

# KARITANE®

ANNUAL REPORT 2024







ACKNOWLEDGMENT 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

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KARITANE PATRON AND AMBASSADOR



Our Patron  
The Hon Jillian Skinner AM



Our Ambassador  
Laura Jayes



# Chair & Chief Executive Officer's Report

It is with great pride and deep commitment to our community that we present this foreword for Karitane, a cornerstone of support for families and children during the first 2000 days of life. We have had an exciting and fast-paced year of continued growth, which included rounding out our Centenary celebrations and nurturing new strategic collaborations and partnerships that help us to deliver the Karitane Vision:

**“OUR IMPACT WILL ENABLE CHILDREN TO HAVE THE BEST START IN LIFE.”**

We were delighted to open our new state-of-the-art 19-suite Early Parenting Residential facility at Campbelltown Hospital. Minister for Health, the Hon Ryan Park officially opened the building, together with the NSW Health Secretary, Ms Susan Pearce and Member for Campbelltown, Mr Greg Warren MP. We were also excited to secure a new Community Hubs Australia program in nine schools in Canterbury, Bankstown and Fairfield. With the support and advocacy of Dr David Sailba MP, we were thrilled to receive \$13 million in partnered NSW Government and Paul Ramsay Foundation funding to bring the vision for the Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub to life. This Hub will support the growing and diverse community in the Fairfield area, as well as offering virtual services to families across NSW. It will be a ‘one-stop-shop’ with services from health and education to social services, which will give families access to the facility’s wide range of early parenting and support services. We will launch the service in mid-2025.

We are proud to celebrate families in all their diversity, listen to individual stories and tailor our support. We have the highest ambitions, hopes and aspirations for all young children and their families and kin. We continue building and strengthening respectful relationships with First Nations communities around the lands where we deliver support and care to families. We have progressed the work for our Innovate RAP, and were really proud to be invited by the NSW Government to be the first organisation in Australia to take the pledge to implement the Culturally Informed Practice Principles (CIPP), thereby strengthening and empowering families in our region.

We have been truly committed to the process of authentic co-design, and have outlined an example in this report: Village Connect – Young Parent Program. This program was launched by the Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Disabilities, Families and Inclusion, in partnership with Sonder & Uniting, and was co-designed by First Nations community members with the continued guidance of the Aboriginal Core Design Group. From the program’s inception, the lived and living experiences and voices of young parents in these communities have been essential, ongoing parts of implementing it.

As an industry leader working in integrated care models, partnerships, alliances and consortiums, Karitane was excited to announce a partnership this year with Partnership Brokers Association to deliver Partnership Brokers Training. We co-hosted this training, which focused on child and family services, with leaders across not-for-profit, government, community and philanthropic sectors. We were pleased to support the development of multi-stakeholder partnership brokering competencies, both within our own organisation and within the sector across Sydney, NSW and Australia, positioning us as a leader in impactful, collaborative partnerships that build the child and family services ecosystem.

Continuing our commitment to strong alliances, Karitane co-founded CaFSA with community-based not-for-profit stakeholders, including early childhood education and care providers, early childhood intervention organisations, peer-led groups and researchers who are helping to shape the framework for foundational supports in NSW and nationally. This alliance was informed by recommendations from the NDIS Review. We co-hosted a national roundtable in Parliament House, Canberra with the Hon Bill Shorten, Minister for Disability, and are now proactively working with government to plan for foundational supports across Australia.

We continue to support parents in ways that enable children to reach their full potential, and that have broader, positive implications for our communities, the economy and the nation across current and future generations. To support this, we have undertaken robust research and delivered significant training programs to families and healthcare professionals across Australia. We have provided responses and submissions to Inquiries including the NSW Special Commission of Inquiry into Healthcare Funding in NSW.

We are thrilled to progress Karitane’s Digital Transformation Strategy, upgrade our corporate and clinical systems, and champion virtual care delivery to families across Australia. We are also excited to partner with UTS INSIGHT to pioneer and innovate further digital solutions, and we continue to deeply appreciate the social impact support we receive from Cisco and our partnership with UCOMM.

As we look toward the future, Karitane remains committed to evolving with the needs of the families we serve. Our team of healthcare professionals, volunteers and supporters is united by a common goal: to make a lasting, positive impact on the lives of children and their families. At the very heart of what we do lies the trusted care, expertise, wisdom and empathy of our amazing Karitane child and family health nurses; perinatal infant and child mental health, allied health, and community teams; medical staff; support staff and volunteers. We celebrated the healthy Culture of Success at Karitane, demonstrated by the exceptional results in our recent staff cultural survey, in which 92% of staff told us this is a “truly great place to work”. Additionally, we undertook the PERMAH Staff Wellbeing survey, with results presented later in the report.

We recognise and appreciate the pivotal role that volunteers play in our community. We have continued to advocate strongly as a member of both the National Volunteering Strategy Council and the NSW Volunteering Taskforce to ensure volunteering is supported to thrive across Australia.

## SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS

We thank our Patron, the Hon Jillian Skinner AM, who has continued to tirelessly support Karitane and the CEO again over the last 12 months. Jillian’s healthcare knowledge, history and networks have been pivotal in strengthening partnerships and building connections.

We also deeply appreciate the additional support we received from the NSW and Australian Governments, and all our partners, donors, foundations and advocates, who have enabled Karitane to support thousands of families again this year, and every year.

We especially acknowledge and thank our major donors and supporters, who have provided very generous financial assistance that has enabled us to deliver more services, education and research. Without them, we could not deliver many of our important services. We thank South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) for its ongoing collaboration and partnership.

Finally, we are ever grateful for our exceptional Board of Directors, who voluntarily provide their time, skills, wisdom, guidance, expertise and influence, enabling Karitane to further flourish, create an aspirational strategic trajectory, and provide consistent, unwavering support for the CEO, Executive and teams. We acknowledge and thank Mr Garth Ross, who celebrated 25 years on the Board of Karitane.

Please enjoy the report.



  
Lee Carpenter  
Chair



  
Grainne O'Loughlin  
CEO

# Message from our Patron

Karitane has a growing footprint across NSW, and one of its greatest strengths is its ability to remain relevant to the needs of today’s communities. This is illustrated by its innovative expansion of evidence-based services through digital platforms and development of new models of care, such as establishing integrated child and family hubs, and focusing on perinatal infant and child mental health services.

Karitane’s ability to deliver these services has been helped by partnerships with health, social services, non-government organisations (NGOs), early education, schools, philanthropists and foundations. Karitane genuinely transforms the lives of so many Australian

families, and I congratulate all involved who work so assiduously to make this happen – none more so than the organisation’s indefatigable CEO Grainne O’Loughlin.



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 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.



**90%**  
of a child's brain develops by the age of five\*

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

**1 in 5** mums and **1 in 10** dads experience post-natal depression or anxiety\*\*\*

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

**1 in 5**  
parents that needed help didn't reach out because they were unsure where to go, or had cost concerns or feelings of shame and judgement\*\*

## How Parenting Challenges Make Parents Feel

Parents' 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"

\*Karitane's national 'Parenting Today' survey, based on a sample of more than 1000 mums and dads with children 0-5 years.

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





# KARITANE®

## Who We Are

TOGETHER WE'LL KNOW WHAT TO DO



**KARITANE** is an affiliated health organisation, not-for-profit and registered charity with over 100 years' experience in supporting families to enable children to have the best start in life. We do this by providing a range of accessible specialist early parenting services to families around Australia.



**WE SUPPORT PARENTS**, face-to-face and virtually, with challenges around sleep and settling, feeding and nutrition, establishing routines, toddler behaviour, emotional dysregulation, and perinatal infant and child mental health.



**WE ARE ALWAYS WORKING ON NEW WAYS TO CONNECT** with parents and their families. We offer place-based integrated child and family hubs, residential services, virtual support and hybrid models of care to support parents, adapt to families' changing needs and improve accessibility.



**RESEARCH AND EDUCATION ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR PRACTICE.** Our highly trained, multi-disciplinary team delivers our evidence-based services. We work within a Family Partnership Model that supports attachment-based relationships through a child-centred framework and trauma-informed practice.



**WE OFFER A STEPPED MODEL OF CARE** from early engagement and intervention through to intensive support. We provide the right care, in the right place, at the right time.



**OVER 100 YEARS**, we have built a culture of inclusivity and respect for all. Our care and expertise include services for **FIRST NATIONS AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE FAMILIES**, as well as those facing adversity or increased vulnerabilities. We also welcome and embrace the diversity of **LGBTIQA+** people. We provide safe, trusted partnerships for all families, offering parenting support services that treat everyone equally, and value everyone's contributions.



**WE PROVIDE VALUE-BASED HEALTHCARE**, working in partnership with local government, NGOs and community groups to provide effective, efficient integrated care that demonstrates significant measurable outcomes for families.







## 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 Strategy

1. Achieve sustainable growth
2. Continue to evolve and innovate consumer-led services
3. Further strengthen partnerships and collaborations
4. Engage skilled people in a supportive, collaborative and productive culture
5. Develop a progressive and impactful organisation



# Our Impact

	<b>116,737</b> lives touched by Karitane		<b>3</b> services co-designed with families
	<b>5272</b> referrals		<b>99%</b> of clients were satisfied with Karitane services
	<b>3583</b> careline calls		<b>98%</b> of parents found Karitane helpful to their needs
	<b>3244</b> parents registered for our popular webinars		<b>99%</b> of parents found their parenting knowledge improved
	<b>463</b> First Nations clients		<b>98%</b> of toddler behaviours decreased in intensity at our Toddler Clinics
	<b>470</b> CALD clients in our community programs		<b>95%</b> of parents had improved mental health using our perinatal mental health services
	<b>3</b> new services opened		<b>1.3 million</b> social media reach
	<b>\$13 million</b> to expand Integrated Care Hubs		<b>106,570</b> website sessions
	<b>\$9 million</b> in partnered research funding		





# Our Reach

## PLACE-BASED CARE, VIRTUAL SUPPORT AND HYBRID MODELS OF CARE FOR FAMILIES

Karitane provides leading specialist early parenting services that focus on accessibility and support for parents across NSW to ensure every child receives the best start in life.

Our commitment to support Australian families when and where they need us has significantly grown our range and reach of services, with both place-based and virtual models of care, and an extensive suite of community programs to support some of Australia's most vulnerable communities.



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



**CARELINE**  
Statewide



**INTEGRATED CHILD AND FAMILY HUBS**  
Carramar  
Newcastle  
Oran Park  
Randwick  
Shellharbour  
Wolli Creek  
Warrawong



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



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



**TODDLER CLINICS**  
Carramar  
Campbelltown



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



**VOLUNTEER FAMILY CONNECT**  
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](https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia)



EQUITY OF ACCESS ACROSS RURAL AND REGIONAL NSW

Karitane understands that families appreciate choice, so we're continuing to expand our physical footprint across NSW to enable more families to receive care through their preferred medium, whether face-to-face (Shellharbour, Newcastle, Taree) or virtually. This year, we opened two new services: Campbelltown Early Parenting Service and Warrawong Parenting Centre, located on the NSW South Coast in the Illawarra region.

We focus on ensuring equity of access across all the communities we serve. To this end, we have continued to build a 'virtual village' for families across NSW, along with our national perinatal and infant mental health service, offered nationwide.

OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO FIRST NATIONS FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

At Karitane, we continue building and strengthening respectful relationships with First Nations communities around the lands where we deliver support and care to families. We envisage an Australia in which relationships between First Nations peoples and other Australians are strong: an Australia that acknowledges and addresses the hard truths of our history, and where respect for First Nations peoples, and their cultures, wisdom and resilience, are embedded in family life, in schools, in workplaces and in other organisations – including our own.

