

Annual Report 2019/20



Palm Island
COMMUNITY COMPANY

A Message From The CEO



In last year's annual report, I wrote that so much is happening or about to happen at PICC that we seem to be at a turning point in its history.

And we are.

PICC is about to undergo its biggest change ever.

Community control is coming.

Community control means that the community's hands are on our steering wheel. The Board of Directors will continue to have a majority of Palm Islanders, who will be nominated by Palm Islanders.

As I write to you, most of the work to make this happen is finished. The last major step is for the Queensland Government to agree to this change, which we expect in the near future.

Our transition to community control will be grounded on our strongest-ever base.

With our existing core services going from strength to strength, PICC is supporting more programs than ever before. We are now funded for twenty different programs and services, and we've received funding for a wider variety than ever of special events and activities.

In the past year, PICC has introduced a new service, the Women's Healing Service, and we also began negotiations to add two more in 2020/21.

The Women's Healing Service is notable for being the first PICC service based in Townsville, rather than Palm Island. However, we know that there are a number of Palm Island women in the Townsville Women's Correctional Centre, so we are still able to help Palm Islanders through the WHS.

In 2020, the Palm Island Primary Health Centre began its transition from government to community control, which is scheduled to be completed in 2021. As part of this, the PICC Medical Centre will be integrated into the Primary Health Care Centre, providing a single, central location for all non-emergency health services on Palm.

We are also continuing to implement the recommendations in the 2019 PICC Evaluation Report. The biggest of these is the transition to community control, but we've also begun the first steps of establishing the community dashboard of data so that we can see in

clear numbers how Palm Island is going and use this information to help the community better.

I definitely can't talk about our past year without talking about the coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, there have been no known cases on Palm Island, and life has gotten almost back to normal. However, restrictions on gatherings and travelling to Palm meant that several of our programs, services and activities had to stop temporarily or run in a significantly different form. Nonetheless, our staff still found new and creative ways to help the community and their clients. I am both proud and grateful for their hard work and dedication in what was a difficult, even scary, time. You can read more about how our services adapted to the pandemic in this annual report. In some cases, such as an expanded range of telehealth services at the Medical Centre and the CFC, the changes worked so well that we are keeping them permanently.

A small, but certainly not unimportant, project PICC has started is recognising Palm men's voices and needs. This means that in addition to addressing the important issues facing women on Palm we recognise the distinct needs of Palm's men and acknowledge that we can only make progress on gender issues and disparities by including everyone. For example, we have the new Men's Behaviour Change Program at the SDFVS, which you can read about in a few pages.

PICC has come a long way, but there's still plenty for us to do—and we'll be getting it done hand in hand with the community at every level.

I'm really looking forward to working with Palm Island and everyone at PICC to take us into this new era. It is an enduring privilege to be here with you.

Rachel Atkinson

Chief Executive Officer

Chair's Report

I am pleased to be writing to you for the first time as the Chair of PICC's Board of Directors.

My congratulations to PICC's prior Chair, Mislam Sam, who was elected Mayor of Palm in March 2020.

It is an honour to be in this role as PICC is reborn as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation. This is something all of us on the Board have believed in from the start. The Board is very glad that its time is arriving after years of hard work and dedication from everyone connected to PICC.

Going to community control will be transformational not only for PICC, but also for Palm Island. I grew up on Palm Island, and I live on Palm Island; it is my heartland. I know what the Palm Island community can do. At PICC we've always been determined to hear the community, and there have always been Palm Islanders on the Board, and this will continue. But this change is transformational from top to bottom.

I am determined to make my time as Chair count. I am determined to make the transition a change that the community can see and feel in PICC, not just a promise of a better tomorrow.

Luella Bligh

Acting Chair





About PICC

The Palm Island Community Company is a not-for-profit organisation which delivers human services, community-capacity building and staff development programs on Palm Island.

Through the establishment of a network of partnerships and collaborations, the ongoing recruitment and training of staff, and an uncompromising attitude towards the building of community capacity, PICC continues to make a real difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Boasting a successful history since our establishment in 2007, PICC delivers innovative, community-driven programs that are squarely aimed at supporting and strengthening the social, cultural and economic fabric of the Palm Island community.

PICC continues to work hard to strengthen the infrastructure of this remote island and to create local jobs for local people whilst delivering vital human services to the community we serve.

