



Crossway LifeCare
Annual Report **2015**

The Heart of LifeCare

The heart of LifeCare is to see people in tough places flourish emotionally, socially, economically and spiritually because we care deeply for people, especially those in need. We provide services that help to break the cycle of generational poverty, abuse, broken relationships, spiritual anguish and other challenging life circumstances. Central to our model are professional counselling and mentoring to help disadvantaged children, young people and families move beyond their current hardships and reach life goals.

We are faith-based but not faith-biased and seek to benefit people no matter what their religion, race, disability or sexual orientation. Being non-judgmental is core to our values.



Chief Operating Officer's Report

The heart of LifeCare is to see people in tough places flourish emotionally, socially, economically and spiritually because we care deeply for people, especially those in need. We provide opportunities for healing, empowerment and connection into community for those suffering from hardship such as domestic abuse, broken relationships, financial destitution, psychological anguish and spiritual affliction. We make it possible for people to not only heal but gain the life skills and the resilience needed to move beyond their circumstances and connect into community for lasting transformation.

This transformation is made possible with the combined effort of our professional staff and trained volunteers who deliver an integrated set of core services including counselling, COACH, B-Empowered financial and practical care, the women's centre and B-Together communities.

One example of our model at work is our women's centre for single mums who have been traumatised by domestic violence. The centre is a safe and relaxing environment for single mothers and their children to recover from traumatic experiences and develop emotional resilience and life skills necessary for recovery. They are often supported by COACH and financial mentors and counsellors. The women form community together. We've seen lives transformed, women baptised and hope restored for the next generation.

What makes our services effective are the people involved – the care, compassion and heart behind why we do what we do. Our team members are high capacity, skilled professionals who have chosen to serve at LifeCare because of their heart for others, because they genuinely care.

We go a step deeper than the typical community services organisation as we get to know people and their unique stories. There is a sense of belonging, being a part of a group of people who really care about individuals and their unique needs, helping them to discover how they can not only look after themselves and their families but give back as well.

When asked what makes LifeCare different, one participant responded:

"When I walked into LifeCare it felt different, it was warm and welcoming. They gave me a place to belong and made me feel resilient."

2015 was filled with highlights of lives transformed in our community, families united, relationships restored, cycles of abuse and poverty broken, and hardship overcome. The LifeCare team walked alongside more than 750 people experiencing hardship in 2015.

We took up an exciting opportunity, in partnership with Mission Australia, to lead and deliver the COACH program right across Australia. In order to facilitate the strategic expansion of COACH, Toby Baxter, one of the original developers of COACH, stepped across from leading LifeCare to lead this initiative. We are thankful to Toby for his four years of leadership of LifeCare and are thrilled to continue to work together as he focusses on making COACH available nationally and internationally. Our COACH goal is to see nearly 3000 families and over 6000 children and youth flourish by the end of 2020.

Another of our core programs, B-Empowered, our financial and practical care program, is gaining broader recognition. B-Empowered was selected by Financial Literacy Australia to support further development and growth in order to make the program accessible to many more who are struggling to overcome cycles of debt.

It is an absolute pleasure to lead the LifeCare team as we work together to see people in our community move beyond their difficult circumstances into lives that are flourishing! But we couldn't do it without the kindness and selfless generosity of our supporters. To all of the supporters who have teamed with LifeCare to reach out to the most vulnerable in our community and to the dedicated staff and volunteers, please accept my heartfelt thanks.



Gail Thannhauser
Chief Operating Officer

LifeCare Services

Crossway LifeCare's programs and services continued to go from strength to strength in providing holistic and integrated care to those who are in need in the community. We are encouraged to hear the many life-transforming stories from the disadvantaged and marginalized people we have supported and empowered. A few of these stories are shared with you below.

*Names have been changed to protect our clients' privacy.

LifeCare COACH

LifeCare COACH (Creating Opportunities And Casting Hope) recruits and trains volunteers to walk alongside disadvantaged kids, youth and families in our community and mentor them to achieve their life goals. In 2015, 71 mentors were engaged to mentor 115 individuals and families.

Danny* is just one teenager who has been supported through COACH. His mother, Mary*, was a single mother of Vietnamese descent, who broke away from an abusive relationship when Danny was only an infant. Danny never knew his father.

Life in Vietnam had been challenging, and it continued to be very difficult after Danny and Mary came to Australia. The family experienced significant financial difficulties, and Danny struggled to fit into the Australian culture. They lived in shared accommodation, and the two would often have fights that led to their relationship becoming strained.



