



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd  
trading as ROCC for Women

ABN 94 002 660 120

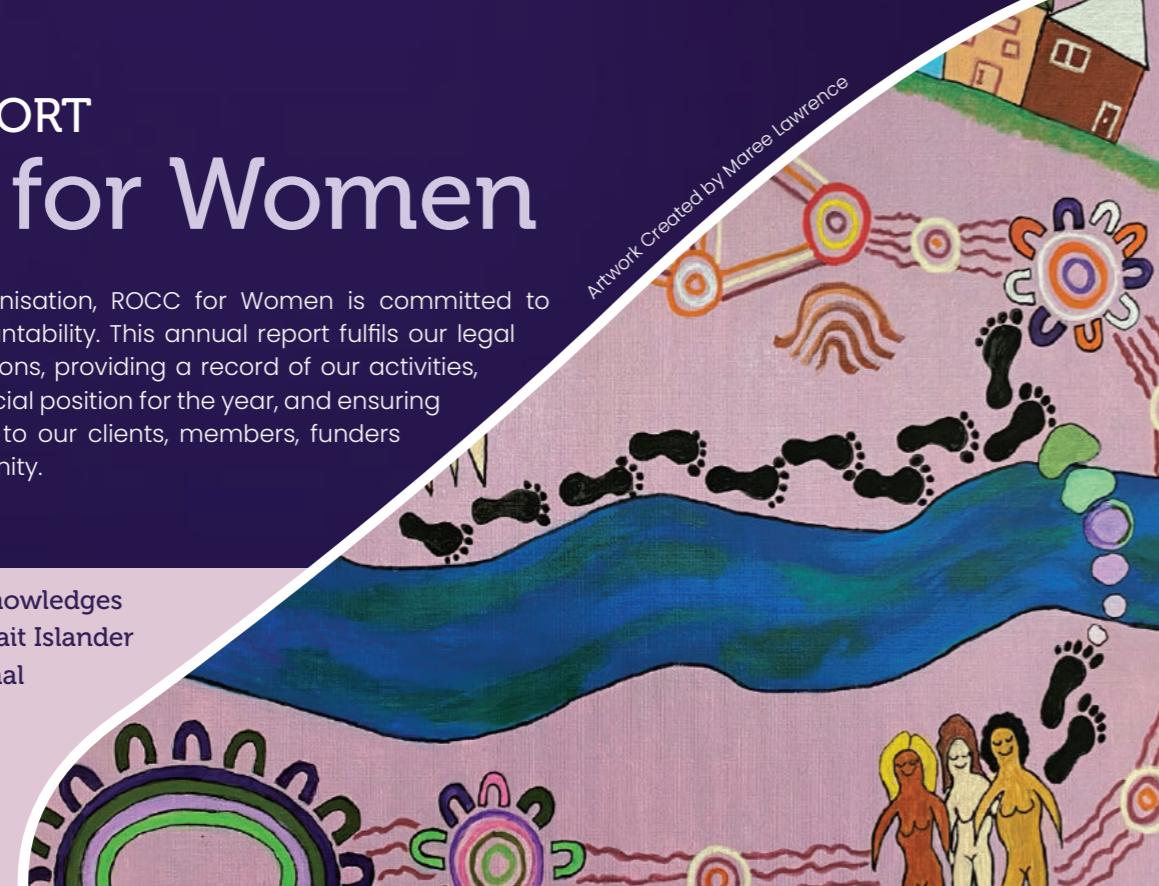


# ANNUAL REPORT ROCC for Women

As a not-for-profit organisation, ROCC for Women is committed to transparency and accountability. This annual report fulfils our legal and governance obligations, providing a record of our activities, achievements, and financial position for the year, and ensuring we remain accountable to our clients, members, funders and the broader community.

ROCC for Women acknowledges Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and water we live and work on. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd  
trading as ROCC for Women ABN 94 002 660 120



ROCC for Women receives funding from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) under the Specialist Homelessness Services, Service Support Fund.