The fundamental focus of the Company is underpinned by the belief that the residents of Palm Island are entitled to have ready access to the range of reliable and high-quality human and social services which are available on the mainland.

The human services provided by PICC help improve Palm Islanders' childhoods, safety and health. PICC has agreements for twenty programs and services with eleven different funding providers. Although our services focus on three areas of greatest need on Palm Island—

namely health, early years education and social and emotional wellbeing—PICC aims to provide support to all Palm Islanders in need.

In addition to these services, PICC provides a range of enterprises for our clients, staff and the broader Palm Island community. These enterprises include products and services not otherwise available on Palm Island, and, where they are available, expand the available choices. All their profits are directed back into the community, such as sponsorships for local sports teams and clubs. We also offer help to community members for funeral expenses; relief funding after local disasters; a transport service, which connects our patients on Palm to health services in Townsville; and the community safety net, which enables PICC to either accept referrals for medical services, or connect patients to an alternative service.

To our staff, PICC offers local employment, capacity-building, and training and professional development. The skills our staff learn working with us can continue to be used and developed in the Palm Island community even if the staff member stops working with PICC. We are the second-largest employer on Palm Island, making sure that nearly a hundred Palm Islanders have an income to support themselves and their families and to spend in their community.

Through our recognised expertise in service delivery in a remote Indigenous community, PICC also provides high-level advice and representation to government bodies, boards, non-government organisations and other organisations—particularly through our Chief

Executive Officer, Rachel Atkinson—which ensures that the Palm Island community and its needs have a voice on the national stage. PICC also aims to document and share what we learn so that other remote Indigenous communities can benefit from our experience. Our website is continuing to develop so that we can showcase the Palm Island community, their achievements and the tropical beauty in which they live.

PICC is proud of our role in helping Palm Island to lead the way in developing a new model of Indigenous community capacity building.

In short, PICC is determined to deliver high quality, essential services to the Palm Island community and to develop the community's strengths, so that Palm Islanders can enjoy the healthcare, services and quality of life equal to those enjoyed by so many Australians.

Women's Healing Service



The Women's Healing Service is the newest service from PICC.

It is one of a range of similar pilot services currently being offered in prisons across Queensland under a funding initiative by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women in response to recommendations in the Queensland Parole System Review (2016).

The Women's Healing Service aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who are incarcerated at the Townsville Women's Correctional Centre, whether serving sentences or on remand, and before and after their releases. Its ethos is that Indigenous women are best placed to give Indigenous women the help they need.

Its activities are trauma informed, holistic and culturally driven, and they provide opportunities for empowerment and self-healing.

The statewide trial of women's healing services in prisons will run to the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

Through its regular group-based and individual activities, the WHS works with women:

- to assist their reconnection to family and culture;

- to reduce their risk of reoffending and assist their transition back to their communities;

- to assist with parenting practices which are culturally focussed and have positive outcomes for women's families;

- to ensure they receive information and education which allow women to make informed decisions; and

- to ensure they have a safe and supportive environment which will enable women to participate meaningfully in WHS programs.

The statewide trial of women's healing services in prisons will run to the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

Medical Services

As defined in NACCHO's Constitution as amended 9 March 2006, also from the National Aboriginal Health Strategy (NAHS) 1989, "Aboriginal health means not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural well-being of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being thereby bringing about the total well-being of their Community."

The PICC medical clinic offers general-practice medicine, specialised chronic care services, women's and children's health services, social emotional wellbeing services and an after-hours medical clinic Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings until 9 p.m. All services provided at the Centre are designed and delivered to meet the needs of the local

community. PICC conducts ongoing population health needs assessment based on community feedback to ensure services are planned and developed with input from the people who use them. Allied Health and Specialist services form an integral part of the Centre's service delivery model to ensure patients access comprehensive healthcare services that support individuals to maintain their optimal health and wellbeing. Our team aims to ensure services are delivered in place wherever possible to reduce the need for patient travel to Townsville. We do this through a range of visiting services, as well as video conferencing and telehealth as appropriate.

