiative, we understand the critical leadership role organisations play in supporting their people and those people's families. That's why we offer an extensive range of webinars and world-class, evidence-based education programs to support parents in the workforce. During each webinar, our experienced child and family health nurses provide tips, strategies and opportunities for parents and carers to ask questions.

● 92 parents supported in the workplace

### INTEGRATED CHILD AND FAMILY HUBS

Integrated child and family hubs provide a 'one-stop shop' for families to access the developmental and early intervention services they need to give their children the best start in life. These hubs bring existing services together, helping families with children from birth to school age (0-5) to better navigate the service system, reducing barriers to access and providing additional support to those in need.

Our hybrid model of care means parents can access either place-based or virtual consultation options, or both. Client feedback tells us that choice and flexibility are key factors in how and when families engage with services.

Our integrated child and family hubs also offer individual consultations and parent groups. During individual consultations, clinicians work together with parents and other family members to develop a tailored plan, which typically involves an initial consultation and two or three follow-up sessions. This gives parents and carers the chance to practise skills with the support of our highly trained child and family health nurses. Our nurses will also help to identify any other supports a family may need to give their child the best start in life.

Integrated child and family hubs offer a place-based approach, reflecting the strengths and challenges – and matching the needs – of each community. With a focus on equity, access and bringing services closer to communities with additional vulnerabilities, we have expanded access touchpoints across several different sectors, and increased collaborations, partnerships and locations.

● 2324 clients, +33% vs last year

## VIRTUAL BREASTFEEDING CLINIC

Our Virtual Breastfeeding Clinic, available five days a week, provides timely and accessible support to help families achieve positive breastfeeding outcomes. Breastfeeding is a unique journey that parents and babies learn together, and we are here to guide and encourage families along the way. Our experienced clinicians support parents with a wide range of common challenges, including milk supply, feeding routines, positioning and attachment, recognising feeding cues, managing mastitis and navigating weaning.

• 250 clients, +56% vs last year

## STATEWIDE PLACE-BASED COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

### SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

We provide a range of community groups and programs to support parents and carers with young children – from prenatal to school age. Outcomes include developing positive parent-child relationships and nurturing children's learning and social and emotional experiences.

We support families from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, including those with CALD backgrounds, new migrants, refugees and those from First Nations communities.

Our commitment to partnerships is evident in our strong relationships with NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), Uniting, Mission Australia, The Benevolent Society, 54 Reasons, The Smith Family, Barnardo's Australia and Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation. With these partners, we deliver a variety of world-class, evidence-based community programs to families who experience disadvantage in South West Sydney and regional NSW.

## LEADING THE SUPPORT OF YOUNG PARENTS IN NSW

Karitane has led service support to improve the overall safety, wellbeing, resilience and lifetime trajectories of parents and expectant parents aged 25 years and younger. Karitane has two services specifically for these parents: Village Connect (VC) and the Karitane Young Parent Program (KYPP).

## VILLAGE CONNECT: SUPPORTING PARENTS UNDER 25 IN SOUTH WEST SYDNEY

Funded by the DCJ under the Investment Approach for Social Impact Strategy, VC supports parents and expectant parents, aged 25 years and younger, who live in South West Sydney (SWS). Working with consortium partners that include Uniting and Sonder, our goal is to provide the right supports at the right time to ensure the best outcomes in the first 2000 days of a child's life, and a positive trajectory for families.

VC is culturally informed, designed from robust consultation with the DCJ Aboriginal Core Design Group, and built on the premise that what works for First Nations families works for all. Staff have been trained in and use 'The Common Approach', engaging in communities of practice with other agencies in SWS. The team works to implement Culturally Informed Practice Principles, which have been developed alongside VC to ensure we continue to review and improve our practice and methodologies in line with our cultural lens. VC provides a stepped model of care, including universal, flexible supports through access to tertiary supports.

• 148 clients supported at Village Connect

## KARITANE YOUNG PARENT PROGRAM (KYPP)

We also support young parents through parent education and case management, to ensure they can achieve their goals of further education and employment. This peer-educator training course for young parents is a recognised pathway into TAFE NSW, which gives young people the foundations of the Community Services Certificate III qualification. Young parents also have the opportunity to develop their professional skills by presenting to high school students about healthy relationships, consent and the realities of being young parents, aligned to the school curriculum.

## KARITANE LINKING FAMILIES (KLF)

KLF is an early intervention service funded by the DCJ. We work in partnership with families who have children aged 0-5 years and who experience parenting challenges, providing them with case management support. Our health education officers can see families either at home or online to provide parenting information, skills and strategies, or referrals to other services – including welfare support, early education and community health – to support their needs. Our case management support enables us to work with families more closely, and over time, support their parenting confidence and skills as their children grow and develop. Our team specialises in strengthening the parent-child relationship through responsive parenting and play.



## KRYSTAL AND ALORA'S STORY

### CREATING CHANGE FOR THE FUTURE

Krystal became a mother at a young age and found herself single while caring for both her daughter Alora and her parents, who have health concerns. She also experienced domestic and family violence, which affected her confidence as a mother and carer. She became increasingly isolated as her priorities and circumstances changed from those of others her age. Her carer roles left her unable to work and disconnected from her community, resulting in mental health and financial struggles, as well as challenges in furthering her education to later enter the workforce.

Like most first-time parents, Krystal did her best, but she wanted to do more for her daughter. Her first instinct as a parent was to ensure Alora had the best opportunity to thrive, but what she didn't realise before entering the Village Connect (VC) program was the depth of support she could access to help her thrive too.