Innovation is at the core of our business strategy and values. However, true innovation extends beyond technological advancements and sector leadership. It is about innovating in our approach to relationships, understanding and respect. At Karitane, we are dedicated to fostering an environment in which innovation and reconciliation walk hand in hand.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS (RAPs)

This year, we conducted a staff survey on reconciliation to both measure the outcomes of our Reflect RAP, and to inform our Innovate RAP. The staff survey included questions about:

- staff engagement
- building relationships with First Nations communities
- recruitment
- services to First Nations families
- culturally sensitive care.

Our Innovate RAP is now in preparation for launch, highlighting our ongoing commitment to strengthening respectful relationships with First Nations communities and ensuring their voices are heard, their contributions recognised, and their heritage respected.

FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

Senior Aboriginal Health Education and Liaison Officer Auntie Freda has been with Karitane for over 20 years, supporting families through all our services, as well as leading the Lil' Possums Playgroup for First Nations families. This year, we have grown our senior leadership team, and in February 2024, we were delighted to welcome a senior First Nations Lead to our team to provide cultural support within Karitane, and to specifically support the First Nations Liaison Officers and Navigators employed across each state in the ForWhen national program.

As we support families in the early years of their children's lives, we aim to be an inclusive, culturally safe service and employer: a place to which First Nations people want to come. We want our work to contribute to all children and adults fulfilling their potential to flourish. This year, Karitane supported over 463 First Nations clients, with that number continuing to grow across our services. We also expanded our range of services specifically for First Nations families, including our Lil' Possums Playgroup South West Sydney and our Volunteer Family Connect program in Taree. Additionally, this year we opened our new Early Parenting Centre in Campbelltown, which includes a 19-room residential service with a culturally welcoming space and multiple rooms to accommodate families.

FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

This year, we hosted our first NAIDOC event at our Early Parenting Centre in Campbelltown to celebrate the richness, wisdom and diversity of First Nations cultures with families, community partners and special guests, including Nathan Jones, Director of Aboriginal Health, SWSLHD; Jemma Milloy, Deputy Director, Aboriginal Health, SWSLHD; Melissa Tonga, Senior Project Officer, The Investment Approach for Social Impact Strategy team (IAFSIS), NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ); Dr Michael Freeland MP; and Uncle Des from the Dharawal Men's Group.

We were also delighted by the Marrabang Waggagee Aboriginal Dance Group from Bonnyrigg Public School, who performed a cultural dance and Welcomed us all to Country. Melissa Tonga then shared the NSW Government's CIPP. Karitane was very proud to be selected as the first organisation in SWSLHD to 'take the pledge' to strengthen and empower families in our region by implementing the CIPP. Karitane Village Connect was co-designed by First Nations community members, with the continued guidance of the Aboriginal Core Design Group; and, from its inception, the community's lived and living experience and voices have been an essential, ongoing part of its implementation.

We celebrate our programs and partners across the many First Nations Lands we work on, including Cabrogal, Tharawal, Gadigal, Biripi, Awabakal and Wodi Wodi.

CELEST'S STORY



"We absolutely loved our stay at Karitane. It's helped our sleeping at home progress so much. Inala went from waking 5-6 times per night, to now only waking up twice, exactly what we went there for. The nurses were so lovely and supportive, and were different ages and from different backgrounds, which felt very inclusive and made things very comfortable for myself and Inala.

We had the privilege of staying in Room 19, which was a culturally inclusive space for First Nations people. The room was amazing – fitted with both a cot and a

toddler bed for large families who may stay. There were so many amazing artworks around the space from local Indigenous artists, which made the space feel so homely.

We had the most amazing stay, and were grateful for our Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Auntie Freda. We ran into her a lot over our stay, and she always made us feel welcome. Auntie Freda gifted us a bag with many resources in it for myself and my daughter – a book, especially, which she loves to this day!"



## SUPPORTING CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) COMMUNITIES

Karitane is committed to equity of access for all families, and we have developed several new initiatives this year to support CALD families.

### WOLLI CREEK HUB

The Wolli Creek Hub supports a diverse group of families, including many on temporary visas. Of the parents who accessed the Hub in the last year, 60% were born outside of Australia, with 39 different countries of origin. To increase the Hub's accessibility, we have translated the service information into seven dominant community languages. We also work closely with local ethno-specific organisations and attend multicultural days to meet local community members.

### MY TODDLER AND ME VIDEO SERIES

Our *My Toddler and Me* video series is an educational resource that supports parents of toddlers (aged 10–24 months) by normalising toddlerhood and presenting practical actions parents can take to support their toddler's social-emotional wellbeing. Thanks to a generous grant from the Australian Chinese Charitable Foundation and philanthropic support, we could design these videos specifically for families with young toddlers from a range of different cultural backgrounds (Arabic and Vietnamese). Our bilingual colleagues at Karitane Linking Families (KLF) have been involved in co-creating the videos, and have consulted with families they support to ensure the video content and animation is culturally appropriate. We also have focus groups and a randomised control trial with 150 families underway to ensure the rigour of this work. Associate Professor Jane Kohlhoff, Director Research presented the initial findings of this study at the Australian Institute of Families conference, and at the Maternal Child and Family Health Nursing Australia conference. We look forward to being able to share the final videos with families and the greater community.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR TODDLER

The Understanding Your Toddler project was funded by the Paul Ramsay Foundation Strengthening Early Years Small/Medium Grant 2022. This five-year Karitane project (Understanding Your Toddler: Co-designing a preventative parenting skills program with CALD families) allows us to translate resources for Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) educational parent groups, and to hold the groups in Arabic and Vietnamese for families from these backgrounds.

This year, we invited families and key community members to co-design the Vietnamese Understanding Your Toddler program to incorporate suitable language, delivery style and cultural parenting practices. A bilingual Vietnamese worker, together with a skilled PCIT clinician, will also facilitate groups and provide all resources in the Vietnamese language. Next year, we will co-design and implement the same group program for Arabic-speaking families.

### BABY MAPS VIDEO SERIES

The *Baby Maps* animated video series launched in November 2023, developed in partnership with the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), NSW Refugee Health, New Horizons and Hunter New England LHD. It features six short videos that explore the importance of play, joy and attachment for healthy development in 0–3-year-olds. It was developed for parents and caregivers from refugee communities and is available in 13 community languages: Arabic, Assyrian, Dari, English, Ezidi, Farsi, Hazaragi, Karen, Kurdish-Kurmanji, Rohingya, Swahili, Tibetan and Ukrainian.

### COMMUNITY HUBS AUSTRALIA

This year, we launched a new Community Hubs Australia partnership service in Canterbury, Bankstown and Fairfield. Community hubs build social cohesion in Australia. They are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds – particularly mothers with preschool children – come to connect, share and learn. KLF has been working in schools with CALD families for over 20 years, and this exciting partnership will extend our reach in an additional nine primary schools.

**40%**

of the parents accessing the Carramar Parenting Centre were born outside of Australia and come from 14 different countries of origin

**80%**

Of families supported by KLF are from CALD backgrounds

**40%**

of families supported by Community Programs are from CALD backgrounds





# Our Services

Karitane offers place-based services across NSW, as well as a nationwide ‘virtual village’, allowing us to develop effective hybrid models of care to support families with children from birth to five years.

More recently, we have worked with health, education, NGO and other child and family sector partners to grow our integrated child and family hub model of care. These hubs are designed to engage families with vulnerabilities in early intervention services, reducing health inequity and providing essential wellbeing support for both children and families – all to provide a lifetime of benefits to the child.

Our evidence-based services are delivered by a highly trained, multi-disciplinary 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.

The primary reasons for referral are sleep and settling, toddlers, adjusting to parenting, mental health and feeding. Since 2021, the number of parents referred to us with issues such as perinatal mental health and adjustment to parenting has increased by 100%. These changes clearly highlight the pressures families are feeling and the support they need.



## TOP PRIMARY REASONS FOR REFERRAL

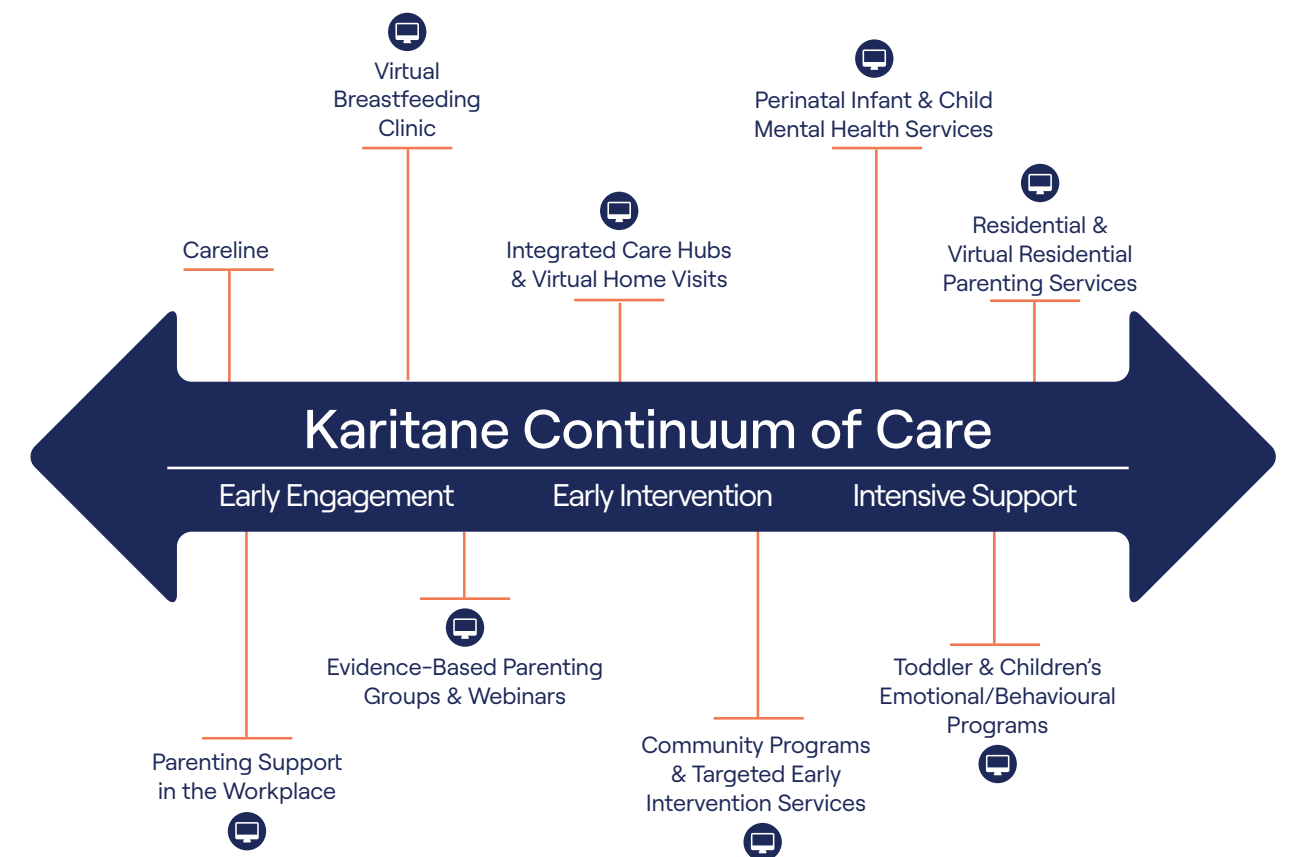
1. Sleep and settling
2. Toddlers’ behaviour
3. Adjusting to parenting and mental health







## The first 2000 days shape a child's future



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

virtual services available



## INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY FOR FAMILIES ACROSS NSW – THREE NEW LOCATIONS AND SERVICES

This year, we opened three new place-based services in NSW: an Early Parenting Centre in Campbelltown, a (partnered) Child and Family Health service at an integrated care hub in Warrawong, and Community Hub support in Canterbury, Bankstown and Fairfield.