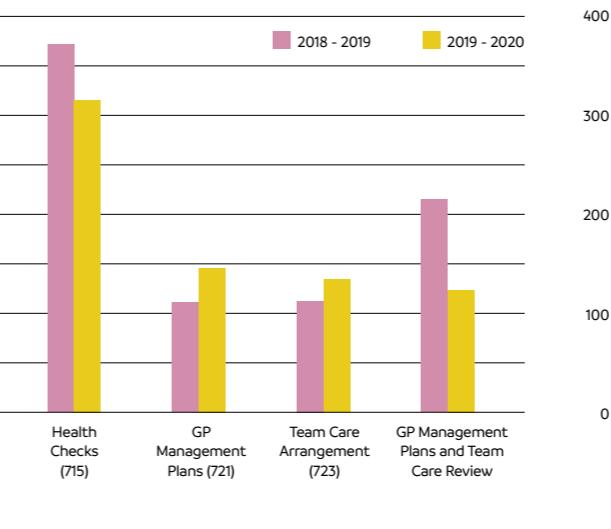
PICC continues to work in partnership with Griffith University and James Cook University supporting medical students and GP Registrar training as Palm Island is an excellent remote location where students and Registrars

gain much experience working in an isolated practice environment with Australia's First Nations peoples.

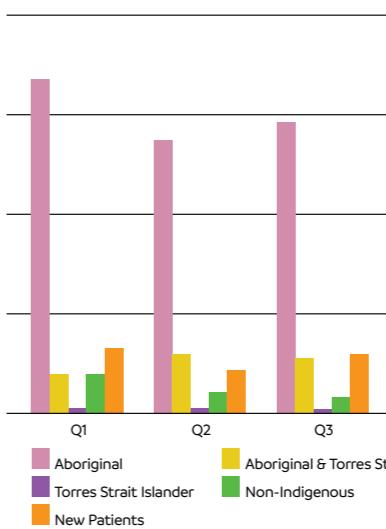
Our goal is to deliver safe, comprehensive, quality primary health care in ways which meet patient needs and support equity and better access to health, community and social services.

Our team encourage empowerment and self-determination in relation to patient healthcare, we do this by supporting people to achieve their best possible health and wellbeing outcomes through individualised assessment, care and service planning, by linking with a range of integrated healthcare service providers; moreover, by connecting people with a wide range of community-based services that focus on addressing the cultural, social, environmental and economic determinants of health and wellbeing.

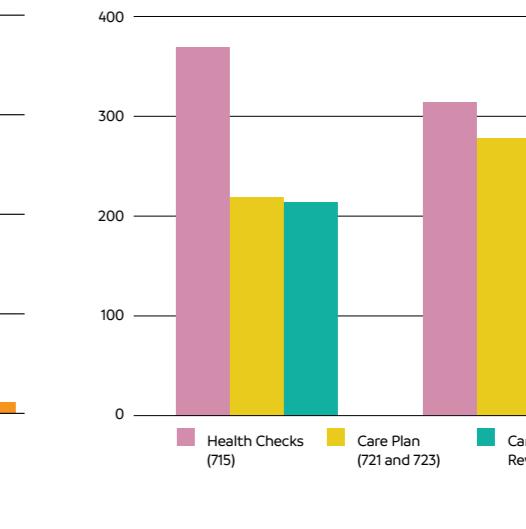
Children and Family Centre Medical Services



2019 - 2020 Patient Demographics



No. of Health Checks to Care Plans



Children & Family Centre

After its organisational restructure in 2019, the ever-popular CFC has spent the past year building on its strengths.

The CFC helps give Palm's kids the best start to life, ensuring they have a strong foundation for growing up healthy and strong. In addition to its much-loved playgroup and childcare services, the CFC delivers paediatric care through the integrated Medical Centre.

Playgroup is held every day, and it continues to welcome new families regularly. Playgroup provides a space for children and parents to come together to play, learn and socialise.

Various medical specialists, such as a speech therapist and occupational therapist, visit the Centre regularly to help children who need their services, with CFC assisting and supporting therapists, children and families.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the visiting paediatric specialists changed to remote service-delivery, which was a great success and proved very popular with children and families. With the easing of travel restrictions, the specialists have returned to in-person service delivery but, depending on the child's needs, have continued to deliver some services remotely.

The impending integration of the PICC Medical Centre and its paediatric services into the Palm Island Primary Health Care Centre will free space in the CFC building to expand its programs and facilities. Many paediatric services will still be delivered at the CFC as they are now, but for those which cannot, they will be delivered only a short walk from the CFC.



Social Enterprises

The community enterprises operated by PICC – the Community Store, Palm Automotive and the Fuel Station – continue to go from strength to strength.