Through VC, Krystal accessed a key worker who walked alongside her, helping her set goals and access clothing, education and housing support. Krystal now feels connected to her community: regularly attending playgroups, parent education and consultation sessions. Her daughter Alora is accessing speech therapy, and Krystal has even become a 'Being a Parent' peer-to-peer parent education program facilitator, training other VC parents

*"I'm 24 and a single mum. My daughter Alora is three, and I am also a carer for both my parents. In October 2023, I came across a flyer on the (Karitane hub) door for a playgroup for under-25s, and I was like, 'Oh, perfect, that's exactly what I need!'"*

*"They've supported me in the times that I needed someone the most"*

*At the time, I was in a really bad place, but I knew I needed something for my daughter. I was certain that I didn't want any other help, but the staff said, "Nope, we need to work with you too!" And now they've gotten me to a really good point in my life.*

*When I started, I had no purpose. I was struggling and deep in the dumps. But now, since starting and being there for almost two years, I've set goals and I've smashed them.*

*Village Connect is different to a lot of other services where it felt like I was just constantly waiting and not getting anywhere. But I jumped in with Village Connect, and things just started happening... I feel like the service is proactive, and that's what I needed."*

### SHORT-TERM IMPACTS FOR KRYSTAL

- Krystal has created a village within which she feels safe raising her child, and which lifts her up, supports her on the bad days and helps her feel positive about her future.
- She's entered the workforce in multiple unpaid roles, including cooking for the homeless and supporting mothers like her who've experienced family violence.
- Krystal now engages in self-care activities, and she's creating mental health resources for others with the goal of publishing her own book.
- Alora's developmental trajectory and readiness for preschool and school have also both improved significantly.

To further our work in early intervention, we facilitate seven supported playgroups, each embedded with the principles of the Early Learning Years Framework. Strong partnerships with community service providers are integral to offering a holistic approach to care for families, especially in the supported playgroup space. Our playgroups service the Fairfield, Liverpool, Bankstown and Camden LGAs.

● *“This team has helped my daughter become more social and learn to interact with others”*  
 ● *“They supported me through my postpartum journey, helped me with so much advice for my children and linked me with supports”*

### VOLUNTEER FAMILY CONNECT

We recognise that volunteers play a critical role in our community and our organisation. This year, our world-class, evidence-based program Volunteer Family Connect (VFC) matched 61 trained volunteers with families for one-on-one support to increase parents’ confidence and connection to the community. We offer VFC in Fairfield, Macarthur, Taree and Shellharbour. The service is championed by volunteers and overseen by a Program Coordinator. Families are matched with trained community volunteers who serve as a support and social bridge to the local community. Volunteers visit families for two hours per week for between 3-12 months. During home visits, volunteers establish trusting, respectful and meaningful relationships with families, providing them with flexible practical and social support. They also provide information about appropriate community services to facilitate parent engagement, and connection with these services and other community activities. We are very fortunate to partner with Barnardos in Shellharbour to offer our VFC program, which is part of our DSS Communities for Children programs.

● *“It takes a village to raise a child, and my volunteer is part of my village”*

### COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

We have continued to grow our DSS-funded Communities for Children (C4C) programs across regional and metro NSW.

### PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY (PCIT) AND FAMILY COACHING, MILLER

With the support of our Mission Australia C4C funding partners, we now offer a continuum-of-care approach for our PCIT program, with the addition of a new family coaching model for families living within the 2168 postcode.

PCIT provides parents with the skills and confidence to manage behaviours of concern in their child, as well as strengthen their relationship with that child. Family coaching allows families to further understand areas of children’s development, such as language, movement, cognition and social skills, nutrition, sleep and settling, and behaviour. Coaching also offers access to community supports.

### FIRST STEPS COUNT (FSC) NAVIGATOR, TAREE

In partnership with Mission Australia and the FSC Community Centre, we continue to develop and grow the reach of the FSC Navigator role to support Mid Coast children, families and the community. The Navigator works with families wherever they are – supporting some as a one-off and others on a more ongoing basis. The Navigator’s ability to build relationships with families has proven very important to the success of the Centre.

### EMPOWERING PARENTS EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, TAREE, FAIRFIELD, CAMPBELLTOWN, ORAN PARK

The Community Programs team has continued to deliver the Being a Parent (BAP) education program to parents in various sites across NSW. BAP is part of the Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) programs – an intervention that parents facilitate, and which started in Tasmania. EPEC requires practitioners and services to embrace a culture of practice that includes parents as co-workers, co-reflectors and co-learners, in partnership with professionals. The EPEC model challenges traditional hierarchical service constructs. It levels the playing field to enable community members to work alongside practitioners to deliver parenting interventions. Parent facilitators’ active involvement makes the system more credible in the eyes of families that have previously found services difficult to access.

We thank the organisations that funded these groups, including The Smith Family (Fairfield), Mission Australia (Taree) and the DCJ (Campbelltown and Oran Park).

### COMMUNITY PROGRAMS IMPACT

- 1012 individuals supported, +8% vs last year
- 99% satisfaction with community programs
- 13% First Nations clients
- 6% people with disability
- 39% of families from CALD backgrounds (87% in KLF)

### RESIDENTIAL AND VIRTUAL RESIDENTIAL PARENTING SERVICE

Our new, state-of-the-art Residential Unit in Campbelltown offers inclusive, place-based care in a purpose-built environment designed to promote healing, connection and cultural safety. Family rooms and a dedicated cultural courtyard provide a welcoming space for rest, reflection and support.

Grounded in co-designed frameworks and evidence-based clinical pathways, the service ensures families receive consistent, high-quality care. During a four-night stay, parents are supported 24/7 by a multidisciplinary team, including child and family health nurses, psychologists, social workers, GPs, paediatricians and psychiatrists. These professionals partner with families to address parenting concerns, build confidence and strengthen family wellbeing.

