

Newsletter

Tamworth NAIDOC Celebrations

As always, Tamworth had a very busy NAIDOC Week. We attended the Touch Footy carnival, marched in the NAIDOC march, and had a stand and our basketball inflatable at the Tamworth Family Fun Day. It was a wonderful week to get in amongst the community and embrace our First Nations culture.



Narrabri Family Fun Day

Our Narrabri team enjoyed a day in the sunshine for their NAIDOC Week celebration. A fantastic day that included lots of fun for kids and adults alike, with a strong sense of community.



OUR MISSION

In response to the Gospel call to "love your neighbour", Centacare New England North West provides social services to enable individuals, families and communities in the Catholic Diocese of Armidale to reach their potential and enjoy the fullness of life

Whilst we are a Catholic agency, we are proud to provide services to everyone, regardless of religion, circumstance, ethnicity, economic situation, age, gender or ability.

Walhallow NAIDOC

Representatives from our Tamworth site attended Walhallow Family Fun Day during NAIDOC Week. It was a great opportunity to have some fun with the Walhallow community – and we even got to meet Wests Tigers superstars Kai Pearce-Paul and Ethan Roberts. We were treated to a wonderful lunch and education session by the Walhallow residents – and the kids loved our basketball inflatable and badge maker!



Quirindi Family Fun Day

Sora Invited us to take part in their Family Fun Day in Quirindi during NAIDOC Week. The ever popular inflatable basketball made a feature, as well as our new badge making machine! There are 4 badge makers across Centacare and they are proving to be super popular at events. It was lovely to have some fun with the Quirindi locals.

Armidale NAIDOC Family Day

On 10 July, Samantha and Charita proudly represented Centacare and the Youth on Track program at the Community and Family Day at Curtis Park as part of Armidale's NAIDOC Week celebrations. Following a march through the Armidale CBD, the community came together for a day of stalls, local businesses, food, entertainment and cultural activities. Despite a chilly start, the sunshine made for a beautiful day of connection and celebration. With lunch provided and performances from Mad Proper Deady and other Indigenous artists keeping the crowd entertained, it was a wonderful opportunity to connect with the community and showcase the work of Centacare's Youth on Track program.



YOT Cultural Workshops – Glen Innes



During NAIDOC week of 2026 we held a two-day cultural workshop in Glen Innes focused on the making and playing of didgeridoos.

With help from Local Land Services and run by Yamitji man and internationally acclaimed didgeridoo player, builder and storyteller Uncle Mark Atkins, we had seven young men involved with the Youth on Track program attend from Glen Innes, Armidale and Inverell to learn how to craft their own instrument and take part in lessons playing them.

The boys listened keenly and did an excellent job of this, with three even cooking lunch for the group. There was also discussion around the importance of totems, cultural conservation practices and storytelling as well as a showing of artifacts dating back about 5,000 years.

It was a lot of fun and a great way for the boys to develop deeper connections with their heritage!

Big thanks to all who came along.



Fantastic Bunnings Connection Narrabri

A big thank you to Bunnings Narrabri for their generous support of our Keep On Track youth program.

Through our ongoing partnership, Bunnings has once again helped us create meaningful opportunities for young people, donating art canvases and acrylic paints that will be used during program sessions and one-on-one appointments. These resources will support young people to explore their creativity, express themselves, and create both cultural and non-cultural artworks in a safe and supportive environment.

Delivering on Centacare's Mission

GOOD NEWS STORIES!

Before working with Brit, the only phone calls the young person's mother ever received from her child's school were about behavioural incidents. There were days involving kicking teachers, throwing chairs and struggling to manage big emotions.

The young person's mother has received a phone call that she never thought she would get. The teacher said she wasn't calling because anything had gone wrong—she was calling because she had seen such an incredible change that it brought a tear to her eye. She told the young person's mother that she had had a really good week and that things were only going to keep improving.

Brit has been such a positive influence on the family. Alongside the strategies and support they've received, they've also started horse riding lessons to help with emotional regulation, and it has been absolutely wonderful. The young person is loving it, and we're seeing growing confidence and better emotional control both at school and at home.



I would like to share a positive story from a recent intake session with a young person.

A few weeks ago, he first came to Headspace during a period of significant emotional distress, as he was experiencing a breakdown and wanted someone to talk to. He shared that this was the first time he had ever sought mental health support.

He mentioned that he was already familiar with Headspace, as he had previously delivered items to the service and had some understanding of the support provided. Despite this familiarity, he explained that it took a great deal of effort and courage for him to attend, as he does not often open up to people outside of his family.