The Community Store offers clothing, homewares, technology, small appliances and personal technology to the community. The Store continues to adapt to its customers' preferences by introducing new products and lines in response to customer demand. Shoppers have shown an increasing preference for new items at reasonable prices, especially clothing and apparel, so the Store has expanded its range of these and discontinued all pre-loved clothing lines. The Store has also widened its range of mobile telephones and other personal electronic devices to meet Palm consumers' wants.

Palm Automotive provides vehicle maintenance and repair to the community, which is unavailable elsewhere on Palm Island and saves motorists from the expense and inconvenience of shipping their vehicles to the mainland for these services. Palm Automotive also has a workshop in Townsville for Palm Islanders on the mainland and anyone who would like to support a Palm Island business. In addition, Palm Automotive also provides training and employment in motor vehicle servicing and repair for a number of local Palm Islanders.

The Fuel Station is run by the adjacent Palm Automotive workshop. It provides choice to motorists on Palm to purchase fuel. In 2020 the Fuel Station began installing a new fuel system which will allow customers to purchase fuel twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year and also reduce the possibility of theft and drive-offs.



Diversionary Service



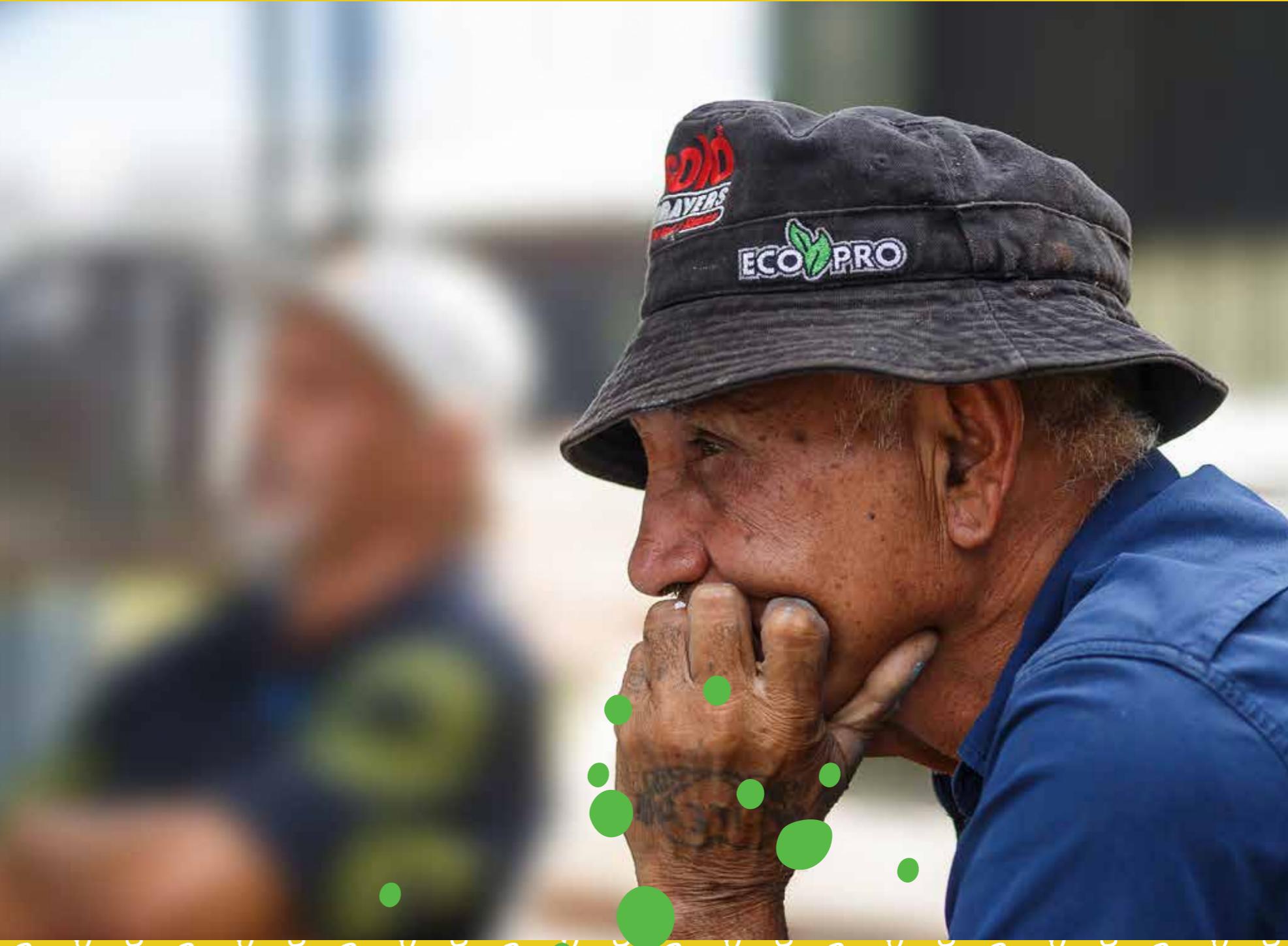
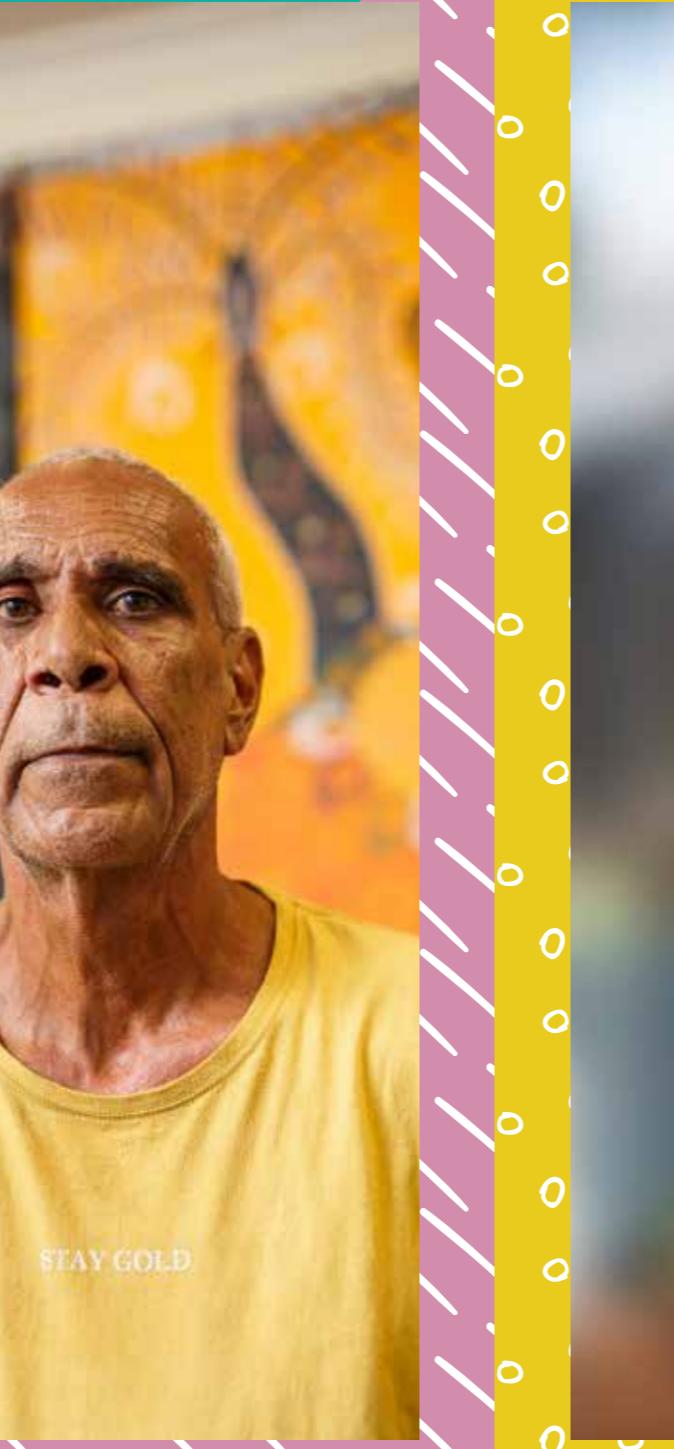
The Palm Island Diversionary Service is funded under the Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.

The Diversionary Centre and an Assertive Outreach Service provide safe and monitored accommodation and diverting people who are intoxicated, at risk of misusing substances in public places or at risk of entering police custody to sober up.

We support the safety and wellbeing of clients and strengthen positive cultural connections. We work in a collaborative way to support positive outcomes for clients and ensure client confidentiality.