### VIRTUAL RESIDENTIAL PARENTING SERVICE

The Virtual Residential Parenting Service (VRPS), supported by the NSW Government, includes 10 VRPS ‘beds’ to provide accessible, flexible 24-hour support for families in their own homes when they need us. This delivers an innovative, improved experience for both families and staff, with effective outcomes at lower care-delivery costs. Digitally enabled, clinically rigorous support has many benefits, including equitable access, reduced time and expenses for travel, and increased confidence for families who need to implement new strategies at home after discharge.

● 1955 clients supported through our Residential and VRPS services

● *“Thanks for helping me with the settling techniques. You were by my side when we did the tough daytime sleep, and YOU really gave me the courage to make a difference. That was the moment when I saw our little one walk himself to his bed and go to sleep. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! He is sleeping in his own bed, and we couldn’t be happier.” - Tamar*

### PERINATAL INFANT AND CHILD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Karitane provides a stepped-care approach to perinatal mental health support for parents experiencing mild-to-moderate mental health challenges. Our approach focuses on supporting parents of infants to improve the quality of their relationship with their child.

We provide individual consultations and world-class, evidence-based therapeutic groups in which families work in partnership with our multidisciplinary team of

clinical psychologists, social workers, mental health nurses, psychiatrists and child and family health nurses across SWS.

We offer place-based services, virtual services and a hybrid of both to ensure parents receive support when and where they need it. Mental health is the third most common primary reason for referral to Karitane.

● 186 clients, +17% increase vs last year

### EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PROGRAMS FOR TODDLERS AND CHILDREN

At our Toddler Clinics, we offer world-class, evidence-based PCIT for families with toddlers or young children who display physical and verbal aggression, non-compliance, tantrums, destructive behaviour, hyperactivity, sibling rivalry, anxiety and withdrawal. PCIT strengthens the parent-child relationship, providing parents with strategies to better manage challenging moments. We also offer this program using telehealth to support families across NSW.

In addition to our internationally renowned PCIT service, we have briefer interventions for families needing support. This additional model of care provides families with one-on-one telehealth coaching, as well as PCIT psycho-education groups. We also offer a step-up or step-down approach if a family’s circumstances have changed, or if they identified other issues.

● 204 families, +29% increase vs last year



# Research and Innovation: Setting National and Global Benchmarks

- \$8.2 million in partnered research funding
- \$1.5 million in new research funding (Karitane-led or partnered)
- 12 peer-reviewed journal articles published
- 26 national and international conference presentations

At Karitane, research is integral to our clinical leadership. Our work is shaping best practice, informing policy and influencing care at national and international levels.

With over \$8.2 million in partnered research funding and 12 peer-reviewed journal articles published this year alone, we are advancing the science of early parenting, perinatal mental health and child development.

Our flagship programs – from PCIT-Toddler to ForWhen – are underpinned by rigorous trials and evaluations in collaboration with UNSW, UTS and global institutions. We are also proud to host a Paul Ramsay Foundation Fellowship exploring the national scale-up of early parenting programs in rural and remote communities.

Karitane-led studies are defining new metrics in parent-infant bonding, cultural safety and digital care outcomes. Our researchers present across global platforms and conferences, ensuring that innovation developed in Australia informs parenting care worldwide.

Our research is bold, translational and deeply grounded in the lived experiences of families. It ensures that every Karitane service delivers care that is evidence-informed, ethically strong and future-ready.

Karitane's research team, led by A/Prof Jane Kohlhoff, includes research officers, PhD and undergraduate students, and volunteers working alongside Karitane clinicians. Their efforts ensure our services are grounded in robust evidence and continually respond to the evolving needs of families.



## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

### TODDLER RESEARCH

Toddler development remains a key area of focus. In 2024–25, multiple studies examined the effectiveness of early parenting interventions, including:

- A Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) comparing PCIT-Toddler and Circle of Security – Parenting (COS-P)
- Pilot and RCT evaluations of 'My Toddler and Me' group programs at Carramar, Wollie Creek, Randwick, and in the Village Family Connect program, funded by UNSW and Paul Ramsay Foundation
- The development and evaluation of the innovative 'My Toddler and Me' video series for parents of toddlers, available in multiple languages.

Results were published in *BMC Psychology* and shared at several major conferences. They are now contributing to national conversations around toddler mental health and parenting support.

### FORWHEN EVALUATION

Throughout 2024–25, the UNSW–Karitane research team continued leading the evaluation of ForWhen – a national perinatal mental health navigation program. This research is providing valuable insights into program outcomes, economic impacts and service accessibility. Findings have been published and presented at high-profile conferences, with further evaluations underway.

### SCALING EARLY PARENTING PROGRAMS IN REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE AUSTRALIA

In 2024–25, Karitane was proud to be the host organisation for a Paul Ramsay Foundation Fellowship awarded to A/Prof Jane Kohlhoff. Jane's project explores how evidence-based early parenting programs can be best scaled across regional, rural and remote Australia. The project aims to identify barriers, enablers and best practices to inform local practice and national strategies for delivering equitable service.

VIEW PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES



## MAJOR RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Karitane leads the way in contributing to large-scale statewide and national projects, including:

- NHMRC STARS for Kids Centre of Research Excellence, led by Scientia Professor Valsamma Eapen (UNSW)
- Integrated Kids Hubs (ARC Linkage Project) in partnership with UNSW and the Australian Research Council for Children & Youth, led by Professor Sue Woolfenden (University of Sydney)
- Integrated Kids Connect program project (NHMRC Partnership project), led by Scientia Professor Valsamma Eapen (UNSW)
- Kids Connect Integrated Hybrid program (NSW Health Translational Research Grant Scheme project, led by Scientia Professor Valsamma Eapen (UNSW)).