Minister for Health of New South Wales, Ryan Park officially opened the new Karitane Early Parenting Centre at Campbelltown Hospital to support families across NSW in the early years of their child's life. Integrating services ensures a holistic approach and wraparound support for all family members, so parents find it easier than ever to receive the care and guidance they need during the crucial early years.

This purpose-built facility includes a Residential Unit, a Toddler Clinic and perinatal infant and child mental health support. Our Residential Unit offers 19 rooms for families, with multiple rooms to accommodate double families, as well as a culturally welcoming room for First Nations families. This year, thanks to Greg Warren MP and the NSW Government ClubGrants program, we are currently redeveloping the outdoor playspaces to provide an enriching environment for all the families who use our service.

*"A significant 52% of admissions for Karitane's residential services originate within South Western Sydney Local Health District, accounting for 15% of all births across NSW.*

*The opening of the new Karitane Early Parenting Centre at Campbelltown Hospital represents a pivotal moment in our journey towards providing exceptional support to families, not only in South Western Sydney but across broader New South Wales.*

*I am delighted that the partnership between Karitane and South Western Sydney Local Health District has provided this exceptional centre, with access to specialist paediatric care at Campbelltown Hospital. Working together, we can ensure every child receives the best possible start in life."*

Ryan Park, Minister for Health of New South Wales

*"Our valuable partnership with Karitane is allowing us to together build a healthier future by providing life-changing care for children in their early years, and their families, with the opening of the new centre."*

Sonia Marshall, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health District

## CO-DESIGNING SERVICES WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES FOR IMPROVED OUTCOMES

'Co-design' is a collaborative approach that brings together families, communities and healthcare professionals to enhance services. It values the importance of lived and living experience, the wisdom of communities and deep listening and engagement to design services by a community for that community. Rather than involving stakeholders after decisions have been made, co-design engages them from the start to help define the issues and develop solutions.

The co-design process generally involves two parts:

- understanding: gathering and analysing experiences from all involved to gain insight into the current service
- collaborative design: consumers and health professionals jointly develop and refine improvements based on the gathered insights.

This method ensures that final outcomes are more relevant and effective, addressing the actual needs of those who will use and deliver the services. In early 2023, we launched Village Connect with a collaborative partnership approach to support parents aged 25 years and under. We developed this service using co-design. Currently, we are co-designing our Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub and the Campbelltown Residential Service.

### CO-DESIGN IN ACTION: DESIGNING VILLAGE CONNECT

Village Connect is a new, innovative integrated hub for young parents, established in early 2023. It aims to improve the overall safety, wellbeing, resilience and lifetime trajectories of parents aged 25 years and younger, who are pregnant or have children. The hub helps parents at critical points in their parenting journey through fast-tracked access to our Residential Unit and Toddler Clinic, parent training and education, referral for allied health supports, peer support through group programs and playgroups, and most importantly, support to navigate the complex family and early childhood sector.

The model was designed by SWS First Nations community members and guided by the DCJ Aboriginal Core Design Group. Village Connect is delivered in partnership with Uniting and Sonder; and together, we prioritise ongoing consultation and co-design. From inception, community members' lived and living experiences and voices have been an essential, ongoing part of implementing and evolving the model.

In co-designing Village Connect, we held multiple parent consultation sessions that helped to inform its ways of working and considerations for change. In these sessions, families have helped to shape how best to navigate services and support systems, and have described how we can make access easier and more valuable. This has helped us to set up our environment to ensure we emphasise bringing parents together across all the programs we offer.



Launch of the National Child and Family Hubs Network – Jo Goulding National Director SNAICC – National Voice for our Children Early Years Support, Associate Prof Sue Woolfenden Senior Research and Fellow UNSW, Anne-Marie McNamara, Dr Shanti Raman Conjoint Associate Professor UNSW, Prof Sharon Goldfeld Chair of the National Child and Family Hubs Network and Director of the Centre for Community Child Health, the Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth, Grainne O'Loughlin Karitane CEO, Dr Suzy Honisett Manager of the National Child and Family Hubs Network.

## PARTNERSHIPS FOR IMPACT

Karitane has a deep commitment to collaboration and partnerships embedded in both our company values and our strategic directions. We seek to collaborate with families, colleagues and care partners to achieve our purpose.

We build our partnerships through effective teamwork, shared decision-making, our caring and supportive approach, and appropriate, timely communication. We have several robust, enduring partnerships and works across many industry alliances.

We continue our existing partnerships with:

- Mid Coast 4 Kids Alliance
- Family Friendly Workplaces Advisory Committee
- Australasian Association of Parenting and Child Health (AAPCH)
- Social Economic Empowerment Advisory Committee.

We have also grown and developed the following new partnerships.

### NATIONAL CHILD AND FAMILY HUBS NETWORK

This year, we further developed partnerships with the National Child and Family Hubs Network, a game-changing initiative dedicated to ensuring services are more accessible and impactful for Australian families, by enhancing integrated, community-based child and family hubs. Bringing together the collective expertise of health, early education, NGOs, community organisations, research institutes, universities, philanthropy and government, these hubs ensure families receive the care and support they need during their child's first 2000 days.

On 22 November 2023, the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Dr Anne Aly – together with Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Karitane – marked the official launch of the National Child and Family Hubs Network, held at the Karitane Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub.



## CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORTS ALLIANCE NSW (CAFSA)

Karitane CEO Grainne O'Loughlin is a co-founder of CaFSA: the Child and Family Supports Alliance NSW. CaFSA is a collaborative body of leaders from NSW's mainstream and specialist community-based and not-for-profit sectors, including national parenting support services. CaFSA was established to advocate for, design and implement foundational support systems that are tailored for children with developmental differences and their families.

Collectively, these trusted and established organisations work with over 182,000 children and families, including children with disabilities; and many have a broader reach through consultancy and support work. CaFSA works to collaborate in developing a supportive framework for foundational supports that benefit children and their families across NSW.

## PARTNERSHIP BROKERS ASSOCIATION

Working together in partnerships is the foundation that enables us to deliver the best wraparound service for families. We develop impactful partnerships with parents to support them in their first five years of raising a child. Through our experience in developing integrated care hubs and models of care within the child and family ecosystem, we have witnessed firsthand the transformative power of collaboration.

We are committed to working with health professionals to deliver integrated care and support to parents, and this year we were excited to announce a partnership with Partnership Brokers Association: Partnership Brokers Training. Karitane co-hosted this training to focus on child and family services with leaders across not-for-profit, government, community and philanthropic sectors for a four-day program.

*"The training provides a framework that enables shared language, processes and values for developing, navigating and sustaining partnerships in the community sector. The experiential nature of the course allows participants to immerse themselves in the content and develop tangible skills that can be applied in practice."*

Sharlene Vlahos, Director of Education and Business Development, Karitane

## COMMUNITY HUBS AUSTRALIA

Karitane developed new Community Hubs Australia partnerships in Canterbury, Bankstown and Fairfield. Community Hubs build social cohesion in Australia. They are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds – particularly mothers with preschool children – come to connect, share and learn. KLF has been working in schools with CALD families for over 20 years, and this exciting partnership will extend Karitane's reach in an additional nine primary schools.

## A YEAR OF INFLUENCE AND ADVOCACY

### INQUIRY RESPONSES

This year, Karitane responded to:

- the Special Commission of Inquiry into NSW Healthcare Funding, and gave evidence at a hearing in April 2024
- the Select Committee on reproductive, maternal and paediatric health services in Tasmania
- the Australian Government's consultation on A stronger, more diverse and independent community sector
- the Australian Government on the Developing a not-for-profit sector development blueprint: Submission in response to blueprint expert reference group issues paper

### SECTOR LEADERSHIP

This year, Karitane also:

- had representatives on the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Practice Framework Governance, the NSW Government's Volunteering Taskforce and the National Strategy for Volunteering Council
- was a founding member of CaFSA NSW and the Family Friendly Workplace Accreditation Committee
- was a member of the Social Economic Empowerment Advisory Committee, the National Child and Family Hubs Network and the Mid Coast 4 Kids Alliance
- holds the current Chair of AAPCH
- holds certified membership of PCIT International as the leading provider, and only licensed regional trainer, of Parent-Child Interaction Therapy in Australia
- is the only Licensed Provider for Family Partnership Training in NSW







# ForWhen

## 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 a range of host sites in each state and territory to connect parents with services and supports that best match their needs. Karitane acts as the lead agency for ForWhen, with consortium partners that include the AAPCH Board, the Parenting Research Centre and the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

Launched in February 2022, ForWhen has continued to grow to reach parents with perinatal mental health challenges in all states and territories. Over the past 12 months, it has grown as a trusted service to deliver high-quality, much-needed care navigation. With 57% service growth in the last 12 months, ForWhen has assisted over 5000 new and expectant parents in total to get the help they need, over 2800 of these in the last 12 months. Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care until June 2025. ForWhen's research partner, UNSW, completed a snapshot study that showed favourable results in client outcomes, and in stakeholder and client qualitative feedback, and a social return on investment study is underway. Papers containing research findings will be published in coming months.

This year, 84% of parents rated the navigator as 'excellent' in all aspects, and 99% were highly satisfied with the service. Client outcomes of anxiety and depressive symptoms, coping and parenting self-efficacy also all consistently showed positive changes.

This year, we also introduced two new national lead positions to further improve service delivery and support. The Clinical Lead has enhanced the service's clinical excellence, ensuring everyone follows best-practice principles and practices. ForWhen developed a Perinatal and Infant Mental Health Navigator Clinical Competency Framework to provide a structure for recruiting navigators, training skills and encouraging self-reflection.

The unique skills for this specialised area of perinatal and infant mental health further support us in providing timely, accessible, seamless referrals during this highly changeable time for new and expectant parents.

The Yarning Lead position has increased our stakeholder connections with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations to facilitate engagement with First Nations people, providing advice and guidance for culturally inclusive practice, and supporting the First Nations ForWhen staff.

*"Thank you for helping me get through the darkest days in my life."*

ForWhen Parent

# Early Engagement

Our early engagement services promote positive parent-child relationships and build early attachment through a strengths-based approach.

Through a range of targeted services, Karitane supports parents who experience challenges with parenting, ensuring they have timely access to care through a variety of platforms, including our Careline, weekly webinars, national nutrition program, evidence-based parenting groups, online resources, videos and podcasts.

## CARELINE

1300 CARING (1300 227 464)

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



**3583**

Careline calls received this year



Artist - Joy Makepeace, Kamilaroi and Murrawarri language groups.

**2800**  
clients, +57% growth  
vs last year

**40%**  
self-referrals from  
parents

**60%**  
referrals from health  
professionals

**7%**  
First Nations clients

**24%**  
regional clients





## CONNECTING THE DOTS (CTD) NATIONAL NUTRITION PROGRAM

CTD is a national early childhood nutrition service, in partnership with the Healthy Beginnings research team at Sydney Local Health District. The service aims to improve early childhood nutrition literacy and self-efficacy for parents and carers, health professionals and early childhood educators. It provides a series of interactive online nutrition workshops, with resources for parents and professionals to support families with young children in their first 2000 days. As part of the service, we developed a comprehensive library of resources for both parents and professionals to ensure evidence-based information is readily available.

The health professional webinars were accredited by the Royal Australian College of General Practice and the Australian Practice Nurses Association.