Christina Lim
Head of Services

In desperation, Mary contacted LifeCare. Danny was matched with a COACH mentor who helped him build positive relationships and get the best out of himself despite the circumstances. Within a short time, Mary noticed a marked increase in Danny's confidence and an improvement in his academic performance. A few months later, Mary also requested for a mentor for herself. Mary was matched with a mentor, who supported her when things were good and when things were extremely difficult.

No one could have predicted the exciting new season that came next. Mary met an Australian Christian man with whom she began a relationship. However, she had some difficulties understanding his culture. With her mentor's help, she overcame these challenges, and eventually married her partner and started a new joy-filled life. Danny and Mary are now happy and flourishing.

"Within a short time, Mary noticed a marked increase in Danny's confidence and an improvement in his academic performance."





LifeCare Financial Care (B-Empowered)

In 2015, LifeCare Financial Care continued to provide help to people who are doing it tough financially. While food and material assistance were provided for emergency relief, participants were encouraged to join B-Empowered. This is our one-to-one financial care coaching program. It aims to equip individuals to take control of their financial situation and break the cycle of poverty. In 2015, over 150 individuals and families were supported through Financial Care, including 48 through the B-Empowered program.

In November 2015, LifeCare was awarded a grant from Financial Literacy Australia to continue developing B-Empowered and to engage in an evaluation project to further improve program outcomes.

One single mother recently supported through B-Empowered is Ellie, who has five children aged between 5 and 16 years. When she first joined the program, Ellie was struggling to keep up with the daily cost of living and had gone into debt to try to keep her head above water. She was desperate for budgeting support and keen to explore how to reduce her outgoings.

Through the program, Ellie set up payment plans and paid down her debt. She set up a budget and was even able to save for a well-deserved weekend away with her kids on the Murray River, which was a priceless bonding time for the family.

Ellie's confidence and wellbeing also lifted dramatically. Her stress levels were noticeably reduced. She is now finishing a Horticulture course and hopes to work in a nursery. The financial skills she has learned will be invaluable as she continues moving forward. Ellie found the best part of the program was having someone to talk to about money concerns. She said it inspired and supported her immensely.

LifeCare Counselling

LifeCare Counselling provides accessible, affordable, professional counselling and psychological services to people in our community. The counselling team is from diverse backgrounds with a wide range of expertise. This diversity has allowed us to serve our multicultural community well. In 2015, a special marketing effort saw an increase of clients seeking help. The team worked with over 500 clients through over 2,700 sessions.

One such LifeCare Counselling client is Lisa. Three years ago, Lisa came to LifeCare feeling "angry, hurt, hating this world, not wanting to live and feeling like God hated me." Her coping strategy had been to starve herself to the point where she was clinically anorexic. Once she consumed an entire bottle of vodka to numb the pain and ended up in hospital. At this point, she cried out to God for a counsellor, as she was willing to give life just one more shot. She found this life-giving counsellor at LifeCare.

Lisa found LifeCare Counselling to be a place where she could be completely open and honest, without feeling judged. She now understands herself better and has found someone to provide her with valuable psychological and spiritual guidance. "I have come a very long way. I am loving life and I have a wonderful relationship with God. I have started eating healthier. God has done a huge amount of work in me." She is now working in aged care as she wants to give back to the community and serve others.

"I have come a very long way. I am loving life and I have a wonderful relationship with God."



LifeCare Women's Centre

LifeCare Women's Centre Single Mums' Program was expanded in 2015 from one day a week to two days a week. The first day focused on building self-esteem, the second day on recovering from domestic violence. Parenting workshops and physical fitness training were offered to emphasise the value of the women's holistic recovery. This year's Open Day was well attended by local community organisations and referral sources have been greatly strengthened.

Many of the women in the program are rebuilding their lives and achieving substantial personal goals. Some of the goals achieved included returning to study, finding employment, and becoming a more competent single parent. Some of the women and children were also connected to faith communities and are flourishing spiritually. One mother reported, "I now feel loved and have hope. I am looking forward to working on my self-esteem and towards a happy future with my boys." Highlights of this year include two single mothers with no family or social support being supported through their pregnancies and births by the Centre's team. Importantly, the group continues to grow in supporting one another.

LifeCare B-Together Communities

LifeCare B-Together communities break isolation by bringing disadvantaged people together to connect socially and develop support for one another. In 2015, the monthly B-Together dinner was attended by an average of 60-70 people. Both adults and children enjoyed the family atmosphere, food, fun activities and importantly, friendship. The Christmas B-Together dinner was the highlight of the year. After a short Christmas message, parents were ushered to the LifeCare Christmas store where they were empowered to select gifts for their children. Over 200 people attended this festive dinner to celebrate the season.