We also collaborate with institutions such as the University of Sydney, Western Sydney University, UTS, MCRI, Griffith University, West Virginia University and the Parenting Research Centre on translational research initiatives.

## CURRENT KARITANE-LED RESEARCH PROJECTS

- The Karitane Families Study – a study that aims to validate a suite of parent-report outcome tools for use in early parenting services. It also examines outcomes of the virtual and face-to-face formats of the Karitane Residential Unit program intervention.
- ForWhen evaluation – a mixed-method evaluation of the ForWhen program (a federally funded perinatal mental health navigation program) funded by the Australian Government and led by Karitane and the Australasian Association of Parenting and Child Health.
- The 'My Toddler and Me' study – an RCT testing the outcomes of two attachment-based early parenting programs for toddlers with early onset disruptive behaviours: Parent-Child Interaction Therapy – Toddler (PCIT-T) and Circle of Security – Parenting (COS-P)
- 'Keeping the Infant in Mind' – a longitudinal study investigating links between parents' sensitivity and capacity to reflect on infant mental states, and their children's temperament factors and callous-unemotional traits in early childhood.
- Parental reflective functioning, parenting and child outcomes – a cross-sectional study examining the reliability and validity of three parental reflective functioning parent-report tools. It also looks at associations between parental reflective functioning and parent/child outcomes, testing changes in parental reflective functioning following Karitane interventions.

# Education and Training

Together, education and training are an essential pillar of Karitane, and we continue our leadership in key areas including Family Partnership Training, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), and – in partnership with Western Sydney University (WSU) – content development and facilitation for the Master of Child and Family Health program. We are recognised for our expertise in delivering professional education across the child and family sector, covering a variety of topics that include brain development, toddler behaviour, nutrition and sleep. Karitane leads the way in collaborating with organisations across NSW to provide education to parents who engage with child and family services, including supported playgroups.

## INNOVATIVE MODELS OF CARE: EMBEDDING CONSISTENCY AND PARTNERSHIP

This year, Karitane’s education team collaborated closely with clinical colleagues to design a new model of care for our residential parenting service – ensuring families receive consistent, world-class, evidence-based support aligned with our practice principles. Together with our Clinical Nurse Consultants, the team developed a suite of clinical care pathways to guide practice and promote partnership with families across Karitane services.

These pathways cover key parenting areas including sleep, breastfeeding, starting solids, healthy eating, toddler and preschool behaviour, and adjustment to parenthood. Each pathway is supported by a tailored parent resource that’s designed to help families better understand all the factors influencing the challenges they face. It also helps them work alongside their child and family health nurse in navigating solutions together. This integrated approach strengthens both care delivery and parents’ confidence.

## GROWING WORKFORCE CAPABILITY THROUGH EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

Karitane leads the way in elevating the capability of the child and family health workforce – both internally and across the sector. This year, we refreshed our clinical orientation program with a new series of nine interactive workshops covering core topics in child and family health. Designed for staff at all levels, the workshops blend world-class, evidence-based theory with practical skills application, and they have been positively received. In partnership with South Western Sydney Local Health District, we also welcomed child and family health

professionals from across the region to attend. Feedback highlighted the value of the updated format and opportunities to connect with peers from other services.

Our leadership in education also continued to grow, with over 40 professional development workshops delivered across NSW in 2024–25.

We are proud to maintain a strong academic partnership with WSU through the Master of Child and Family Health program. A key feature of this collaboration is the delivery of virtual clinical placements, offering students engaging, flexible learning experiences with Karitane educators. This year, we facilitated four virtual placement days, with more than 300 students attending. Evaluations have been overwhelmingly positive. One student shared:

“The webinars were just fantastic over the last year. The mix of theory, case study and discussion made for a really interesting watch. The Karitane team were all great! If only I lived in NSW and could consider working for Karitane!”

In 2025, we also completed a full rewrite of the Perinatal Infant and Child Mental health Unit ensuring content remains current and relevant. The course underwent external review, with commendations received on both the course design and the content quality. This year, 191 students enrolled across the Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master of Child and Family Health programs.

“I have done my Master in Nursing and many other courses over the last 20 years and this course has by far been the most interesting, relevant, up to date and well presented”



## STRENGTHENING PRACTICE THROUGH FAMILY PARTNERSHIP TRAINING

Karitane leads the delivery of Family Partnership Training across NSW, building the capacity of professionals to engage with families through respectful, reflective practice. This year, we expanded our offerings to include Family Partnership Supervision Training, which helps professionals to lead meaningful, strengths-based conversations within their teams and services. In 2024–25, we trained 52 participants, including child and family health teams in Northern Sydney Local Health District and professionals from across NSW. We received outstanding feedback for the training’s relevance and impact.

## EMPOWERING PARENTS THROUGH ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

Karitane supports parents with timely, practical information to help them better understand and care for their babies and young children. Our webinars have become a valued source of early support, giving families the flexibility to engage in learning at a time that suits their needs. This year, we delivered 80 live and recorded webinars, reaching 860 parents and carers across a broad range of topics – from sleep and settling to toddler behaviour and parent wellbeing.

Demand has grown for our educators to deliver in-person sessions at playgroups and early learning centres. These sessions meet parents where they are, offering practical support in familiar, community-based settings. We know that connection and collaboration are key, and Karitane is working alongside other services to enhance outcomes for families. This year, our education team facilitated 51 group sessions, reaching 298 parents and providing world-class, evidence-based advice on topics such as routines, sleep and child development.