The program's advisory committee is made up of 20 stakeholders from government, not-for-profit and university organisations with expertise in early childhood.

CTD has also been conducting a mixed-method study to evaluate its professional education webinars and exploring preventative care in early childhood obesity, with publications due to be released in late 2024. Thus far, evaluations have shown that professional webinars have increased professional knowledge, and that more work is required to continue to increase the skills of professionals who work with families.

We successfully completed this project with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health until June 2024.

**3199**  
parents and professionals registered for webinars

**97%**  
of parents reported information was clear and easy to understand

**94%**  
of parents reported they gained new knowledge that will influence what or how they feed their baby or child

## PARENTING SUPPORT IN THE WORKPLACE

As a founding partner of the Family Friendly Workplaces Initiative, we understand the important role organisations play in supporting their people and those people's families. That's why we offer an extensive range of webinars and 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.

This year, we continue to provide parenting support to a variety of organisations, including MinterEllison. This has included webinars and advice clinics that enable all their team members across Australia to access support. In total, we also delivered 10 webinars, four in partnership with Parents At Work.

**128**  
parents supported in the workplace

## WEEKLY PARENTING WEBINARS

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

**782**  
parents registered for webinars

## WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We use digital platforms to reach families and to provide strategies that promote positive parenting journeys.

Our Facebook and Instagram profiles target parents and carers, and we use LinkedIn to target health professionals for service and research updates and professional development opportunities.

This year, we saw significant growth across all our platforms.

**1.35 million**  
Social media reach

**106,570**  
website sessions





# Early Intervention

Early intervention services provide targeted support to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families with identified health concerns or social vulnerabilities. Our range of early intervention services includes virtual breastfeeding clinics, integrated child and family hubs, virtual home visits and community programs.

## 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 and support children and families 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 practice skills with the support of our highly trained child and family health nurses. Our nurses will also help identify any other supports a family may need to give their child the best start in life.

As the lead delivery partner, Karitane currently works with the National Child and Family Hubs Network. This year, we hosted the official launch of the Network at Karitane Fairfield Hub with the Minister for Early Childhood Education, Dr Anne Aly. We are continuing to expand on our current seven place-based child and family hubs across NSW.

Our new location in Warrawong opened earlier this year. To make our services more accessible to families experiencing complex parenting challenges, we have partnered with Barnardo's South Coast Children's Centre in Warrawong. We also work with other like-minded organisations to enhance the range of family support services that this centre facilitates, including specific supported playgroups for parents with mental health issues. Our Karitane nurse attends this playgroup to build trust and rapport with families and provide appropriate information sessions on child health topics.

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 increased access touchpoints, collaborations, partnerships and locations.



*"The Karitane Hub has been my lifeline through the joys and challenges of raising two sets of twins. From the Residential Unit and Breastfeeding Clinic to the Careline and Playgroups, every step has been a reassuring handhold. Currently attending the Toddler Clinic with my 3-year-old twin girls, Karitane feels like an extension of our family. Becoming a part of this big family network has transformed my journey as a mother – without the Karitane Hub, we would not be the parents we are today."*

Anne-Marie McNamara, a local mum who attended the growing Fairfield Karitane hub

Karitane continues to demonstrate leadership in developing and delivering child and family hubs. In collaboration with South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, we presented the learnings from the Wolli Creek Hub at both the 2023 23rd International Conference on Integrated Care in Sydney and the Ministry of Health AOD Hubs Symposium.

**1742**  
clients

**80%**  
substantially increased parenting knowledge  
(in two-hour consultation)

## \$13 Million

Announcement to Expand Integrated Child and Family Hubs

The redesign of the Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub is being co-funded by the NSW Government and Paul Ramsay Foundation, which have both recognised the crucial impact of hubs. The combined \$13 million funding will enable us to develop the Karitane Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub to support the growing and diverse community in the Fairfield area, as well as offer virtual services to families across NSW. We will establish a 'one-stop-shop' to offer families access to the wide range of early parenting and support services they need to give their children the best start in life.

The redeveloped hub will offer:

- perinatal infant and child mental health services
- toddler behaviour clinics
- child and family health services
- a digital health hub
- integrated services with external providers.

Co-design, with both partners and community, is a critical component of successfully developing this new space. This year, we held a series of continuing co-design consultations with community and stakeholders. These included several roundtable workshops with potential partners from health and community organisations, and local land council.

Additionally, we have had numerous consultations with families that started with our Community Engagement Survey in early 2024, which we translated into four different languages: Vietnamese, Khmer, Assyrian and Arabic. We also attended local events specific to different cultural groups; and in May 2024, we conducted a multilingual Family Focus Day with parents, carers and their children to gain valuable insights into their wants, needs and preferences.

This co-design process has been invaluable, and will ensure that the Fairfield Child and Family Hub meets the local community's needs and wants. We thank all the participants who have taken the time to work with us on this journey, and also thank our community representatives, who provide invaluable insights and attend regular meetings as the hub develops.

We are excited that Professor Valsa Eapen successfully secured a \$2.5 million grant from the Australian Government to establish a Centre for Research Excellence. This multi-disciplinary centre will be named the Centre of Research Excellence in Strengths-based Tiered Access to Resources and Supports (STARS-CRE). It will promote optimal child development outcomes by addressing inequity in health and developmental service access for children, particularly from priority populations, during their first 2000 days.

Through STARS-CRE, we – together with the Ingham Institute, SWSLHD and UNSW – will continue to research the Fairfield Hub's efficacy.



Dr David Saliba MP, Grainne O'Loughlin CEO Karitane, The Hon Ryan Park MP, Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, Prof Kristy Muir CEO Paul Ramsay Foundation.

*"This investment to support the development of Karitane's Fairfield Hub will further enhance the support available to families in Western and South Western Sydney. Karitane is an important partner in providing trusted parenting services for families seeking professional support with their unsettled babies, perinatal infant and child mental health issues and challenging toddler behaviours. By investing in Karitane, we're improving the ability to deliver high-quality care and support for children and their families in the critical early years."*

The Hon Ryan Park MP, Minister for Health of New South Wales, Minister for Regional Health

*"The Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub is a cornerstone support service designed to ensure that the children and families of the Fairfield area have what they need to thrive. PRF is proud to support Karitane in developing this vital service for families so that it can provide integrated services that support child development."*

Kristy Muir, CEO, Paul Ramsay Foundation

This world-first strengths-based, co-designed model of care will enhance child and family health, so that every child will have an equal opportunity for the best start to life, irrespective of their geographic, cultural, linguistic or economic background.

Additionally, our sincere appreciation goes to the NSW Government and Paul Ramsay Foundation for the generous funding that supports Karitane Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub, and to Dr David Saliba MP for his continuous support in advocating for Karitane and the families of Fairfield. Together we are ensuring that Fairfield children receive equitable, fair and timely support to get the best start in life.



## VIRTUAL BREASTFEEDING CLINIC

We offer virtual breastfeeding clinics (VBC) five days a week. This allows us to provide timely support to improve breastfeeding outcomes. This year, we have focused on increasing service accessibility to families in remote and regional areas to ensure that no matter where they live, support is always available.

**160**

new mums supported on their breastfeeding journey, +18% increase 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 — to develop positive relationships with their children and nurture their learning, as well as their social and emotional experiences of the world.

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 with our strong relationships with DCJ, the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS), Uniting, Mission Australia, Benevolent Society, 54 Reasons, The Smith Family, Barnardo's Australia and Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation to deliver a variety of evidence-based community programs to families who experience disadvantage in South West Sydney and regional NSW.

The Community Programs team aims to be responsive and inclusive to the needs of the children, families and communities we work alongside. To assist this process, Community Programs recently implemented a new Client Record Management (CRM) system to provide oversight of — and the capability to monitor and deliver — our high-quality, impactful services. The new CRM will not only allow us to better view our quantitative data, but it will also help us identify service improvement opportunities by capturing qualitative feedback, suggestions and the voices of children and families.

In 2023–24, our collaborations have further developed with organisations that include the First Steps Count Community Centre in Taree, TAFE NSW, Volunteering Australia, Uniting, Sonder, SWSLHD, Playgroups NSW and Community Hubs Australia. This has allowed us to offer a wider range of programs and services to children and families.

## 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 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 a period of time, to 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.

To support our work in early intervention, we facilitate seven supported playgroups embedded with the principles of the Early Learning Years Framework. We also implemented the evidence-based Smalltalk parenting program and strategies in sessions. 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 Fairfield, Liverpool, Bankstown and Camden LGAs.

*"Thank you for supporting Isaac's learning with such warmth, care and understanding."*

Bankstown playgroup parent



## 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 aged 25 years and younger — both those who are pregnant and those who have children. Karitane has two specific services for young parents: Village Connect and the Karitane Young Parent Program.

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

Funded by DCJ under IAFSIS, Village Connect 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. Village Connect 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 implement, the use of 'The Common Approach', engaging in communities of practice with other agencies in SWS, and the team works to implement CIPP which have been developed alongside Village Connect to ensure we continue to review and improve our practice and methodologies in line with our cultural lens. Village Connect provides a stepped model of care, including universal, flexible supports through to access to tertiary supports.

**130**

clients supported at Village Connect

### KARITANE YOUNG PARENT PROGRAM (KYPP)

This year, we supported 15 young parents through parent education and case management, to ensure they could 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. We helped seven young parents graduate with their Certificate III in Community Services this year: a first for this program. Young parents also get opportunities 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.

Our young parents were also instrumental in helping us co-design the expanded new young parents' program Village Connect. Our South West Sydney young parent program was funded by DSS Children and Parenting Services.

## VOLUNTEER FAMILY CONNECT

We recognise that volunteers play a critical role in our community and our organisation. This year, our evidence-based program Volunteer Family Connect (VFC) matched 59 trained volunteers with families for one-on-one support to increase parents' confidence and connections to the community. We offer VFC across three locations: Taree, South West Sydney and Shellharbour. The service is delivered 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, as well as 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 Barnardo's in Shellharbour to offer our VFC program, which is part of our DSS Communities for Children programs. Our VFC Coordinator has continued to build our volunteer team, now with 16 trained volunteers who continue to provide weekly support to families. The VFC Coordinator sits on the National Strategy for Volunteering design team, and continues to advocate for volunteering supports.

*"We can't thank Karitane enough. When our second baby was born, we thought we were prepared, but a traumatic birth and rough recovery with complications changed everything. The Volunteer Family Connect program was a huge help for our family. We were socially isolated from friends and family. With Karitane support, I had time to prepare meals, do washing, and some days even just having time for a shower was helpful. Izzy was a great fit with our family, and I felt really comfortable having her in our home. It was great having her as part of our 'village.'"*

VFC Parent



# BECKY'S STORY



"I was 17 when I fell pregnant with my first, and I was petrified. My family voiced their opinions, tried to force me to end the pregnancy, and called me and my baby a screwup. My best friend of seven years told me that if I kept the baby, she would never speak to me again.

I was isolated and didn't know what to do, or who to talk to. I approached one of my high school teachers, who reassured me that it was all going to be okay, and I should talk to the case manager of Karitane's Young Parent Program. I was so afraid, but took a chance, and it changed my life for the better.

I still remember the first phone call we had. I was left in tears of joy that I'd found someone who didn't judge me for my situation. Instead, she offered support and kind words to me: words I hadn't heard the whole pregnancy – a simple 'Congratulations, everything will be okay, you've got this, and we will look after you.'

Walking into the first session with the program was such a relief – seeing six other young mothers who instantly became my cheer squad. I progressed through the course with so much support and guidance. I could start my journey to formal education, something I was told I'd never achieve due to being a 'child having a child'.