During the intake session, he expressed genuine appreciation for the service. He said he felt grateful to be given the space to talk openly and that he felt truly listened to. It is encouraging to see his first experience with Headspace was a positive one making him feel heard and supported.



Want to get in touch?

Whether it's a question about our services, feedback or information, we'd love to hear from you!

[Contact Us!](#)

CEO SLEEPOUT

Recently our CEO Chris participated in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, where hundreds of CEOs, business owners as well as community and government leaders sleep outdoors to support the many Australians who are experiencing homelessness and people at risk of homelessness.

Chris took part in the Brisbane event, where 262 participants raised over \$2 million dollars to help Vinnies provide essential services to the people who need them.



Centacare 25 – Tamworth!

In 2026, Centacare is celebrating 25 years of working in the New England North West, and walking together with the communities.

The Tamworth Centacare 25 celebration event was held on the 25th of June – and so much fun was had. With some great media coverage we had an excellent community turn out – meaning that we were able to connect with so many people that we have worked with and walked with over the past 25 years.

Our day started with a staff lunch, including the Chair of our Board Louise Clarke and Board Director Deacon Paul. It was very interesting to hear about the early days of Centacare, and how our organisation has grown over the past quarter century. We then moved to Fitzroy Plaza for our community event – our sea of teal bringing joy and brightness to the winter's day. The first of our 25 years of walking together events was wholeheartedly a great success!

Centacare 25 – Moree!

We hosted our Moree Event at Apex Park on the 2nd September. It was such a fun afternoon handing out free snow cones, fairy floss and popcorn. The Lions Club of Moree hosted our bbq, and the fabulous HOPE Truck served iced coffee. Our friends from The Benevolent Society, Byamee and Quit B Fit provided activities for the kids. It was a great time celebrating Centacare in the Moree region.



A huge thanks to our event partners and participants

- The Dirtroad Barnyard
- The HOPE Kitchen
- Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service
- Oh Snap! Photobooths
- Creating Focus Social Media
- SORA
- Bamara
- Tamworth Community College
- i.am
- Tamworth Regional Council



Seasons For Growth

Children & Young People's Program
Learning to live with change and loss
6-8 year olds

 Centacare Tamworth
201 Marius Street
Tamworth

 3:30pm-4:30pm

 Tuesdays
commencing
11th August

 Enquire with Centacare Tamworth today.

 centacare
New England North West

Caring for our community.
Building stronger futures. 



 centacare

FREE LEGO, BOARD GAMES & CRAFT GROUP

Primary school aged children
5 - 12 years

AFTER SCHOOL FUN!

DATES:

Alternating
Tuesdays and
Wednesdays
Term Three
Starting
Wednesday 29th of July
until the
15th of September.

**AFTER SCHOOL
TILL 4:45**

 21 Oliver Street Inverell

Must be registered
to attend scan QR Code
or contact

0467 948 586



Afternoon tea provided
Limited spaces available

Check out some of our great programs currently running



 centacare
New England North West

GARDEN PLAYGROUP

**RELAX AND ENJOY
THE OUTDOORS!**

- Gardening
- Nature Play
- Morning Tea Provided

Mondays | 10:00am

**Tamworth Community Garden
Victoria Park, Tamworth
PLEASE REGISTER HERE**



MUMS & BUBS PLAYGROUP

10am - 12pm **Mondays** **0 - 12 MONTHS**

Centacare Moree

Term 3
20th July
27th July
3rd August
10th August
17th August
24th August
31st August
7th September
14th September
21st September

**CONNECT WITH A
REGISTERED CHILD AND
FAMILY HEALTH NURSE***

**LIGHT
REFRESHMENTS
PROVIDED**

For more information
contact Centacare
Moree
on (02) 6752 8500



*Child and Family Health nurses will attend when available.

 centacare
New England North West

 NSW
GOVERNMENT

 Health
Hunter New England
Local Health District

Mental Health Matters – Inverell

Centacare Inverell were the grateful recipients of proceeds from a Speed Shear event, and so decided to host a Mental Health matters expo! Highlighting the programs that Centacare have on offer in Inverell, as well as other organisations that we work alongside in the Sapphire region. It was a lovely morning out – congratulations to the team, and thank you to the staff members who travelled to be there!