ROCC for Women also receives support through donations and grants from various sources, which are outlined in more detail in this annual report.



ROCC offers long-term case management for women 18 years and over who are homeless or at risk of homelessness or have had contact with the criminal justice system and/or where alcohol or other drugs, mental health concerns and trauma impact negatively on their lives.

## **Vision of ROCC**

To realise the dignity and well-being of women within their communities.

## **Mission**

To deliver trauma-informed, strength-based supports to foster resilience in, and advocate for, women.

## Diversity

Embrace everyone's story

## Feminism

Women matter

## Individuality

Our own and others

## Advocacy

Speak up for ourselves and others

## Self-determination

The right to choose

## Collaboration

Working together

## Resilience

Survive and thrive

## Contribution

Every voice is valued

## Honesty and Integrity

Openness and good intent

## Holistic

Include the whole person

## Client Feedback

'Without ROCC I wouldn't have an income, a home, an NDIS plan or my three children at home with me with my fourth child being restored at the end of the year.'

## Contents

About ROCC .....	1
Values and Behaviours .....	2
Board of Directors .....	4
Board of Directors Report .....	5
Service Operations Manager & Team Leader Report .....	8
Organisational Structure of ROCC .....	11
Client Story - Paige's Story .....	12
ROCC for Women Social and Therapeutic Workshops .....	14
In the Spotlight - Issues Affecting Housing .....	14
ROCC Client Service Information .....	23
SHS Client Satisfaction Survey .....	32
Referrals .....	35
Staff Professional Development and Training .....	36
Areas of Focus for 2025-2026 .....	37

# Board of Directors

Our skilled, committed and experienced Board are actively involved and passionate about our service.

## Tessa Barnett - Chair

With over 30 years experience providing operational and strategic advice to CEOs, boards and senior executives within the healthcare sector and insurance industry, Tessa has a career path transiting Physiotherapy, Occupational Health and Safety, Occupational Rehabilitation, Organisational Behavior, Insurance, e-Health and Strategic Management Consulting. Tessa brings insights into operational challenges in assisting people to re-establish productive lives.

## Justine O'Reilly - Deputy Chair

Manager of the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery program at Legal Aid, Justine has 20 years' experience as a lawyer, mediator, and policy development officer in government and non-government organisations. She has lived in the Shoalhaven for the past 18 years and has worked as the Principal Solicitor of South Coast and County Community Law and has served on the boards of many of the local community organisations. Justine has a keen interest in project management and governance.

## Kerry Wright

Kerry is a civil lawyer with Legal Aid NSW, Nowra, and has lived in the Shoalhaven for 20 years. Before beginning her legal career in 2015, she spent two decades in the community sector in the ACT and

Shoalhaven, working in senior roles with organisations including Australian Red Cross ACT, YWCA ACT and NSW and Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre. Kerry has extensive experience on community-led boards and committees, including the Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre, Community Legal Centres NSW, and the Shoalhaven Women's Resource Group, which established ROCC for Women. She served on the ROCC for Women Board from 2013 to 2016 before rejoining in 2020 and continues to contribute her skills and governance experience to a range of local organisations.

## Kelly Stehr

Kelly brings over 20 years experience in senior management roles in Human Resources both locally and internationally. She has extensive business and operational experience across a range of industries including as the Executive Manager People & Culture with Shellharbour City Council and has previously worked with IKEA, Travelex, Rentokil Initial and the University of Wollongong.

## Melissa Vine

As Principal Solicitor/Director of Burbank & Brown Lawyers and Conveyancers, Melissa manages the daily operations of the Law Practice, people and staffing, regulatory compliance, client and public relations, staff budgets KPI performance targets, debtors and maintenance of financial reports.

# Board of Directors Report

2024 - 2025

The past year has been one of significant change and growth for ROCC for Women.