We also extend our support into the workplace, recognising that parenting support should be accessible no matter where families are in their journey. Through our ongoing partnership with MinterEllison, we delivered eight parenting education sessions and four advice clinics, reaching over

60 working parents, including those on parental leave. This initiative reflects our commitment to a whole-of-community approach to parenting support, helping parents to balance their professional and caregiving roles while fostering the best possible outcomes for children.

## EXPANDING OUR DIGITAL REACH

Karitane leads the way in using digital platforms to connect with families, share practical parenting strategies and build awareness of our services. This year, we saw strong growth across all our social media platforms. Our Facebook and Instagram channels remain trailblazing authorities for parents and carers – particularly Millennials and emerging Gen Z parents – seeking timely, relatable support. We also use LinkedIn to engage health professionals and partners with service updates, research and professional development opportunities.

In 2025, we relaunched the Karitane website to better meet the needs of families and professionals. The redesign focused on improving access, experience and clarity, with five key enhancements:

1. **Improved Content** – more than double the parenting information, new corporate pages, and simplified, plain-English language.
2. **Improved Structure** – a clearer menu and layout so families can easily find what they need.
3. **Improved Functionality** – new features like Google Translate, improved forms, a location finder, better accessibility and search.
4. **Improved Design** – a mobile-first, user-friendly interface with new filters for events and resources.
5. **Improved User Experience** – faster navigation, clearer pages and a smoother overall experience for all users.

These digital improvements are part of our commitment to early engagement and empowering families with trusted, world-class, evidence-based support, wherever they are.

- 1.2 million social media reach
- 143,568 website sessions

# Governance: Embedding Excellence, Safety and Accountability

## PARTNERING WITH CONSUMERS AT EVERY LEVEL

Karitane is uncompromising in our commitment to governance excellence, safety and person-centred care. Our systems are built on a foundation of rigour, transparency and co-design – with a focus on families embedded at every level of planning, delivery and evaluation.

Partnering with consumers is also embedded across all levels of our governance systems – supporting our planning, delivery, evaluation and design of care. In 2025, we strengthened this commitment by launching our Consumer Participation Toolkit and formally adopting

our Consumer and Community Engagement Framework. These tools amplify the voices of families and ensure that our services remain responsive, inclusive and accountable.

We deliver a strong safety culture with effective governance systems that support high-quality, person-centred care to families. Our safety culture is the collective responsibility of our Board, Executive, managers and staff. Together, we ensure robust oversight of care quality, risk, client safety, consumer engagement, and a continuous improvement culture.



## USING DATA TO DRIVE PERFORMANCE

Karitane’s newly established Data and Performance Unit is shaping a new era of outcomes measurement. With a unified data system and automated reporting aligned to our Continuum of Care, we are turning insights into action – tracking what matters most to families and informing service improvement at every level. In 2025, we endorsed a Karitane Minimum Data Set for KPI deliverables and Board assurance.

Client-reported outcome measures, now aligned to our Continuum of Care, highlight meaningful progress in areas that matter most to families. A rise in positive client feedback this year reflects our increased focus on client-centred survey design and staff training in feedback processes. Our Net Promoter Score (76 – classified as ‘excellent’) reflects high client satisfaction and trust in our services. Looking ahead, we are continuing to develop our unified data system with automated client matching to further streamline service delivery and evaluation.

## LEADING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Karitane’s Digital Transformation Framework strengthens the governance and innovation of our models of care, information systems and digital innovation.

We operate multiple virtual models of care to improve child health outcomes and reduce care costs. This year, we worked with South Western Sydney Local Health District and the Ministry of Health Connected Care team to roll out the Healthdirect video platform that replaces My Virtual Care.

Key digital projects to enhance internal efficiencies this year include implementing a new Human Resources Information System to improve automation and ICT infrastructure planning for the Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub. The hub will provide an innovative approach to streamlining navigation and early intervention support services for families in their child’s first 2000 days.

Karitane’s digital strategy is underpinned by partnerships with eHealth NSW, Cisco, Diginostic and UTS INSIGHT, ensuring our work is grounded in evidence and designed for scale.

## EVOLVING OUR CLINICAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

We also undertook a major refresh of our Clinical Governance Framework to embed cultural safety, research and quality improvement as central pillars of care. Our robust audit and risk systems – including cybersecurity readiness and full compliance with all Ministry of Health standards – ensure that every Karitane service is safe, ethical and future-ready.

These changes are supported through our governance meeting structures and oversight processes, ensuring new services align with our rigorous clinical standards.

## SAFETY, COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Karitane maintains high standards of safety and compliance across our service footprint. This year, we collaborated with the NSW Ministry of Health on capital works for the Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre and Fairfield Integrated Hub, ensuring purpose-built, safe environments for both staff and families.

Risk management is embedded into every level of our organisation. Our Audit, Risk and Governance Committee oversees organisational risk and compliance, while our Clinical Governance Committee ensures quality of care. In 2025, we continued to meet all regulatory requirements, including:

- Successful Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Food Safety Audit at Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre (December 2024)
- Full compliance with the Ministry of Health Security Audit (March 2025)
- Compliance with the NSW Health Healthy Food & Drink Audit for Café at Mitch (March 2025).

We also enhanced our commitment to child safety through assessment against the Child Safe Standards, and launched a targeted improvement action plan. Across all services, high levels of staff engagement in incident reporting and quality improvement projects reflect a shared culture of accountability and excellence.

## STRENGTHENING CYBERSECURITY

In 2025, Karitane strengthened cybersecurity by collaborating with NSW eHealth and South Western Sydney Local Health District. Our embedded cybersecurity assessment processes now ensure we are equipped to respond to mandatory notifiable data breaches within national timeframes. We also progressed a new Cybersecurity Risk Management Action Plan, including a second cybersecurity maturity assessment, to ensure our systems remain robust, responsive and safe.