Programs and Services

	2015	2014
Counselling sessions	2834	2723
Individuals or Families Coached	115	78
New Volunteers	51	98
Individuals mentored through B-Empowered	48	17
Food Parcels given out	169	293

"I now feel loved and have hope. I am looking forward to working on my self-esteem and towards a happy future with my boys."

Operations



Debbie Uy
Head of Operations

2015 was a great financial year for Crossway LifeCare (CLL), realising a 58% increase in revenue made possible by continuous support from the Crossway Baptist Church community and by the several fundraising efforts throughout the year. CLL also received over \$100,000 from grants and company donations. Building development donations increased by 261% to \$950,323 from \$263,108 in 2014.

Our sincere thanks to all of our supporters and donors who have made it possible for Crossway LifeCare to continue serving the wider community, in the pursuit of our vision to see people in tough places flourish.

Counselling revenue increased by 96% providing 2,834 counselling sessions. This was due to the additional services offered to clients under the Medicare Mental Health plan.

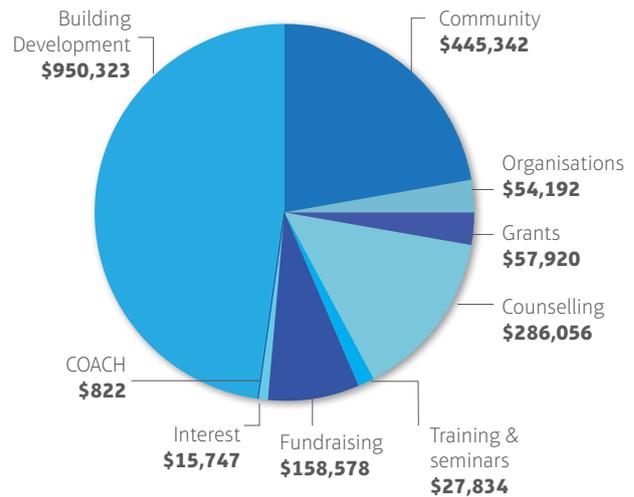
Operational expenditure increased by 20% channelling the expansion of the COACH program on both Youth and Kids Coach, B-Empowered program, as well as the establishment of the LifeCare Women's Centre. The COACH program grew by 47% serving 115 individuals or families coached, up from 78 in the previous year. The B-Empowered program successfully mentored 48 individuals, enabling them to navigate through personal debts and financial challenges. This represents 182% growth, up from 17 individuals in 2014.

The quantitative achievements are notable in revealing the progress of CLL. More importantly, however, we must remember that each number represents a person touched, supported, empowered and encouraged. Each individual has a unique story of how LifeCare has impacted their life and helped them flourish.

Finances

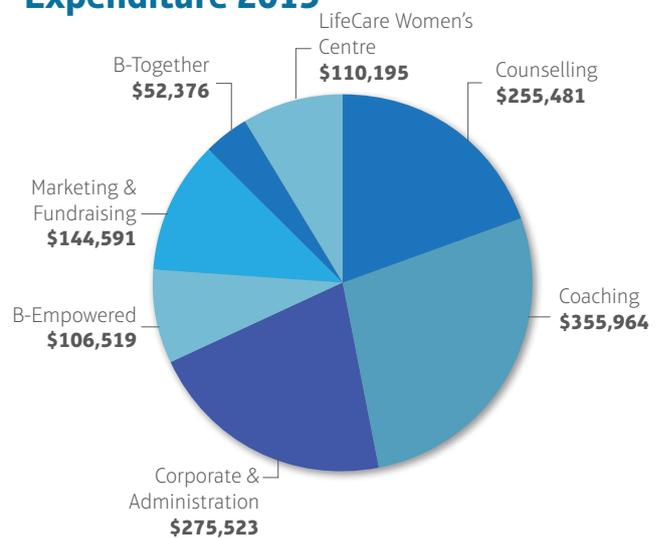
	2015	2014	Difference
Revenue	\$1,996,814	\$1,263,795	58% ↑
Expenditure	\$1,300,649	\$1,079,786	20% ↑

Revenue 2015



Total	\$1,996,814
Building Development	\$950,323
Community	\$445,342
Counselling	\$286,056
Fundraising	\$158,578
Grants	\$57,920
Organisations	\$54,192
Training & Seminars	\$27,834
Interest	\$15,747
COACH	\$822

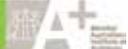
Expenditure 2015



Total	\$1,300,649
COACH	-\$355,964
Corporate & Administration	-\$275,523
Counselling	-\$255,481
Marketing & Fundraising	-\$144,591
LifeCare Women's Centre	-\$110,195
B-Empowered	-\$106,519
B-Together	-\$52,376

Surplus for the year
\$696,165



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