I would like to start by recognising the changes to our Board and the contributions of those who have stepped down. We farewelled Sophie Ray, Sharlene Naismith, Simone Finch and Denise Clarke. Each of these women has made a significant contribution to the leadership and governance of ROCC for Women, helping to guide the organisation with dedication, skill and commitment to our mission. Their collective efforts have strengthened our foundation and supported the growth and stability of the service during their time on the Board. We are deeply grateful for the long-term contribution of Sophie and Sharlene, who both served the full nine years available under our Constitution. With Sophie stepping down, Simone briefly took on the role of Chair before I was fortunate enough to accept this responsibility.

We also acknowledge the departure of our CEO, Coralee, and staff members, Bronte and Rowena, and thank them for their years of service to ROCC for Women and to the clients we support.

The changes within our team opened a valuable opportunity for the Board to review and enhance the organisation's structure to ensure it remains strong

and sustainable into the future. From this review, ROCC for Women moved to a co-leadership model: a Service Operations Manager, overseeing contracts, business growth, HR, finances, budgets and community engagement; and a Team Leader, responsible for case workers, best practice case management and day-to-day operational oversight. In June 2025, Suzette Laird commenced as Service Operations Manager, joining Maree Lawrence, who continues in the role of Team Leader. In May, we were also pleased to welcome Julie, a new case worker, to our staff.

Amidst these changes, the organisation not only maintained services but exceeded expectations. In 2024-2025, ROCC supported 109 women, well above our DCJ KPI target of 98 women, despite being short-staffed for several months. This is a testament to the commitment and resilience of the team.

In August 2024, we were honoured to receive the Shoalhaven Business Chamber Award for Outstanding Community Organisation. It is wonderful to be recognised as a leader in the sector for the vital work that ROCC for Women does. On behalf of the Board, I commend and thank all staff – past and

present – for their role in this achievement.

Our work continues to be deeply embedded in the local sector and community. ROCC for Women staff actively participates in Homelessness Interagencies, Domestic and Family Violence, mental health, legal, and drug and alcohol networks, Community Corrections and housing meetings. Staff have also represented ROCC at NAIDOC Week celebrations and Homelessness Week events. With new staff on board, it has been encouraging to see strong engagement with other services, both through visits to local providers and by welcoming partner services into the ROCC office. This ensures our team is well connected, visible, and equipped with the knowledge to provide the best possible support to women.

All activities this year have been guided by ROCC for Women's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan and our risk management framework, keeping our mission, vision and direction at the forefront of Board decision-making. A focus for the organisation is our Reconciliation Action Plan (Reflect). With 39% of our clients identifying as Aboriginal women, cultural appropriateness remains



**A sweet send-off for Sophie, Sharlene & Denise – acknowledging their years of leadership and commitment to ROCC for Women.**

fundamental to our work. We continue to work towards the objectives outlined in our RAP by strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, celebrating National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and embedding reconciliation through our staff, policies and practice. Our focus remains on increasing cultural understanding through learning and observing protocols, encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and professional development, and promoting supplier diversity, with our RAP Working Group

driving governance and accountability.

The Department of Communities and Justice has indicated that funding for Specialist Homelessness Services is expected to continue from mid-2026 to 2031, with formal arrangements to be confirmed later in 2025.

In addition, support from funders and partners including FRRR, Freemasons, Wayahead, Shoalhaven Anti-Poverty Committee, Shoalhaven Business Chamber and Macy Insurance Brokers Charity Golf Day has enabled the delivery of social and therapeutic workshops. Coolaroo Foundation funding will also allow the recommencement of in-reach services to correctional facilities in late

**Flowers of thanks for Sophie Ray and Sharlene Naismith, whose dedication and leadership have helped shape ROCC for Women**

2025, and the rollout of new educational workshops focused on financial capability, employability skills, resilience and wellbeing.

The Board feels confident that ROCC for Women is currently well staffed, with the right mix of skills, experience and dedication to deliver on our mission. The team brings professionalism, compassion and commitment to their work every day, and their collective efforts are central to the organisation's success. We sincerely thank them for their hard work and resilience throughout the year and look forward to supporting them as they continue to grow and achieve even more in the year ahead.