# People and Culture

Karitane is a family-friendly workplace with a strong culture of success, grounded in our values of innovation, excellence, respect and collaboration. We are a passionate and highly engaged team, connected by a shared purpose – to make a real difference in the lives of children and families.

We foster a supportive and inclusive environment where staff feel valued, encouraged and empowered to grow. With 97% of our workforce identifying as women and 85% working part-time, flexibility remains a cornerstone of how we work – supporting balance, wellbeing and career development. We are proud to be an equal opportunity employer, encouraging diversity and fostering a workplace where everyone can contribute meaningfully.

We know that families are at the heart of everything we do – and that includes our own people. Karitane is proud to be a founding partner of the Family Friendly Workplaces initiative, and we were certified as a Family Friendly Workplace for the second time in 2024–25. We were also one of the first organisations in Australia to be certified as a Family Inclusive Workplace™: an initiative led by Parents At Work and UNICEF Australia. These commitments reflect our belief in creating a workplace culture where working parents can truly thrive, both at home and at work.

## SUPPORTING STAFF WELLBEING

In 2025, we strengthened our focus on staff wellbeing, recognising it as fundamental to how we care for others. Guided by insights from our 2024 Wellbeing Survey, the Karitane Wellbeing Committee developed and implemented a 12-month action plan that emphasised the power of small, consistent actions to improve everyday wellbeing. Wellbeing is now a standing item on all team meeting agendas, reinforcing that it is a shared responsibility – me, we and us.

A special highlight this year was the generous donation from Professor Bryanne Barnett AM, which enabled us to create a healing wellbeing garden at the new Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre. This is a peaceful space where staff can recharge and reflect.

## INVESTING IN LEADERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

In 2025, Karitane proudly partnered with the Australasian College of Health Service Management to design and deliver a bespoke leadership development program for 11 current and emerging leaders across the organisation. The program provides five face-to-face workshops focused on essential leadership capabilities, including change management, leadership styles and financial literacy. It also combines personalised one-on-one mentoring with completing the Leading Digital Health online course.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants already applying their learning in practical and meaningful ways. We look forward to celebrating the group's achievements when the program concludes in October 2025.

At Karitane, we know that when our people thrive, so do the families we empower. Our commitment to professional development, connection and care ensures that we continue to grow stronger together.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**LEE CARPENTER**  
Chair  
CPA, MBA, GAICD



**ELYSE JEFFRESS**  
Vice Chair  
Chair Audit, Risk & Governance Committee  
LLB (Hons), Grad Cert HPol, Grad Cert Legal Prac, GAICD



**JEAN-BAPTISTE NAUDET**  
Treasurer  
Chair Finance Committee  
BA, CA, GAICD



**GARTH ROSS**  
Director  
BBus



**HEDIYEH VAHDAT**  
Director  
B Biomed Sc(Hons), MPharm, MHSM, Dip PM, GAICD



**KATHY JONES**  
Director  
BA Dip Ed, MAICD



**LESLEY JORDAN**  
Director  
Chair Clinical Governance Committee  
Dip App Sc (Nursing), CM, Grad Cert Women's Health, MHM (with Distinction), GAICD



**MARION SKULLEY**  
Director  
Chair Innovation & Business Development Committee  
MBA IMD, MAICD, Dip Psych



**PAUL HERBERT**  
Director  
MSc (Hons), PhD



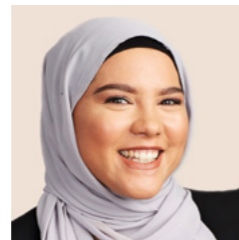
**PAUL WHITE**  
Director  
MSc, FCHSM, CHE, GAICD



**SARAH BARTER**  
Director  
BA Psych, LLB, MPH



**SCIENTIA PROF. VALSAMMA EAPEN**  
Director  
MBBS, DPM, MRC Psych, Dip Family Therapy, PhD, FRC Psych, FRANZCP



**ZULPHA STYER**  
Director  
MPA, LLM, LLB, BA, GDLP

## EXECUTIVE TEAM



**GRAINNE O'LOUGHLIN**  
CEO & Company Secretary  
BSc (Hons) Sp. Th., MBA, GAICD



**SHARLENE VLAHOS**  
Director Education & Business Development  
BA Nursing, Cert Child Family Health, M Nursing – Clinical Leadership, Mgmt Cert – Executive Management & Leadership



**ANGELA WOOD**  
Director Clinical Services  
Dip App Sc, Nursing, Grad Dip Child Family Health, Grad Dip Critical Care Nursing, Dip Mgmt



**DINETHRA NANDAKOBAN**  
Director Governance & Corporate Services & Company Secretary  
BSc, MICDA, GIA (Affiliate)



**PETER YEUNG**  
Chief Financial Officer  
BComm, CPA, HKICPA

## VOLUNTEERS

Our Karitane volunteers continue to play a vital role in supporting families through the everyday challenges of parenting. Backed by comprehensive training and ongoing guidance, they provide compassionate, practical support and help families feel more confident, connected and supported when they need it most.