I've come a long way since I was 17. A lot has changed, and I cannot be more grateful for all the support and help Karitane has provided. I have accessed many services through Karitane, from the KYPP program to the Residential Service, and now Village Connect.

I have been able to gain further qualifications using the units I completed while doing the KYPP, while also accessing and completing multiple parenting courses to better myself and my parenting toolbox for my children.

Within the last three months, I have completed the Being a Parent course, which was provided to me by Village Connect. It has been incredibly beneficial for me and my

children, and I could not recommend it more to every parent I talk to. It helped me realise I just need to be a good-enough parent, and not a perfect parent. It let me reflect on my own childhood and develop the skills and attitude I needed for my children.

Recently, I have had a tough time with my five-year-old, Jack. I noticed a lot of change in his behaviour and development. I reached out to my KYPP case worker and to Village Connect, who helped me organise appointments with an Occupational Therapist, a Speech Therapist and other supports for my son – all things I wouldn't have been able to manage by myself. They supported me, gave me information about how to best support my son, and have been a shoulder to cry on and always willing to listen to me talk through my worries.

Without Karitane's help and all the wonderful employees and services they provide, I can assure you that I would not be where I am today, as a strong, resilient mother of two wonderful-yet-crazy children who always keep me on my feet and push me to better things. For the first time in an extremely long time, I finally feel stable and proud to be me: a young single mother with two children, with Karitane as the village that's helping me raise them to be the future. I have been able to overcome so many adversities, and to support my children, knowing that I have the support of Karitane KYPP and Village Connect.

I have cried through writing this because I am so grateful for all that Karitane has done for my family. Karitane and the health professionals do not get the acknowledgment and credit they deserve. I have my own story, and everyone has theirs, but I can assure you that everyone who can access and receive the support that I have had through Karitane has become a better person and parent from it. I owe everything I am to their programs and support."

# COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN

We have continued to grow our DSS Communities for Children programs across regional and metro NSW.

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

With the support of our Mission Australia 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, behaviour, and access to community supports. In 2023-24, we supported over 24 families to connect better with their children and to help those children reach developmental milestones.

## 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 FSC Centre opened in early 2023, and the FSC Navigator has since supported 94 parents and children. Many families accessed the Navigator through self-referral, and a strong partnership formed with Community Health. This saw referrals to the Navigator increasing, particularly from the Building Strong Foundations Aboriginal Maternal health team, with some fantastic outcomes. The Navigator works with families wherever they are at – supporting some families 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

For the second year, 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. We currently have nine parent facilitators working across three sites. 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 DCJ (Campbelltown and Oran Park).

"I'd tried to reach out for help before, but no one would help me. I'm really glad I met you. I don't feel quite so alone anymore."

FSC Parent

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS IMPACT

**934**  
individuals supported, +13.8% vs last year

**98%**  
satisfaction with community programs

**13%**  
First Nations families

**7.1%**  
people with disability

**40%**  
of families from CALD backgrounds (80.3% in KLF)

### CALD CLIENTS' MAIN LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

- 1. Vietnamese
- 2. Arabic
- 3. Assyrian
- 4. Urdu
- 5. Bengali





# Intensive Support

Our intensive support services provide comprehensive, multi-disciplinary care to families with a complex range of needs. These services include residential and virtual residential parenting services, Toddler Clinics, and perinatal infant and child mental health services.

## RESIDENTIAL AND VIRTUAL RESIDENTIAL PARENTING SERVICE RESIDENTIAL PARENTING CENTRE

Over a four-night residential stay, parents receive 24-hour support from our team of health professionals, including child and family health nurses, psychologists, social workers, paediatricians and psychiatrists. These professionals work in partnership with families to address their parenting concerns and provide information, guidance and encouragement.

In September 2023, our residential services relocated from Carramar and Camden to a new purpose-built facility in Campbelltown. We now offer 19 rooms to families across NSW, with multiple rooms to accommodate double families, as well as a culturally welcoming room for First Nations families.

This new facility has been designed to make families feel at home during their stay, with increased space, new outdoor areas and modern features. The new location will include residential services (and a virtual residential parenting service), a Toddler Clinic and perinatal infant and child mental health services. We've worked in partnership with SWSLHD and other key local stakeholders to collaborate on this new and exciting facility, and we look forward to continuing to provide critical early parenting support for families with children aged birth to five years.

As a result of comprehensive consumer engagement with families and staff, and service statistics, we identified an opportunity to revise our model of care from all families receiving a four-night/five-day stay to a hybrid model of care that's tailored to individual family needs. We established a steering committee in April 2024 and

used redesign principles to develop flexible service options in consultation with families and staff, which we will pilot later this year. We will evaluate the new models by measuring outcomes and improvements for families in the various programs.

### VIRTUAL RESIDENTIAL PARENTING SERVICE (VRPS)

The VRPS, supported by the NSW Government, includes 10 virtual residential parenting service 'beds' to provide accessible, flexible 24-hour support for families in their own homes when they need us. This provides an improved innovative experience for both families and staff, with effective outcomes at lower care delivery costs. Providing virtual support has many benefits, including improved access, reduced time and expenses for travel, and increased confidence for families who need to implement new strategies at home after discharge.

Families that attended the Virtual Residential Unit (forerunner to VRPS) in 2021 and 2022 reported effective post-discharge outcomes from the program. At the six-week follow-up, they identified improvements in areas of parenting self-efficacy, and improved understanding of the emotions their child experiences. This shows that Virtual Residential programs can effectively bring positive changes to families.

## 2428

clients supported through our Residential and VRPS services

## 92%

of clients found the service extremely or very helpful for their needs

*"I just wanted to say thank you for such an amazing, positive stay this week at your Campbelltown Residential Service. The room was so spacious, and we were impressed to see that it had been decorated with local Indigenous artwork and books, and to learn that they had an Indigenous wing dedicated to Aboriginal families.*

*Every single member of staff we had the pleasure to meet was so caring and attentive, and you could tell that they all genuinely cared about the families they were assisting. Every person we met remembered our whole family's names, and offered their support at every possible opportunity.*

*One nurse created a sticker chart for my girls to reward them when they slept in their own beds. Since having their sticker chart, my girls have been sleeping in their own beds, the first night in over a year. I truly believe we would not have reached this point without our sticker chart – probably the one thing that I hadn't thought to try at home.*

*I no longer feel shame in admitting that I need help with my children's sleep needs, as we were so supported and never made to feel silly. I can't thank you all enough!*

*I love you all, and thank you for supporting our family during our sleep journey."*

The Martin Family

## 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 evidence-based therapeutic groups, in which families work in partnership with our multi-disciplinary 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.

To meet increasing demand, we ran six-week therapeutic groups this year for families on the waitlist for receiving individual support. This enabled families to connect, learn about mental health, practise self-care strategies and discover how to build a support network. This ensured early access to support from an experienced child and family health and mental health nurse in a supportive group environment.

## 158

families, 41% increase vs last year

## 95%

of parents experienced improvement in their mental health

## TODDLER AND CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PROGRAMS

At our Toddler Clinics, we offer evidence-based PCIT for families with 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.

This year, in addition to our internationally renowned PCIT service, we developed 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 offered a step-up or step-down approach if a family's circumstances changed, or if they identified other issues.

With caring for toddlers being the second most common reason for referral to us, we wanted to use Karitane's leadership in PCIT beyond our Toddler Clinics. This year, we trained 18 Karitane clinicians from our residential units in PCIT-Toddler (PCIT-T) model elements. This allowed the Child and Family team to deliver community toddler groups to families admitted to the residential units. We also support an eight-week PCIT-T community group at our Wolli Creek integrated child and family hub.

This year, Lucy Rabbetts and Linda Lennie, two regional trainers in our Toddler Clinic, have been awarded the prestigious Enid Ross Fellowship. This provided the financial support to present the findings of a PCIT-T preventative model for children aged 12-18 months old at the PCIT International Convention: Working 9 to 5 for Innovation and Sustainability September 4-6 2024 in Knoxville, Tennessee, USA.

## 179

toddlers and children supported



# Clinical Research & Evidence Base

**\$6.50 million**  
in partnered research funding

**\$2.56 million**  
in new partnered research funding

**10**  
peer-reviewed journal articles published

**7**  
national and international conference presentations

## KARITANE RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Karitane conducts research to:

- inform the evidence base of our clinical service delivery
- contribute to wider knowledge and scholarship
- ensure families receive the best interventions, advice and support available.

Karitane’s longstanding research relationship with the UNSW Discipline of Psychiatry and Mental Health has continued in 2023–24. This partnership aims to develop a perinatal infant and child mental health research program at Karitane, provide leadership in developing perinatal infant and child mental health services within Karitane, and contribute to UNSW undergraduate training, postgraduate training and Higher Degree Research student supervision.

In 2023–24, the Karitane research group comprised:

- Associate Professor Jane Kohlhoff (group leader)
- Sophia Harris (Research Officer)
- Jess Brandt (Research Assistant)
- PhD students: Vivian Chau, Praveena Rajaswaran, Angelique Roth, Sa Ma and Helen Gu
- undergraduate research students: Amir Nadeem, Jack Vorgias, Jerrica Kuan, Kevin Li and Yanqiu Zhang
- research volunteers: Holly Dragvik and Niloufar Imanirad.

The research team also collaborated with clinical teams at Karitane, and with researchers and clinicians from across Australia and internationally.

The team has experienced significant successes this past year, including 10 publications in peer-reviewed journals and seven national or international conference presentations. Team members have partnered with other researchers on numerous funded projects, valued at \$2.56 million in new partnered research funding. Across the year, we were part of ongoing projects with a total of \$6.50 million in funding.

### PAUL RAMSAY FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

Associate Professor Jane Kohlhoff has been awarded the Paul Ramsay Foundation (PRF) Fellowship for 2024. As Karitane’s Head of Research, Assoc Prof Kohlhoff specialises in perinatal, infant and early childhood mental health. The PRF Fellowship Program is designed to support innovative research ideas that have the potential to fill key knowledge and practice gaps and create meaningful change. Assoc Prof Kohlhoff will use this fellowship to research approaches to providing mental health support for the early years in rural communities.

## CELEBRATING INDUSTRY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

In November, we held a Research and Education Showcase that celebrated Karitane’s commitment to translational research and education in perinatal infant and child mental health, and child and family health. Over the decades, Karitane has partnered with research and academic institutions to inform our clinical service delivery, as well as to contribute to wider knowledge and scholarship. Our research has ensured families receive the best interventions, advice and support available.

This day was an exciting celebration with our staff, academic partners, supporters, sponsors and special guests including:

- our Patron, the Hon Jillian Skinner
- Dr David Saliba MP
- Dr Bryanne Barnett
- Mr Michael Goot
- our Keynote Speakers: Prof Valsa Eapen, Assoc Prof Jane Kohlhoff and other guest speakers.

We deeply appreciate the sponsorship we received from UNSW for this event.





## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

### TODDLER RESEARCH

The toddler years can be an exciting-but-challenging time for many families, and toddler development and interventions have been strong research focuses for Karitane. In 2023–24, this has included five major projects:

1. follow-up assessments with the 90 families who participated in a Randomised Controlled Trial to test outcomes of PCIT-T and Circle of Security – Parenting
2. pilot trials of the My Toddler and Me PCIT-T group programs at the Karitane Carramar and Wolli Creek Hubs,
3. a new Randomised Controlled Trial of the My Toddler and Me PCIT-T program at the Carramar and Wolli Creek Hubs, Village Family Connect, and Randwick Parenting Centre
4. a mixed-method study to evaluate a new education series for parents of toddlers called the *My Toddler and Me* video series
5. an evaluation of a brief three-session PCIT-T group delivered as part of the Karitane Residential Unit program.