I wish to recognise the significant efforts of all Board members, past and present, whose voluntary commitment of time, skills and leadership is critical to



the governance and financial sustainability of ROCC for Women. Each Board member serves with dedication and passion for the mission of ensuring that women in our community can live with dignity, safety and opportunity.

Looking ahead, the Board is confident that ROCC for Women will continue to grow stronger, building on our achievements while adapting to meet the evolving needs of women in our community.

**Tessa Barnett**  
Chair, Board of Directors.

# Service Operations Manager & Team Leader Report

The 2024–2025 year has been a period of both challenge and achievement for ROCC for Women. Despite significant staffing transitions, our service continued to deliver strong outcomes for women in the Shoalhaven.

Our core funding continues to be through the Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) program with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). While referrals in earlier years came largely from the Department of Corrections, we are now seeing increased referrals from a broader range of community organisations. The majority of women accessing ROCC are aged 26–55. In 2024–2025, 39% of women accessing ROCC identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, reflecting the importance of our continued engagement with Aboriginal communities in the Shoalhaven. Most women engaging with ROCC are experiencing housing crisis or homelessness, including community housing, temporary arrangements, or no housing at all. The majority are unemployed and reliant on Centrelink payments, with almost two-thirds experiencing diagnosed mental health conditions. Clients often come to ROCC at times of crisis, such as imminent eviction or transition from a correctional facility. Our long-term, trauma-informed and client-centred case work means that women are supported not only through immediate crisis but also as they move into stability, with many returning to ROCC if circumstances change. Women know that ROCC is a place where they will always be welcomed back. During the reporting period, ROCC supported 109 women, exceeding our KPI of 98. This result is especially significant given that for several months in early 2025 the organisation operated with only a Team Leader and one Case Worker. It reflects not only the dedication of our staff but also the strong relationships we have built across the community over recent years.

We were fortunate to receive funding from FRRR, Freemasons, Wayahead, Shoalhaven Anti-Poverty Committee and donations from the Shoalhaven Business Chamber and Macy Insurance Brokers Charity Golf Day, enabling us to provide social and therapeutic workshops. These activities reduced isolation, strengthened wellbeing, and created safe opportunities for women to build confidence and connections.

With generous funding from the Coolaroo Foundation, ROCC has been able

to plan the recommencement of in-reach services to correctional facilities in late 2025, providing support to women for up to six months before their release. This funding will also support new educational workshops focused on education and wellbeing including budgeting, cooking on a budget, employability skills, resilience, healthy relationships, cultural connection and yoga.

ROCC for Women supported two tenants in subsidised units at Plunkett Street, managed by Southern Cross Community Housing, where we paid reduced rent on rolling three-month leases. These units provided much-needed stability for women experiencing housing crisis. Unfortunately, the properties were sold and our clients were required to vacate early 2025. The units were then renovated and subsequently privately rented — an option often well beyond the financial reach of our clients. The loss of this housing highlights the ongoing shortage of safe and affordable options for women in the Shoalhaven.

2025 marks the final year of ROCC's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan, which focused on three strategic aims. The first was to be recognised by clients, community and industry as a service of excellence. In August 2024 we were honoured



**Support from the Macy Insurance Charity Golf Day and other generous funders enables ROCC for Women to run workshops that foster wellbeing, confidence and connection.**

the successful and sustainable operation of ROCC, and the financial sustainability of the service. We are proud to have achieved these objectives, ensuring that ROCC remains a reliable, trauma-informed service for women in the Shoalhaven. At the same time, we continue to look for ways to increase our impact and diversify income streams to strengthen sustainability beyond our core SHS funding.

ROCC's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) continues to progress under Maree's leadership, with staff participating in cultural training and community events such as NAIDOC. This remains an early but important part of our

journey, and we are committed to building stronger connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and achieving the outcomes outlined in our RAP in years to come.