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Ainsley Burgess   | Katherine Isaac     |
| Alisha Sonter     | Kathy King          |
| Amy Kiss          | Kelly Mewkill       |
| Amy Millington    | Kerrie Meldrum      |
| Amy Vuong         | Kritika Kapil       |
| Amy Willesee      | Larnie Bray         |
| Anna Rolandsen    | Lauren Dellow       |
| Anne Langham      | Lauren Rouse        |
| Brianna Hingston  | Leanne Lambros      |
| Brianna Phillips  | Letitia Ladmore     |
| Bridie Barker     | Lisa Morena         |
| Brie Ebsworth     | Lorna Burden        |
| Briley Hatcliffe  | Mariam Habeeb       |
| Caroline Collier  | Maura Larkin        |
| Catherine Corbett | Maureen Belanzsky   |
| Cathy Powell      | Ngoc Filipaina      |
| Chrestina Butrus  | Nicole Ojeda        |
| Dakota Holmes     | Nikita Elliott      |
| Deborah Miccoli   | Patricia Lamey      |
| Deborah Saad      | Pene Dobell Brown   |
| Delaney-Brindle   | Phoebe Heperi       |
| Denise Ghali      | Pooja Joshi         |
| Diane Coleman     | Portia Flack        |
| Diane Redman      | Rachel Reid         |
| Dianne Holden     | Rebecca Atem        |
| Dorothy Witt      | Rebecca Wood        |
| Emily Ross        | Renee Wright        |
| Emma Simpkin      | Robyn Howarth       |
| Gabrielle Pegrem  | Robyn Sales         |
| Hannah Wright     | Sarvannah Fabian    |
| Heidi Duncan      | Sharon Friere       |
| Indra Gaugere     | Sharon Mann         |
| Jacqueline Rogan  | Sharon Mann         |
| Jean Michaels     | Sheryl Klein        |
| Jessica Maharaj   | Stacey Butcher      |
| J'Kayla Romero    | Thi Bich Mai        |
| Joanne Greenwood  | Tiffany Davidson    |
| Jodie Stuart      | Tyra Channel-Caines |
| Julie Baturynsky  | Vicki Goodsell      |
| Karen Carpenter   | Zoe Thornley        |
| Karen Eddie       |                     |
| Karen Smith       |                     |

# Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for the 2024/25 financial year, which reflects a period of strong performance and long-term sustainability for Karitane.

## REVENUE AND GROWTH

Karitane's revenue grew to \$20.5 million in FY24/25, up from \$20.4 million in FY23/24, and almost double the \$10.6 million achieved in FY18/19. This growth demonstrates the strength of our services and the trust placed in Karitane by governments, donors and philanthropic partners.

Government funding continues to form the backbone of our operations, contributing 79% of total revenue. This included \$16.7 million from both the Australian and state governments – a slight decline of 0.3% on the previous year. Importantly, diversified income streams from philanthropy and donors have increased by 6.0%, and these continue to provide stable supplementary funding.

## MAJOR INVESTMENTS AND FUTURE GROWTH

During the year, the NSW Government committed \$6.5 million towards redeveloping our Carramar site into the Karitane Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub. This was matched by a \$6.5 million grant from Paul Ramsay Foundation. The combined \$13 million investment will transform service delivery and create new opportunities for partnerships and collaboration. Construction is due to commence imminently and targeted for completion in FY25/26.

## PROGRAM FUNDING ACHIEVEMENTS

We successfully secured renewed and extended funding for several flagship programs:

- National Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Program – the ForWhen program received funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, and was extended for a further 3 years with funding exceeding \$10.1 million.
- Virtual Residential Parenting Service – this was extended for 5 years by the NSW Government, with funding exceeding \$7.0 million.
- Village Connect Young Parent Hub – funding of \$1.1 million was extended by the NSW Government.

## NEW FUNDING STREAMS

We successfully achieved new funding for innovative programs through:

- National Community Hubs Program – funded in partnership by Community Hubs Australia, the Australian Government Department of Social Services, and philanthropic support.
- I-PCIT in Kids Hub – through funds committed by the NSW Ministry of Health.

These commitments provide a solid foundation for ongoing service delivery. They demonstrate confidence in Karitane's national leadership role in early parenting, child and family health and perinatal infant and child mental health.

## EXPENDITURE AND SURPLUS

Total expenditure on programs and activities remained steady at \$20.0 million, consistent with FY23/24.

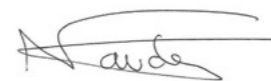
Despite the stability in expenditure and a slight decline in government contributions, Karitane achieved an operating surplus of \$537,983, up from \$505,316 in the previous year. This year's operating surplus included one-off capital grants of \$820,404.

## FINANCIAL POSITION

Karitane's balance sheet remains strong, with net assets of \$22 million as of 30th June 2025. This strong balance sheet provides the foundation for long-term financial sustainability and enables investment in service innovations and infrastructure.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the Board, I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of our government partners, donors and philanthropic organisations, whose contributions make our impact possible. I also extend my gratitude to the Karitane leadership team, Board and staff, whose financial discipline and stewardship continue to safeguard Karitane's sustainability.



Jean-Baptiste Naudet



# Financials

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2025

		2025 \$	2024 \$
	Notes		
REVENUE FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS	3	20,141,620	20,002,388
Other revenue and income (expense)	4	354,901	349,653
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>		<b>20,496,521</b>	<b>20,352,041</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employee benefits expenses		(15,039,614)	(14,307,073)
Provision for doubtful debts		72,974	(27,473)
Printing and stationery expenses		(91,548)	(88,578)
Telephone expenses		(100,144)	(101,362)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses		(643,425)	(600,511)
Repairs and maintenance expenses		(296,596)	(239,834)
VMO expenses		(371,891)	(321,270)
Consultancy expenses		(556,967)	(386,303)
Occupancy expenses		(754,732)	(886,605)
Other expenses		(2,176,595)	(2,887,716)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>(19,958,538)</b>	<b>(19,846,725)</b>
<b>SURPLUS BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>537,983</b>	<b>505,316</b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>SURPLUS AFTER INCOME TAX FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>537,983</b>	<b>505,316</b>
Other comprehensive income			
Revaluation of land and buildings	10	3,602,702	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>3,600,685</b>	<b>505,316</b>