Results from these studies were presented at the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Conference at the Gold Coast in March 2024, and at the Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference and the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Conference in June 2024.

### KARITANE FAMILIES STUDY

The Karitane Families Study was completed at the Carramar Residential Unit this year. We used study results to inform the development of a new suite of parent-reported outcomes tools that we implemented at the Karitane Residential Unit in 2024 (including the Karitane Family Outcomes Tool (KFOT)). The study explored client satisfaction and tested outcomes of the in-person and virtual residential unit programs.

Results showed high levels of consumer satisfaction and significant gains for families who accessed both programs in domains that include infant sleep, parenting self-efficacy, and parenting empathy/emotion. Results from this study were published in *Journal of Clinical Nursing* in November 2023 and *BMJ Open* in February 2024.

### FORWHEN EVALUATION

Throughout 2022–23 the UNSW–Karitane research team continued to work on evaluating the ForWhen program: the federally funded perinatal mental health navigation program led by Karitane and delivered by a consortium of the AAPCH, the Parenting Research Centre, UNSW and a range of delivery partners. This evaluation will play an important role in assessing ForWhen's clinical and implementation outcomes and economic return on investment, and informing ongoing service development and delivery.

Evaluation results were published in *Community Mental Health Journal* in November 2023, and were also presented at the Australasian Marcé Society Conference in Adelaide in September 2023, and the Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference in Melbourne in June 2024.

### RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Karitane has continued to be a partner on several major research initiatives throughout 2023–24, including the Early Life Determinants of Health clinical academic group within the Sydney Partnership for Health Education. We are also delighted to be an active partner on the National Medical Health and Research Council (NHMRC) STARS-CRE, and on several translational research grants, including:

- an NSW Health Translational Research Grant Scheme grant
- an NHMRC Partnership Project (2019–23)
- an Australian Research Council funded partnership project entitled 'Integrated Kids Hubs – Ensuring Equity of Access for Children', in partnership with UNSW, Mission Australia FSC Inc., Mission Australia, and Australian Research Alliance of Children and Youth.

We have also partnered with several health, community and university-based organisations throughout 2023–24 to conduct specific translational research projects. Partners include:



### OTHER KARITANE-LED RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Emotional Connection and Contagion: an evaluation of an arts-based and biofeedback professional development program for child and family health nurses and midwives at the Karitane Residential Unit.
- Keeping the Infant in Mind: a longitudinal study to investigate links among parental sensitivity and mentalisation, child temperament factors and callous-unemotional traits in early childhood.
- Parental Reflective Functioning, Parenting and Child Outcomes: a cross-sectional study to examine the psychometric properties of three parental reflective functioning parent-report tools, and associations between parental reflective functioning and parent/child outcomes, testing changes in parental reflective functioning following Karitane interventions.



Research and Education Showcase – Dr David Saliba MP, Prof Bryanne Barnett AM, Grainne O'Loughlin, the Hon Jillian Skinner AM, Prof Valsa Eapen.

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Barbaro J., Winata T., Gilbert M., Nair R., Khan F., Lucien A., Islam R., Masi A., Mendoza Diaz. A., Mendoza; Dissanayake C., Karlov L., Descallar J., Eastwood J., Hasan I., Jalaludin B., Kohlhoff J., Liaw ST., Lingam R., Ong N., Tam CW., Woolfenden S., Eapen V. (2023). General practitioners' perspectives regarding early developmental surveillance for autism within the Australian primary healthcare setting: A qualitative study. *BMC primary care*, 24(1), 159.

Phillips, S. T., Druskin, L. R., Lilly, C., Chavez, F. T., Morgan, S., Wallace, N., ..., Kohlhoff, J. (2023). The Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory: Developing an Adaptation for Toddler-aged Children. *Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment*, 1–16.

Harris, S., Harrison, M., Hazel-Raine, K., Wade, C., Eapen, V., Kohlhoff, J. (2023). Patient Navigation Models for Mental Health of Parents Expecting or Caring for an Infant: A Systematic Review. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 44(4), 587–608.



# Education & Training

Together, education and training are an essential pillar of Karitane, and we continue our leadership in key areas including family partnership training, PCIT, and – in partnership with Western Sydney University (WSU) – content development and facilitation for the Master of Child and Family Health. We also extended our growth and reach across General Practice and early childhood education through the Connecting the Dots program, with eight webinars receiving accreditation. 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, toddlers, nutrition and sleep. Karitane continues to collaborate with organisations across NSW to provide education to parents who engage with child and family services, including supported playgroups.

## PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION THERAPY (PCIT) TRAINING

Karitane Toddler Clinics are recognised by PCIT International as the leading Australian PCIT provider and training organisation. Our Toddler Clinics are supported by five PCIT-certified regional trainers.

Our increased capacity to train the professional PCIT workforce across Australia ensures that our clinical excellence and leadership of PCIT in Australia remain sustainable. This will help to meet the growing demand for this service and reduce waitlists for families seeking support. This year, the regional trainers delivered PCIT and PCIT-T training to 19 internal and external clinicians.

## FAMILY PARTNERSHIP TRAINING

Karitane continues to provide leadership of Family Partnership in NSW. Family Partnership forms the basis of our practice at Karitane, and this year, we delivered six foundation courses. Importantly we are committed to implementing and embedding Family Partnership across the child and family sector. We collaborate with local health districts across the state to ensure we continue to build capacity and capability locally, with 50 Family Partnership facilitators across NSW currently. In addition to delivering facilitator training, we provide supervision for all new facilitators to ensure they receive adequate support while they build on their new skills and knowledge.

Karitane also facilitates the Family Partnership NSW Community of Practice group as our commitment to link facilitators and contribute to a culture of learning for the network. Group members can nominate topics related to Family Partnership Model (FPM) training, and have a platform to discuss challenges and new learnings with the group.

Topics this year included:

- provocation and disagreements
- reflecting on the helping process in training
- implementing the FPM tool in supervision and clinical practice
- responsive and flexible FPM foundation training facilitation
- using the FPM tools during supervision and clinical coaching.

This year has also seen a collaboration with Northern Sydney Local Health District to provide training to nominated managers and clinical leads in building partnership-based leadership skills into everyday practice and understanding how to incorporate FPM tools into work with teams. This has provided the opportunity for managers and clinical leads to more deeply understand both FPM in practice and how to support teams to embed it in service delivery.

**6**  
foundation courses facilitated

**2**  
FPM facilitator training courses delivered

**23**  
facilitator supervision sessions provided across NSW

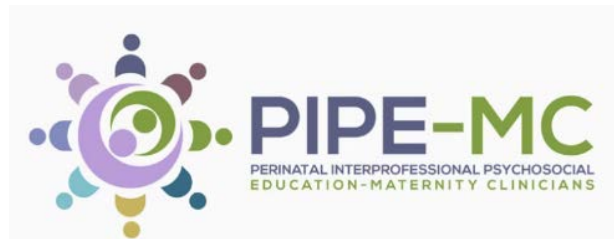
## WORKFORCE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

The Karitane Education Team continues to focus on growing capability within the child and family health workforce across all disciplines. With the move to Campbelltown, the Education team – including managers – provided a five-day transition and orientation program to build consistency of practice across the two teams. The comprehensive program allowed team members to build connections, explore care pathways for families, and ensure the highest standard of practice. Clinicians could also practise their skills and explore scenarios before the unit opened.

Our Clinical Development Support (CDS) Framework supports our clinical teams across the organisation. It considers the various skill levels, recognises the importance of ongoing learning and professional development in clinical teams, and ensures all Karitane staff deliver best-practice, evidence-based care.

The CDS Framework includes a comprehensive orientation program, which we revised this year based on team member feedback. We developed a comprehensive clinical booklet to guide clinicians of all experience levels in Karitane's practice principles and clinical work. To complement the revised clinical booklet, we delivered a series of workshops to allow clinicians to apply theory to, and enhance, practice. Team members could engage in skills practice workshops across all aspects of child and family clinical care, including perinatal infant and child mental health, facilitated by our Allied Health educator.

The Education team also focused on implementing our Domestic Violence and Routine Screening Training across the organisation. With the updated NSW Health Policy, seven of our team members trained in the new workshop to allow us to roll it out across our organisation and ensure best practice. We also partnered with WSU to roll out PIPE-MC: a simulation-based, interprofessional education program that aims to strengthen health professionals' capacity to care for women with perinatal mental health and psychosocial health concerns. Two of our team members completed the PIPE-MC facilitator training.



We continue to work closely with WSU to deliver a child and family postgraduate qualification to nurses and midwives that reflects the contemporary practice of working with families. We review the content regularly to ensure it is current and evidence-based, and that it contributes to students' readiness to engage in child and family work. The updated content ensures enrolled students can access the most up-to-date evidence and research, which contributes to a contemporary child and family health workforce. Our virtual clinical placements allow students to engage with industry experts and to enhance their learning experiences by consolidating the theoretical components through attending interactive workshops.

### FEEDBACK FROM GRADUATE CERTIFICATE, GRADUATE DIPLOMA OR MASTERS STUDENTS

*"Unit content is very practical and educational. The YouTube links and TED Talks are insightful and helpful with understanding the theories."*

*"Particular features that gained me a lot of understanding were the resources presented and delivered with this subject."*





# Good Governance & Value-Based Healthcare

Through a sustained focus on safety, quality and consumer satisfaction, Karitane continues to provide efficacious, value-based healthcare. The Karitane Board has oversight in establishing an effective governance framework and embedding it into our clinical and corporate processes.

Our client-reported outcomes continue to show positive changes in areas that matter to clients, and our client feedback has informed improvements over the last 12 months. Our Net Promoter Score of 80 this year, in the 'excellent' range, is evidence of consistently high customer satisfaction with our services. Benchmarking efforts will ensure we continue to be a leader in early parenting services and meet the outcomes important to parents and families.

We customised the Centre of Perinatal Excellence digital screening tool for our Karitane Residential Unit, Toddler Clinic, Perinatal Infant and Child Mental Health Service and Integrated Care Hubs to include assessments of client wellbeing, parenting confidence and perinatal mental health, building process automations to improve the client and staff experience and efficiency.

We established the Karitane Data and Performance Unit in February in the Governance and Corporate Services portfolio to support data collection for governance reporting requirements, with a focus on process improvement, capacity building and KPI deliverables.

We created the unit from the Digital Transformation strategic focus on capability mapping of data-producing Karitane clinical systems. Its focus is to provide assurance of accurate, complete, up-to-date data to drive decision-making and provide valuable insights, both internally (Governance and Services) and externally (Board, Funding partners).

## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Karitane's Digital Transformation fulfils our governance responsibilities to mature the information systems that underpin our models of care. We operate multiple virtual models of care to improve child health outcomes and reduce care costs. These models are well supported with evidence, and complement our face-to-face services.

We have invested in several projects that align with our clinical and corporate strategic objectives, some of which have been completed, while others are currently being implemented or in the pipeline. Our next phase for Karitane involves co-designing and developing a hybrid (both virtual and place-based), broad discipline model of care with

digital, technological and generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) digital solutions at the new, state-of-the-art Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub. This hybrid hub will provide an innovative approach to streamlining navigation and early intervention support services for families in their child's first 2000 days.

We undertake our Digital Transformation projects in collaboration with eHealth, Cisco, Diginostic and University of Technology Sydney INSIGHT.

## USING FRAMEWORKS TO ALIGN WITH OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

Karitane is an evolving organisation that focuses on supporting families in their child's first 2000 days through wraparound services. We continue to innovate and offer new services, often through partnerships, to ensure we bridge the gaps for families and partner with them to provide the help they need. As we evolve and work towards achieving our Strategic Goals, we recognise the importance of having frameworks for our teams to ensure alignment to our Strategic Goals. We have listed the key frameworks currently in use or in development. These outline our strong vision and alignment to our Strategic Goals.