The Diversionary Service provides its clients with activities for the Men's Gathering Group. We also involve clients with Domestic Violence Order and clients from CDP. These clients are involved in several projects around the community, including building projects on the outer islands and the cleaning of the Old Cemetery at Phantom Island and Francis Creek Cemetery on Wallaby Point Road. The Diversionary Service also provides a Community (Adult) Patrol to reduce the risk of people becoming involved in activities that could lead to contact with the justice system.

The 2019/20 financial year saw the Diversionary Service offering training for a Certificate I in Conservation and Land Management under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative. This program ran at the Bush-Tucker Garden, at the base of the Bush-Walking Track. The past year also saw the Service successfully negotiate for funding to the end of the 2020/21 financial year.



Women's Service

The Women's Service provides safe, temporary accommodation to women and their children who have experienced (or who are at risk of experiencing) domestic and family violence.

The Service also provides several programs and services to support women at the Service and women in the community, which include outreach programs and home visits for clients, the Ladies' Lounge, and housing an office of the Aboriginal and Islander Women's Legal Service.

For 2020, the Women's Service shares with the SDFVS additional funds from the Queensland Government to support victims of domestic and family violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Safe House

The Safe House provides placements for up to six children and young people who are subject to ongoing intervention by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.

The Safe House provides placements for up to six children and young people who are subject to ongoing intervention by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. Typically, resident children are on Child Protection Orders and are referred to the Safe House by the Department.

The Safe House ensures these children can remain in their community, allowing children to have unbroken connections to their families, culture, language and country.

The Safe House staff has been active in the process of ensuring that children in need of placement can continue to reside on Palm in an appropriate and safe family environment. Every staff member is a local Palm Islander with expertise in the needs, traditions and protocols of the Palm community.

Staff members of the FWC continue to receive intensive training in areas such as data information systems, domestic and family violence, case management and child development so that they can provide a high standard of service to families and children who demonstrate vulnerabilities and risk coming into contact with the child safety system.

The FWC operates within a robust network of partner agencies, particularly relating to collaborative planning and joint service provision.

In the 2019/20 financial year, the FWC gained an Indigenous Youth and Family Worker and two new Youth and Family Support Workers better to help its clients.



Family Wellbeing Centre

The Family Wellbeing Centre provides culturally appropriate advice and help to Palm Island families and their children who need assistance to stay safe and together.

The FWC provides support to families and their children through education programs, casework, workshops, referrals, information and individual and group activities.

The FWC has continued to grow since it was established in 2017, and it now hosts several long-running PICC program, such as the Women's Yarning Circle. It also supports regular meetings of the Elders Advisory Group, the role of which is to provide guidance and advice in the development, operation and reform of all PICC programs and services.

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Community Justice Group

The Community Justice Group develops strategies within the community for dealing with justice-related issues aimed at decreasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' contact with the justice system.

Unlike other PICC services, the CJC is auspiced by PICC.

In addition to preventing contact with the justice system, the CJC supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims and offenders at all stages of the legal process, including the provision of sentencing submissions to court, attendance at court and visits to prisons and detention centres. The CJC also provides mediation and referrals to other relevant organisations on Palm Island.

The Coordinator of the CJC plays a significant role in networking with these agencies to ensure that justice-related issues affecting the Palm Island community are addressed collectively and with a focus on developing intervention programs.

Over 2019 and 2020, the CJC played a leading role in co-designing the new Palm Island Community Safety Plan with the community, the Council and other stakeholders.

In 2020, a proposal from the CJC to the Department of Justice and the Attorney-General resulted in the Group gaining additional funds for its work and new staff members to better support its work in the community and with its clients.

Safe Haven

Creating Safe Communities

The Safe Haven Service is designed to respond to domestic and family violence issues within the Palm Island community.

It targets Palm Islanders aged under eighteen years old and families caring for children who have experienced or witnessed violence in their homes. The Safe Haven provides many activities and programs to the youth of Palm Island, including the Night Café, the Youth Patrol and family support and counselling services.

The Night Café is a popular and long-running program. It provides a safe, social space in the evenings for children and young people who may experience, or who may be at risk of experiencing, violence or abuse in the home, as well as other children and young people who may want or need somewhere safe to go in the evenings.

The Youth Patrol escorts children who are outdoors at night to a safe place or to their homes. The Youth Patrol also monitors for children and young people outdoors at night without adult supervision.