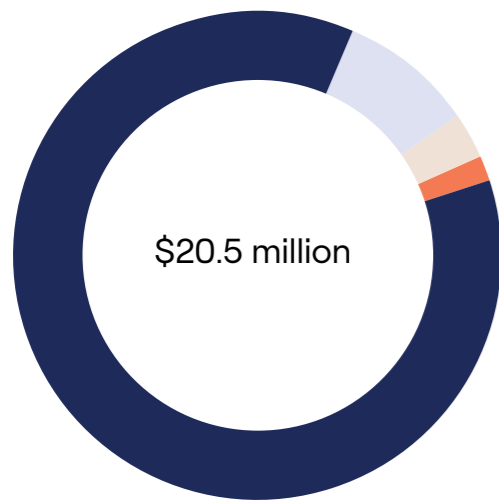
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2025

		2025 \$	2024 \$
	Notes		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	13,906,681	5,174,427
Trade and other receivables	7	264,912	501,563
Financial assets	8	5,856,338	5,662,867
Other assets	9	109,871	81,296
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>20,137,802</b>	<b>11,420,153</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	10	17,263,405	13,820,404
Right of use asset	11	149,012	188,816
Financial assets	8	709,041	668,464
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>18,121,458</b>	<b>14,677,684</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>38,259,260</b>	<b>26,097,837</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	12	2,286,577	1,914,181
Employee entitlements	13	3,216,383	3,266,418
Lease liabilities	16	119,391	104,952
Contract liabilities – revenue in advance	14	10,190,570	1,925,713
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>15,812,921</b>	<b>7,211,264</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee entitlements	13	245,336	210,705
Lease liabilities	16	71,141	146,691
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>316,477</b>	<b>357,396</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>16,129,398</b>	<b>7,568,660</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>22,129,862</b>	<b>18,529,177</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Accumulated funds		11,249,931	10,711,948
Reserves	15	10,879,931	7,817,229
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>22,129,862</b>	<b>18,529,177</b>

# Funding and Partnerships

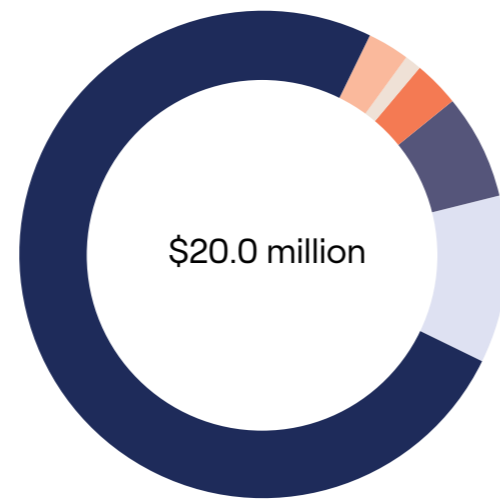
As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, Karitane is deeply grateful for the generous support of our partners and donors. Your contributions enable us to continue delivering high-quality, accessible care to families across Australia. Thank you to the organisations whose ongoing support helps us create stronger, healthier futures for children and their parents.

## TOTAL REVENUE



- Government subsidies and grants
- Donations and sponsorships
- Other income
- Patient fees

## TOTAL EXPENDITURE



- Employment
- Information technology
- Property maintenance
- Depreciation and amortisation
- Contributions to entities for program delivery
- Other expenses

## FUNDING PROVIDERS

- NSW Ministry of Health
- South Western Sydney Local Health District
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
- South Eastern Sydney Local Health District
- Paul Ramsay Foundation
- Mission Australia
- Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation
- University of New South Wales
- Barnardos Australia
- The Smith Family
- South Western Sydney PHN

- Australian Communities Foundation
- Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research
- Community Hubs Australia
- NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport represented by Office of Responsible Gambling
- The Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
- NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Fairfield RSL

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Western Sydney University
- The University of Sydney
- PCIT International
- Sonder
- Uniting
- Parents At Work
- UNICEF Australia
- PANDA
- Gidget Foundation Australia
- Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA)
- Centre of Perinatal Excellence (COPE)
- WEAVE Youth and Community Services
- Stevens & Associates Lawyers
- Australasian Association of Parenting & Child Health
- STARTTS
- Fairfield City Council
- Kids of Macarthur Health Foundation
- Murdoch Children's Research Institute
- Parenting Research Centre
- Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
- Playgroup NSW

## SUPPORTERS

- CISCO
- UCOMM Group
- MinterEllison
- Stockland
- GAIA
- Bunnings
- HESTA
- Woolworths
- Performl
- Linéaire Projects
- AWP



## DONATIONS

A special thank you to our donors for their generous donations to support Karitane this year.

Donor	Value	Purpose
Anonymous donations	\$1,129,079	Clinical Services Support
Dr Bryanne Barnett AM	\$210,365	Clinical Services Support and Capital Works
Rotary Club of Narellan	\$25,000	Clinical Services Support
Walter and Eliza Hall Trust	\$1,732	Gift
Michael and Rochelle Goot	\$200	Gift

## HOW TO DONATE

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit [www.karitane.com.au/donations](http://www.karitane.com.au/donations)

### OUR PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Credit card
- EFT – BSB: 062265 Account: 1539034 (Ref- Donation)

All donations and community grants are used to support more families with our life-changing services.



# Partnerships made for parents

“You’ve helped me reconnect with the joy of being a new mum, even through the tough moments”

KARITANE HEAD OFFICE  
138-150 The Horsley Drive,  
Carramar NSW 2163  
(02) 9794 2300



 CARELINE 1300 227 464  
 [WWW.KARITANE.COM.AU](http://WWW.KARITANE.COM.AU)

**KARITANE**<sup>®</sup>  
Partnerships made for parents