### PRINCIPLES OF A PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

Karitane is recognised as an innovative organisation, moving and growing with the changing needs of our clients and families, staff and partners. We have seen a huge growth in our services, not only geographically, but also in the breadth of services we offer. We continue to expand our service offerings to support families throughout their child's first 2000 days and into the start of formal schooling.

To ensure we remain efficient in providing our services, we are reflecting on and making use of our current frameworks and models of care to build a cohesive, consistent approach to delivering services and managing change throughout all Karitane services. This Practice Framework will guide our staff to ensure we meet families wherever they're at as we continue to break barriers between services and intertwine both our Medical and Community Models of Care.

### AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF HEALTH SERVICES MANAGEMENT (ACHSM) LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK PROJECT

Karitane is developing a robust leadership framework that defines key principles, practices and tools that leaders can use to enhance effective leadership. A structured approach will provide leaders with a complete tool kit to support them in managing various challenges, adapting to different situations and creating a positive culture throughout the organisation.

To enhance the framework, we are commencing the Karitane Professional Development Program for Leaders. This is an exciting opportunity to partner with the ACHSM to provide further innovative education and training to emerging and experienced leaders. Within this framework, we will offer mentoring opportunities, five professional workshops and the online Leading Digital Health learning program to participants.

### DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORK

The Karitane Digital Transformation Framework is currently in development. This framework seeks to align our Strategic Goals to the digital age, and ensure we're using the best tools to partner with our clients and offer them the care they need. This includes exploring how we can use AI in our service provision, as well as analysing our virtual and hybrid models of care and ensuring that our service delivery meets our clients' needs, and that it effectively, efficiently uses the best digital tools available.

## SAFETY, COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Through incident and risk management, hazard identification and continuous quality improvement, we have consistently achieved excellent results in all external audits. This includes:

- successfully complying with the Ministry of Health's Work Health and Safety audit in July 2024
- the Karitane Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre passing its HACCP Food Audit in December 2023
- completing Cisco's Cybersecurity Essential 8 assessment
- developing Karitane's Cybersecurity Risk Management action plan.

We provide regular reports to the:

- Audit Risk and Governance committee to monitor compliance and risk management
- Clinical Governance committee to ensure high-quality care for families accessing Karitane services.







## People & Culture

Karitane is a dynamic workplace with a culture that reflects our values of innovation, excellence, respect and collaboration. We are committed to inclusion and wellbeing so our people can thrive. We have a culture of success, with over 92% of staff rating Karitane as a truly great place to work.

We are committed to supporting our people with flexible work practices to help them balance family and caring responsibilities, enabling them to have a rewarding career. Our team is passionate and highly engaged in making a difference to the lives of families. We support each other and provide excellent professional development opportunities. Karitane offers a wide variety of exciting and rewarding career opportunities for clinical and corporate support professionals. We believe our people are our most important asset.

We are unique in that our staff base is 98% women, and 78% of staff are part-time employees.

This year we are excited to be implementing ELMO – a Human Resource Information system – to support the efficiencies of advertising roles, and onboarding and offboarding staff. We will integrate ELMO with our payroll system.

We are grateful to the very generous donation from Prof Bryanne Barnett AM to support our team at the new Campbelltown Early Parenting Centre by developing a healing wellbeing garden for staff.

### STAFF HEALTH AND WELLBEING

At Karitane, we are committed to the wellbeing of our staff. This year, we engaged The Wellbeing Lab to complete an organisational survey (the PERMAH Staff Wellbeing Survey) to understand our team's wellbeing and our strengths, as well as to develop strategies for any identified areas of opportunity. We received significant engagement, with over half the organisation completing the survey. The workplace outcomes of Engagement, Performance and Satisfaction all rated 'exceptionally healthy' and above global norms, along with the wellbeing nutrients of Diversity and Inclusion, Belonging, Competence and Autonomy. The survey has generated valuable insights to ensure we provide a workplace that values and facilitates both psychological safety and opportunities for staff to prioritise their own wellbeing. The Wellbeing Committee continues to meet and work towards our Wellbeing Action Plan and provide activities for us as an organisation throughout the year.

### FAMILY FRIENDLY WORKPLACE ACCREDITATION

At Karitane, we understand the important role that families play within our organisation, and the need to embed a workplace culture that supports working families to thrive, both at home and at work. We are proud to be a founding partner of the Family Friendly Workplaces Initiative, and one of the first companies in Australia to be certified as a Family Inclusive Workplace™ led by Parents At Work and UNICEF Australia. This year, we started the re-accreditation process by ensuring our policies and practices support employees' family, career and wellbeing needs. This process includes listening to the voices of staff when they describe their own experiences of a family-friendly workplace.

#### FEEDBACK FROM KARITANE STAFF MEMBERS

*"Since joining Karitane last year, I have been grateful for the way the organisation truly considers family for staff as well as clients. Flexibility about work hours and work location is offered without judgement, and this means that if there is a need to take care of family matters, there isn't the added pressure of my employer not being understanding. Managers and the executives lead by example and embody a family-friendly workplace. I feel this in the wonderful care that we give to each other, as well as the families we help. Thank you, Karitane, for being Family Friendly for me."*

*"I have been supported in having flexible hours/ days of work, as well as the option to work remotely. This has been life-changing for me – I can be the mum that I want to be, while also not having to put my career on hold. My family is happier, I'm happier, and I know this has a positive impact on my work as I'm less stressed, meaning I get to give the best of myself to both my work and my family."*

*"I joined Karitane after my parental leave with my second child. From the outset, Karitane provided a flexible and supportive environment, allowing me to start in a part-time capacity and increasing my hours over the first four months to align with available childcare. In addition, there was a clean, private space to express and store breastmilk. When my older child started school, Karitane once again offered flexibility, with my four-days-a-week role being spread across five days to allow for some school drop-offs and pick-ups. This flexibility has meant that I can continue in my career path and be present for the needs of my young family."*

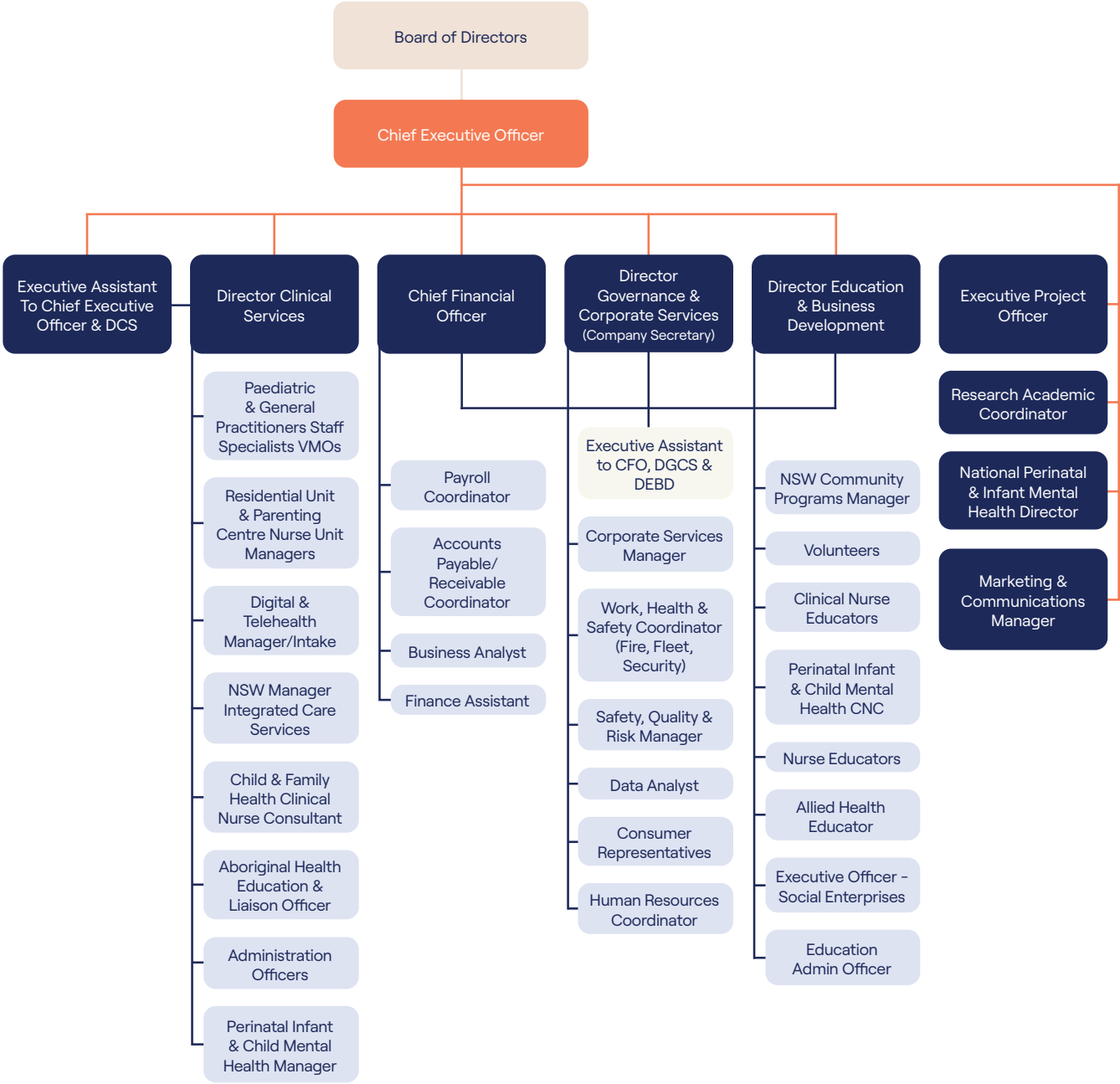


### BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

Karitane is an accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. This accreditation from the Australian Breastfeeding Association ensures we remain committed to implementing family-friendly practices. We enable our employees to make the choices they need to make for the health of their babies and families, so that they can concentrate on being their best at work and home.



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



KEY  
CFO - Chief Financial Officer  
CNC - Clinical Nurse Consultant  
DCS - Director Clinical Services  
DEBD - Director Education & Business Development  
DGCS - Director Governance & Corporate Services  
VMO - Visiting Medical Officer  
PMH - Perinatal Mental Health





BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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*Chair*  
CPA, MBA, GAICD



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



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BFA, MBC, DFP, GAICD



**JEAN-BAPTISTE NAUDET**  
*Treasurer (commenced February 2024) Chair Finance Committee*  
BA, CA, GAICD



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



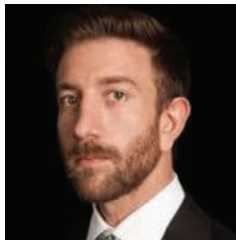
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*Chair Innovation & Business Development Committee*  
MBA IMD, MAICD, Dip Psych



**GARTH ROSS**  
*Director*  
BBus



**KATHY JONES**  
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**NICHOLAS NOGAROTTO**  
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BA Psych, LLB, MPH



**PROF. VALSA EAPEN**  
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*Director*  
MSc (Hons), PhD



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

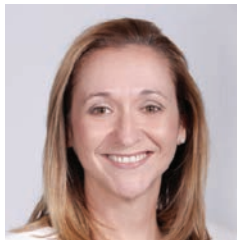
EXECUTIVE TEAM



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



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



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



**DUSHI GOONESEKERA**  
*Chief Financial Officer*  
BA Bus Admin, Member CPA Australia and UK (ACMA), CGMA



**DINETHRA NANDAKOBAN**  
*Director Governance & Corporate Services & Company Secretary*  
BSc MHGSA, MICDA

VOLUNTEERS

Our Karitane volunteers help to support families through the challenges of parenthood. A detailed training and support program is available through Karitane.