Homeless Connect – Tamworth

On the 30th of July our Tamworth team attended the local Homeless Connect day, where over 1000 people were welcomed through the doors of the TRECC and given access to over 57 different service providers. It was a great opportunity for the community to access essentials such as haircuts, flu shots and birth certificates. We were able to raffle off a hamper of food and essentials, and the lucky winner – who was hesitant to enter – said to us “I’ve had a lot of bad luck lately but this has completely turned things around for me” – how good is that!!!

Community Soup Day – Moree

Our Moree team set up with Byamee, Quit B Fit, Moree Plains Shire Council, Carer Gateway, JobLink and Anglicare on the steps of the Town Hall and handed out soup, damper, tea, coffee, milo and juice to community members, all while shining a light and drawing attention to homelessness in our area. Our incredible staff member Fallyn cooked up a nice big pot of chicken and vegetable soup for the morning and we are super proud to say she returned to the office with an empty pot!



Honouring Chris Hietbrink



Chris Hietbrink joined the Board of Centacare NENW in 2018. She brought strong skills and lived experience from her work in the community sector, and Chris' strong Catholic faith and lifelong service to the church are a true reflection of her character. This is evidenced by her community roles and her dedication to Centacare. Chris' leadership, commitment and care have made a lasting difference to Centacare, and throughout her time, she has shown compassion and empathy in everything she has done. Chris leaves a legacy of care, commitment, and quiet strength that will continue to inspire those who follow.

Harvesting Connections at AgQuip!

Our Centacare team had a fantastic time attending AgQuip 2026 in Gunnedah from 18–20 August, Joining Deacon Paul and The HOPE Truck to connect with the local community and enjoy one of the region's biggest events.

Our team was kept busy serving up plenty of coffee, tea, delicious scones and, of course, lots of smiles! We also gave visitors the chance to win a \$100 Coles voucher through our raffle, adding a little extra excitement to the festivities.



Most importantly, AgQuip gave us a great opportunity to get out into the community, meet new people and catch up with familiar faces. Our team enjoyed chatting with visitors, answering questions and sharing information about Centacare's services and support.

It was also a great chance to showcase our new branding and continue strengthening our connections across the region.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped out!





Building for the Common Good

Catholic Social Services Parliamentary Forum

On 13 and 14 August, Kyrie was proud to represent Centacare New England North West at the Catholic Social Services Parliamentary Forum at Parliament House in Canberra.

This year's theme, "Building for the Common Good," was especially meaningful as Catholic Social Services Australia celebrated 70 years of supporting individuals, families and communities across Australia.

The Forum provided a valuable opportunity to hear from Members of Parliament about their views on "Building for the Common Good," and the challenges facing Australian communities, the future of social policy, and the important role of social service organisations such as Centacare NENW.

A personal highlight was hearing from the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP about supporting Australian families, strengthening responses to family and domestic violence, and improving coordination between services and government.

Another special moment was witnessing the formal presentation of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, "Social Justice Statement," to Parliament, and how positively it was received. This year's statement, Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division, calls us to respond to division by building a society grounded in dignity, dialogue, solidarity and the common good.

The two days were a wonderful reminder that, while our organisations work across different communities and programs, we share a common purpose: walking alongside people when they need support, strengthening families and communities, and ensuring no one is left behind.

For those interested, the 2026 Social Justice Statement, Living the Gospel in Times of Social Division, is available to [read here!](#)



25 years of Centacare follow our social media to see more



A Message from our CEO

It gives me great pleasure to bring you Centacare NENW's first quarterly newsletter. I hope it gives you a flavour of who we are and the incredible work we do.

2026 is a special year for Centacare, as we celebrate 25 years delivering much needed social services across the New England North West region. Since 2001, we have supported about 60,000 vulnerable people in our community, and it makes us so proud to have made such a profound impact!

Beyond the expertise of our people, what makes Centacare unique is our physical presence on the ground across the region, with offices in 8 regional towns plus a number of outreach services. This means we are present in the heart of our communities, where they need us.

Our 25th birthday has been an opportunity to refresh how we present ourselves. We have built a new website with updated information on our services, and we have launched a contemporary new brand logo. Our portrayal of the Southern Cross in our logo represents the region we all live in, whilst also symbolising the Catholic mission that drives our work. Whilst Centacare NENW is a Catholic agency, we are proud to provide services to everyone, regardless of religion, circumstance, ethnicity, economic situation, age, gender or ability.

Our continued impact on vulnerable people would not be possible without the extraordinary efforts of our staff, whose professionalism and compassion transform lives every single day. As we look ahead, we remain energised by the relationships we have built with the communities we are privileged to serve.

Chris Smedley



OUR VALUES

Dignity Community Cooperation Support