Internally, ROCC for Women underwent significant change with the resignation of the CEO, Corralee Rough, as well as the departure of Board members Sophie Ray, Sharlene Naismith, Simone Finch and Denise Clarke. We also farewelled two Case Managers, Bronte and Rowenna, and welcomed Julie in May 2025. We wish to recognise and thank all staff and the Board, past and present, for their commitment and contributions in the 2024-2025 period. In 2025, the Board restructured the leadership, appointing Maree Lawrence as Team Leader and Suzette Laird as Service Operations Manager, with both roles now co-leading the organisation and reporting directly to the Board.

We again thank our dedicated staff and the Board for their support and leadership. Together we continue to realise ROCC's vision: empowering women to achieve dignity, wellbeing, have hope and focus on their personal goals.

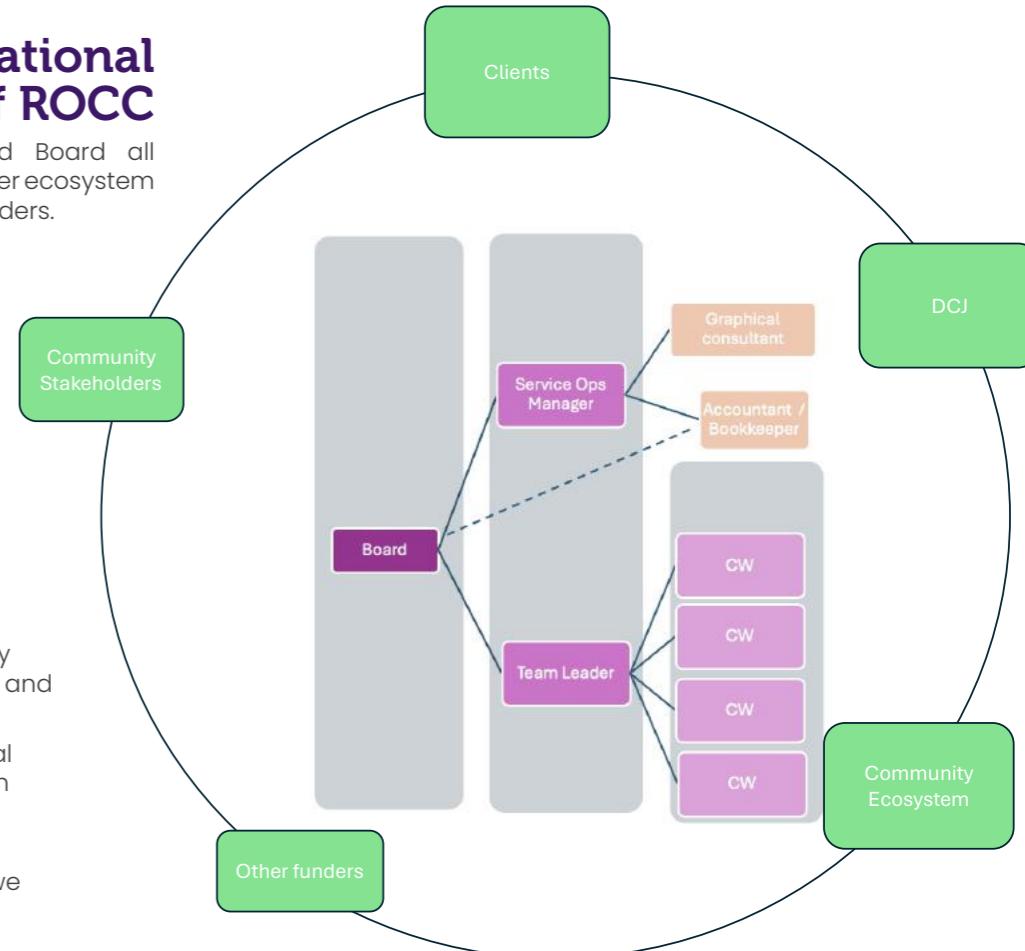
**Suzette Laird**, Service Operations Manager  
and **Maree Lawrence**, Team Leader

**ROCC was extremely honoured to receive the Shoalhaven Business Chamber Award for Outstanding Community Organisation – recognition of the collective impact of our staff, clients and community.**



## Organisational Structure of ROCC

ROCC, employees and Board all operate within the greater ecosystem of their various stakeholders.



