



1st October 2020

To our FASD Supporters

**Re: Make FASD History**

**Program report for the period Jan 2020 until September**

**2020**

Due to the Covid 19 lockdown from March until June the program was placed on hold. Additional time will be allocated in 2021 to make up for the lack of activity.

During Covid-19 lockdown PATCHES lost two critical diagnosticians – their Neuro-clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathologist. They have found it difficult to recruit replacements - a fly-in-fly out Neuro-Psychologist from Victoria was successfully trialled in settings other than Leonora but this had to cease when Victoria experienced a second wave of infections. Both two positions remain vacant as at the date of this report.

PATCHES Paediatrics has provided one clinic in August 2020 and it is planning two more in Late-October and December 2020. They have now provided 4 diagnostic clinics and an early intervention clinic in August 2020. They have completed diagnoses for 16 children and developed detailed treatment plans and funding applications for 7 children presenting with FASD who are probably eligible for treatment and support funding via the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS – known also as NDIA). They still have to complete treatment plans for 1 child with FASD and 4 who probably have FASD. Whilst assessing children they have also identified other developmental conditions such as Autism, Language Disorder, Learning Disorder, Intellectual disability, ADHD and a Hearing Disability. All children diagnosed with these developmental conditions are being referred to relevant service providers and support programs.

During the August 2020 visit, PATCHES re-engaged with the school and provided education to 30 school-teachers on how to work with children having FASD.

Several children with FASD are learning Hip Hop dancing and horse riding to develop their skills and to help them to deal with their condition. Plans are afoot to develop a Therapeutic Hip Hop program with the Youth Centre for a larger group of children having FASD and

similar developmental conditions. PATCHES, the Youth Centre and Rotary are collaborating to obtain the necessary funding support through NDIS so that this program can be put in place.

Bruce Dufty (Chair of the Rotary Aboriginal Reference Group and a Rotarian from the Western Endeavour Club and a member of the WA Make FASD History project planning committee), continues his community development work travelling to Leonora every 2 months.

The Leonora Aboriginal Residents' Community Group have continued to develop their plans. They are considering developing a new Corporation model. Bruce is assisting with the development. They have identified four priorities for attention at future meetings:

- Development of their Community Group through the establishment of an Aboriginal Corporation which will enable them to have a greater say over the determination of their future as a community. A small number of new Local Community Groups across the nation are providing suggestions to the new group based on their experiences to date. The group will also provide cultural reconnection, cultural education and family support to community members;
- Housing issues;
- School attendance; and
- Alcohol consumption.

The partnership with the local youth group Transcend Initiatives Pty Ltd has continued to develop. They will be providing a "Relationships and Safe Sex program" for 8-14 year-old youth and another "Social Relationships and Social Wellbeing Program" for 15-19 year-old youth. These important preventative programs have been funded by Healthway and will commence in September 2020 and will be completed by March 2021.

Planning has commenced to develop a series of 4 short 30-second TV information and community service videos for Goldfields Television stations. These are being prepared with assistance from John Paul College in Kalgoorlie through Goldfields public television. A further animated film on the effect of FASD on the unborn baby is also being planned with a Perth producer who has experience in animation.

Rotary is also encouraging the local service providers to employ Aboriginal staff on a part-time basis because of their cultural expertise and excellent "life-skills". Many are seeking additional training so that they can be more effective in their new roles. Over the past three years, the number of Aboriginal Workers in the town has increased from 9 to 25. Unfortunately, well-meaning Government policies such as social security, housing and education constrain workers from seeking additional hours of employment. Rotary is negotiating with relevant authorities to have some of their policies tailored to remote communities by removing the constraints that inhibit Aboriginal people from pursuing their aspirations.

Existing services (funded providers and voluntary Aboriginal Groups) are now running women's, men and family support groups in the town. The Youth Centre is very active providing strength-based living and cultural skills training. An Aboriginal Education Officer is providing a cultural education and on country experiences to both Aboriginal and Non-indigenous youth in the Primary division of the school. Attendance levels for on-country

experiences has risen from the 26 to 60 and now 90. Many family members now go with their children for these events and actively support the on-country program.

In 2021 PATCHES Paediatrics will provide 2 more clinics in Leonora (One Diagnostic and one Early Intervention Clinic).

Relationship building and ongoing community development is a key aspect of the work undertaken by PATCHES and Rotary.

The Make FASD History committee are planning a return Vocational Training team visit to Alaska in May 2022. We are continuing to liaise with our Alaskan counterparts, and they have provided valuable feedback on their FASD projects with access to video and health information they have developed.

Rotary will be seeking ways to set up a You Tube site dedicated to their project so that this information will be accessible to all interested parties.

We have provided talks to four other Rotary clubs on the topic of FASD. We have done a Zoom session with Kununurra and are planning a session with Broome Rotary Club. This provides another means of sharing important health information and motivating the broader community to be involved. We are liaising with Telethon Kids Institute, Hope Community Services, Wirrpanda Community Employment Program, Centrecare, Bega Garnbirringu (Aboriginal) Health Services, WA Country (Government) Health Services in Kalgoorlie, Fitzroy Valley FASD Project, Alaska and Canada to share information.

The fund-raising component has now been successful in achieving almost the total funds required for this 2-year project.

We thank all of our sponsors for their financial contributions and will continue to provide reports every 6 months until the completion of this program.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Hancock  
Chairperson  
Rotary WA "Making FASD History Project"  
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