With the COVID-19 pandemic forcing the temporary suspension of the Night Café and some of its other programs, the Safe Haven introduced the School Lunch Program. All students of the Bwgcolman Community School enjoyed a free healthy lunch every day for several weeks.

In 2020, the Safe Haven successfully renegotiated its funding agreement to the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Service

The Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Service provides a single, dedicated team focused on reducing the rate of domestic and family violence on Palm Island in a culturally appropriate manner.

The SDFVS works with both victims and users of domestic violence. To victims of violence, it offers counselling and support for their experiences and pathways to healing from trauma. To users of violence, it offers anti-violence and re-education programs hold users accountable and seek to break cycles of violence. The Service also coordinates with the local Specialist Domestic Violence Court.

In 2020, the SDFVS began offering the Men's Behaviour Change Program, which works with

men who have used violence in their homes to understand the consequences of domestic and family violence and help them to change their behaviour.

Also in 2020, the SDFVS shared with the Women's Service additional funding from the Queensland Government to support victims of domestic and family violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Service is based in the Children and Family Centre building. This location offers a high level of discretion, as there are various services here which clients could be visiting. The Service also sometimes delivers services and programs at other PICC facilities, most often the Women's Service.



Family Participation Program

The Family Participation Program helps Palm Island families stay safe and together.

Its target group is families subject to a child protection notification or at risk of entering the child protection system. It provides culturally appropriate advice and support to ensure that families going through the child protection system are kept informed and are fully involved in the processes of the child protection system, and it helps families, children and child protection staff arrive at all decisions by working together.

NDIS Connector Service

PICC has two part-time NDIS Community Connectors who work with the community, providing information to help potential participants understand the NDIS pathway and access the Scheme.

The Connectors work closely with potential participants and their families and friends to complete paperwork, attend appointments and find service providers.

SEWB Team

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Team provides a suite of services, including individual and group sessions, to help in culturally appropriate ways Palm Islanders with mental health concerns.

The Team respectfully work with clients and their families to find a healing path that suits their needs.

The SEWB Team provide services in the Stepped Care range such as promotion and prevention advice, self-help and access to resources, psychological therapies for people requiring early intervention for mild to moderate mental health problems, and assistance to access GP and specialist clinical care coordination services. The Team is a single point of contact for its clients' mental health concerns and services. The SEWB Team acts as a central coordinating body for all mental health treatment services and programs, and it ensures that there are no gaps or overlaps in its clients' treatments or referrals to other mental health services.



Board Members

Luella Bligh, Acting Chair
Harriet Hulthen
Allan Palm Island
Rhonda Phillips
Mark Johnston
Ian Jessup, Company Secretary



Partners

People and organisations partnering with PICC in the 2019/20 financial year include:

- Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service
- Ed Mosby, Clinical Psychologist, Wakai Waian Healing
- Child Safety Services
- Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council
- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Bwgcolman Community School
- Joyce Palmer Health Service
- Primary Health Network
- Jon and Jon Consultants
- Encompass Family & Community
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak
- Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care
- Townsville Hospital and Health Service
- Australian Government
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women
- Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
- Allens Linklaters Solicitors



Achievements

The 2019/20 financial year was another successful year for PICC. Amongst other things, in this time PICC has:

- Began the formal process of transitioning to community control.
- Secured funding from the Queensland Government as part of the Age-Friendly Community Grants program to develop the Elders' Group through consultation and Elders conferences.
- Established the Women's Healing Service.
- Successfully navigated the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on our services and service users on Palm Island.
- Expanded the size of the Townsville office for the first time since 2010 to meet space requirements for current staffing levels.
- Implemented a new quality management system, Logiqc.
- Continued to implement the recommendations of the 2019 PICC Evaluation Report, with changes to the management structure and work commenced on a community dashboard.
- Negotiated with state and Federal departments and other bodies for new and continuing funding.
- Further integrated our internal structure.
- Implemented a new human resources and payroll system.
- Enhanced support to program areas.
- Had an unconditional financial audit.



Financial Report

As at 30 June 2020, the Company was in a strong financial position reporting a Balance Sheet with positive Net Assets.

The Funded Services and Programs have tracked according to budget, whilst at the same time the Social Enterprises have made financial performance improvements from the previous year. This positive financial performance, and the resulting financial position of strength that the company has achieved, is greatly due to the good governance practices and financial management by the Board, CEO and senior staff of the Company.





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