### KEY

**Grey boxes** = ROCC employee

**Purple boxes** within grey boxes = employee roles and reporting lines

**Orange boxes** = external consultants working with ROCC

**Green boxes** = key stakeholders to whom we are all accountable

## Client Story Paige's Story

**P**aige first connected with ROCC in November 2020, referred by the ATSI Court Worker after becoming involved with the justice system. She was facing fines, disqualification from driving, and court orders – heavy burdens to carry alongside her health battles and personal struggles. At the time, Paige had just undergone a biopsy on her lymph nodes as doctors investigated a possible breast cancer diagnosis.

Paige's living situation was unstable from the very beginning. After experiencing violence while renting a room, she moved to refuge accommodation. But recovery from surgery made it difficult to manage house chores and meetings, and soon she found herself back at her grandmother's property, living in a caravan. Her health, mental wellbeing, and legal issues are all intertwined, leaving her vulnerable and without stability.

Through ROCC, support letters were written for housing, Centrelink applications, and court. Paige tried to engage in art and colouring, small joys that offered moments of calm. But homelessness remained a constant theme. At times she camped in unsafe areas, relying on her mother Joyce for help. ROCC staff worked with her on her Disability Support Pension (DSP) application, gathered medical reports, and linked her into services like ROMHS (Rural Outreach Mental Health

Service), Legal Aid, and Victims Support.

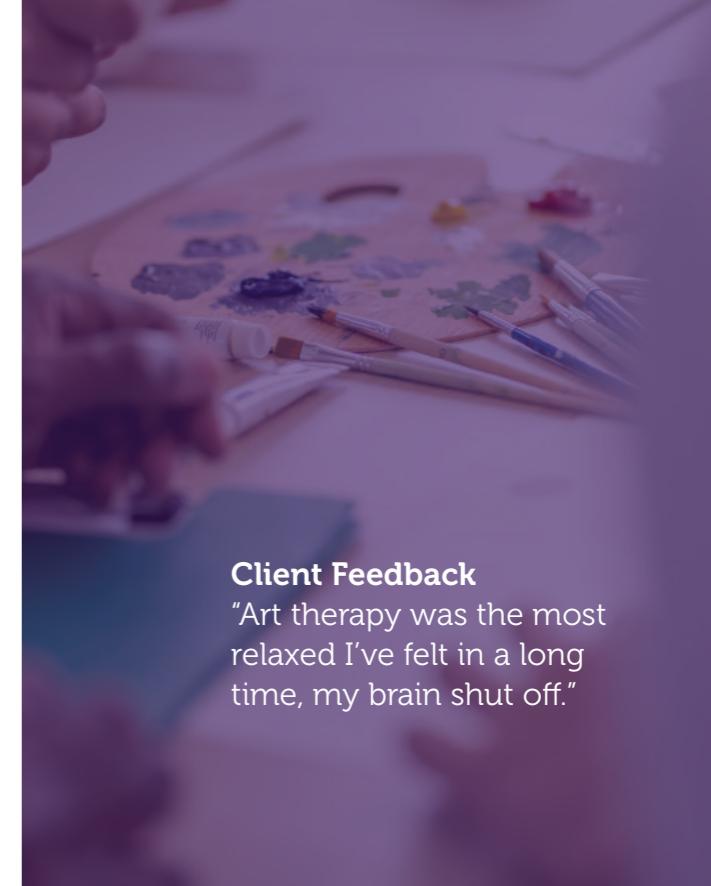
Despite setbacks – poor attendance at appointments, being cut off from Centrelink, struggling with hoarding and squalor, and ongoing experiences of domestic violence – Paige showed resilience. She gained accommodation through SALT Church in mid-2021 and, for a while, stability returned. With legal assistance, she began reconnecting with her children, something that brought her great comfort.