In 2023–24, 74 volunteers supported our services. Thank you to the team of dedicated, passionate volunteers listed below.

We would like to honor and remember Audrey Leishman, who generously dedicated 19 years of service as a valued volunteer.

- |                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Amy Kiss          | Lauren Rouse            |
| Amy Millington    | Lauren Sizer            |
| Amy Rogers        | Leanne Lambros          |
| Amy Vuong         | Lisa Morena             |
| Amy Willesee      | Lisa Rogers             |
| Anna Rolandsen    | Lorna Burden            |
| Anne Langham      | Margaret (Maura) Larkin |
| Barbara Anderson  | Maureen Belanszky       |
| Brianna Hingston  | Mikaylin Stahlhut       |
| Briley Hatcliffe  | Naomi Davies            |
| Caroline Collier  | Nichola (Nicky) Driver  |
| Catherine Corbett | Nicole Ojeda            |
| Cathy Powell      | Patricia Lamey          |
| Deborah Miccoli   | Peggy Kemp              |
| Deborah Saad      | Pene Dobell-Brown       |
| Denise Ghali      | Phoebe Heperi           |
| Diane Redman      | Pooja Joshi             |
| Emma Simpkin      | Quinne Ponseca          |
| Gabrielle Pegrem  | Rebecca Wood            |
| Heidi Duncan      | Renee Wright            |
| Hong Nguyen       | Robyn Howarth           |
| Isabel Gottstein  | Robyn Sales             |
| Izzy Byrne        | Ruth Altman             |
| Jacqueline Rogan  | Ruth Waters             |
| Jasmine Kaur      | Sandra Gilkes           |
| Jean Michaels     | Sarvannah Fabian        |
| Jenny Hanger      | Shari Sabatini          |
| Jenny Pascoe      | Sharon Friere           |
| Jessica Carroll   | Sharon Mann             |
| Joan Garriock     | Sheryl Klein            |
| Julie Baturynsky  | Stacey Butcher          |
| Karen Carpenter   | Stella Austin           |
| Karen Eddie       | Sue Hopkins             |
| Karen Smith       | Thi Bich Mai            |
| Katherine Isaac   | Thi Tran                |
| Kayla Lindsay     | Tyra Channel-Caines     |
| Kerrie Meldrum    |                         |
| Kylie Szymanski   |                         |



# Treasurer's Report

I am delighted to report that this past year – my first as Treasurer – has been truly exceptional for Karitane. Over the last six years, we have achieved transformational growth, which reflects our continuing commitment to partnering and collaboration across the child and family sector at both the state and Commonwealth level. This success ensures accessible, equitable early intervention services in the first 2000 days of a child’s life to help shape a healthier future for them.

In FY23/24, our revenue grew to \$20.352 million. This represents an increase from \$18.4 million in FY22/23, and almost doubles our \$10.6 million in FY18/19.

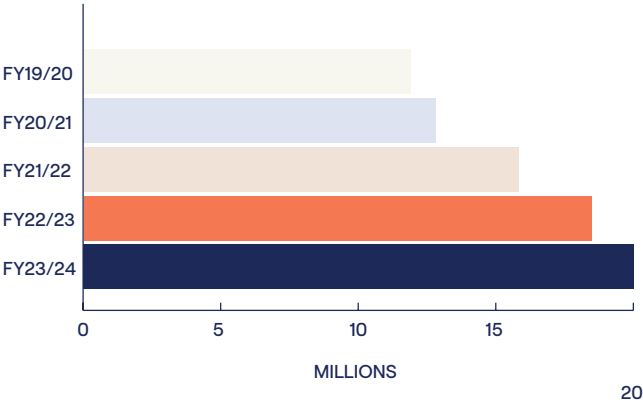
An exciting highlight of this year has been forging a strong partnership with the NSW Government and Paul Ramsay Foundation. In its Budget, the NSW Government announced that it will invest \$6.5 million in redeveloping our Carramar facility to deliver the Karitane Fairfield Integrated Child and Family Hub. Paul Ramsay Foundation will match this investment with its own \$6.5 million grant to support service delivery and research evaluation of the Hub. In total, this will result in \$13 million dedicated to this transformative, leading model of care for the families of Fairfield.

We also continue to work closely and collaboratively with SWSLHD and the NSW Ministry of Health to ensure equitable access to much-needed statewide and secondary services. We are committed to securing sustainable resources for the growing population of families in Western Sydney and South Western Sydney, and to maintaining and enhancing our service offerings to the community.

We are incredibly grateful for the exceptionally generous gifts and donations we have received, particularly from our major donors. This has resulted in a remarkable 26% increase in donation revenue during FY23/24, which highlights the strong support, trust and confidence in the services we provide to parents across Australia.

Government funding always constitutes a significant portion of our revenue, accounting for 82% of total revenue in FY23/24. This includes contributions from both the Australian and NSW Governments, totalling \$16.7 million. We can also report a steady increase of 12% in government funding from FY23. Additionally, we are pleased to announce that we successfully secured a further extension from the Australian Government for our National Perinatal Infant Mental Health Program, and from the NSW Government for the Virtual Residential Parenting Service. We are grateful for the support for these vital services and are committed to maximising the impact for families and communities.

## KARITANE REVENUE GROWTH OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS



The total expenditure on programs and activities for the year was \$19.8 million, representing an increase of 6% from FY22/23 of \$18.6m.

We achieved an operating surplus of \$505,316 for FY23/24, compared to an operating deficit of (\$185,644) in FY22/23.

Net assets remained robust at \$18 million as of 30 June 2024, ensuring a strong and stable financial position for Karitane.

As we continue to build on this momentum, we remain committed to demonstrating the impact our valued funders and supporters make.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Karitane Board and leadership team, whose support has been pivotal to our financial journey over the past year.

Jean-Baptiste Naudet  
Treasurer





# Financial Statements

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

		2024 \$	2023 \$
	Notes		
REVENUE FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS	3	19,392,489	17,627,340
Other revenue and income (expense)	4	959,552	831,713
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>		<b>20,352,041</b>	<b>18,459,053</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employee benefits expenses		(14,307,073)	(13,412,922)
Depreciation and amortisation		(600,511)	(525,230)
Occupancy expenses		(886,605)	(965,463)
Provision for doubtful debts		(27,473)	(34,338)
Printing and stationery expenses		(88,578)	(107,780)
Telephone expenses		(101,362)	(99,569)
Repairs and maintenance expenses		(239,834)	(429,602)
VMO expenses		(321,270)	(229,189)
Consultancy expenses		(386,303)	(471,605)
Other expenses		(2,887,716)	(2,368,852)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>(19,846,725)</b>	<b>(18,644,550)</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE</b>		<b>505,316</b>	<b>(185,497)</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER INCOME TAX EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>505,316</b>	<b>(185,497)</b>
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME/(LOSS) FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>505,316</b>	<b>(185,497)</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

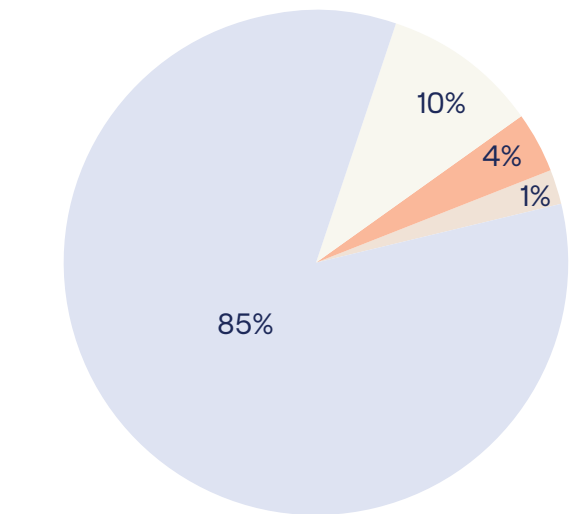
		2024 \$	2023 \$
	Notes		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	5,174,427	6,334,645
Trade and other receivables	7	501,563	518,247
Financial assets	8	5,662,867	4,081,563
Other assets	9	81,296	85,769
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>11,420,153</b>	<b>11,020,224</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	10	13,820,404	14,067,570
Right of use asset	11	188,816	208,337
Financial assets	8	668,464	611,414
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>14,677,684</b>	<b>14,887,321</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>26,097,837</b>	<b>25,907,545</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	12	1,914,181	1,708,153
Employee entitlements	13	3,266,418	3,124,062
Lease liabilities	16	104,952	83,878
Contract liabilities – revenue in advance	14	1,925,713	2,567,206
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>7,211,264</b>	<b>7,483,299</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee entitlements	13	210,705	188,433
Lease liabilities	16	146,691	211,952
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>357,396</b>	<b>400,385</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>7,568,660</b>	<b>7,883,684</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>18,529,177</b>	<b>18,023,861</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>			
Accumulated funds		10,711,948	10,206,632
Reserves	15	7,817,229	7,817,229
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<b>18,529,177</b>	<b>18,023,861</b>



# Funding & Partnerships

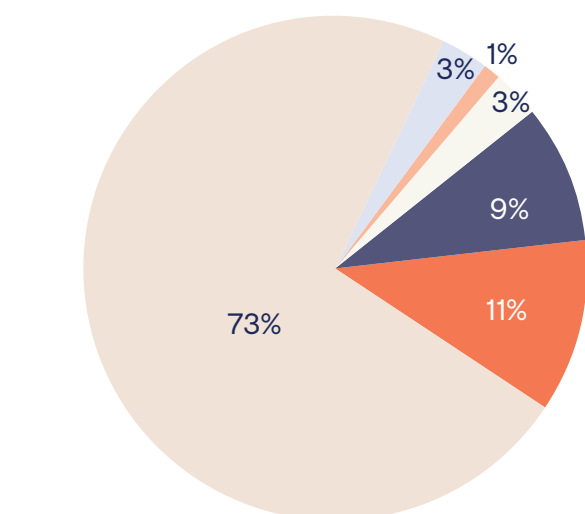
As a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity, we are very grateful to all our partners and donors for contributing to our success. We thank the following organisations for their generous support to Karitane, which helps us provide the highest level of care for Australian families.

## TOTAL REVENUE



- Government Subsidies & Grants 85%
- Donations & Sponsorships 10%
- Other Income (Including Investment Interest) 4%
- Patient Fees 1%

## TOTAL EXPENDITURE



- Employment Expenditure 73%
- Information Technology Expenditure 3%
- Property Maintenance Expenditure 1%
- Depreciation & Amortisation 3%
- Contributions to Entities for Program Delivery 9%
- Other Expenses 11%

## FUNDING PROVIDERS



## COMMUNITY PARTNERS



## SUPPORTERS



## DONATIONS

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

Donations	Value	Purpose
Anonymous Donor	\$2,000,000	Clinical Services Support
Rotary Club of Narellan	\$16,000	Clinical Services Support
Anonymous Foundation	\$10,000	New Garden at Campbelltown Early Parenting Service
Prof Bryanne Barnett AM	\$5,000	Clinical Services Support (PCIT)
UNSW – Event Sponsorship	\$3,000	Research & Education Event
Thelma Roach	Amount Private	Gift
Anonymous Donations	\$233	Gift
Mr Michael & 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

"We are so grateful for your love, care and compassion. I have learnt so much. I have a stronger relationship with baby J because of all of you. You are real life superheros."

PARENT

## 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®