Unfortunately, instability continued to follow. Evictions, returning to unsafe relationships, and repeated health crises, including spider bites, pain management needs, and ongoing cancer fears, meant Paige's life was rarely settled. She often apologised for not being "a good client," but staff always recognised her genuine effort to keep trying despite overwhelming challenges.

Art workshops gave her a chance to make connections, and her grandmother and mother remained pivotal supports – stepping in at critical times, even helping her escape Richard after he threatened her life. In time, Richard was convicted and imprisoned, giving Paige some relief.

Although her DSP was not approved due to inconsistent medical reporting, Paige's story shows the complexity many women face – balancing health, trauma, poverty, unstable housing, and justice issues. She has endured cycles of violence and homelessness, but also moments of connection, resilience, and hope.

Paige's journey reminds us that progress is rarely straightforward, and that behind every "case file" is a woman navigating extraordinary hardship with remarkable strength.



### Client Feedback

"Art therapy was the most relaxed I've felt in a long time, my brain shut off."

# ROCC for Women Social and Therapeutic Workshops

**Client Feedback:**  
Through my art making and words, I wanted to express how you must hold onto hope and remember the things that can make you feel better when the darkness comes.

## Art Psychotherapy Workshops

Following the success of the program in the first half of 2024, ROCC has continued to offer art psychotherapy sessions facilitated by Suzanne Perry, a counsellor and trauma-informed art therapist and funded by Way Ahead. Suzanne also works in the community with some of our clients and provides clinical supervision for the sector.



Held in a safe and familiar environment at ROCC, the program supports clients to express and work through the issues that brought them to our service. With case worker support, sessions foster trust, connection and communication, often continuing beyond the program. Art therapy respects each individual's unique way of expressing themselves and offers a space to share what they have created and learned, leading to ongoing support.

Most participants face mental health challenges and significant barriers to accessing support, making this program an important part of our holistic approach.

## Social Event

Our clients enjoyed a beautiful social day together. The group visited Hyams Beach, taking in the stunning white sands and crystal-clear waters, and were treated to the special sight of dolphins playing just offshore. They then spent time in the serene surrounds of Booderee National Park, walking through its lush gardens and soaking in the peaceful atmosphere. The day was a welcome opportunity to connect with one another, enjoy time in nature, and share moments of laughter and relaxation.

## Jewellery Making

**Client Feedback**  
"ROCC and yourself are absolutely invaluable to me. I honestly feel completely safe in your hands and invite you into the wonderful madness of the insides of my pretty little head."

**Client Feedback**  
"If I am feeling quiet, I can be quiet. If I am feeling sociable I can be sociable. I can participate and feel respected either way."





**Client Feedback**  
"I enjoy being with other people."

### Rise Hive Wellbeing Workshops

Over October and November, we facilitated the Rise Hive Wellbeing workshops, funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR). These sessions combined creative activities, such as rock and pot painting and decorating, making a sun catcher and clay therapy. There was also guided discussions on communication, mindfulness, working well together, and practical wellbeing strategies. The workshops offered a relaxed and engaging way for participants to build skills, express creativity, and connect with one another.



### Christmas Party and Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre

In December, ROCC for Women staff and clients came together to celebrate Christmas with a special lunch at the Encore Café in the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre. For many women in our community, Christmas can be a time of loneliness and isolation, so creating an opportunity to connect, share a meal and enjoy each other's company is especially meaningful.

The day was filled with laughter, conversation and a sense of belonging. For our clients, it was a chance to feel included and supported during what can be a difficult time of year. For our case workers, it was an opportunity to strengthen relationships, share in the joy of the season, and see the positive impact of connection and community. Events like these remind us that support is not just about services, but about shared experiences that help women feel valued and less alone.

### All about Women Art Exhibition

We began the day at the Gallery in the main exhibition room, which featured a collection of photographs and paintings. Suzanne encouraged us to explore the space and select a piece of art that we felt connected to. She asked thoughtful questions around our choices, focusing on our senses, emotions, and reasons for connecting with the artwork. The discussion highlighted how art can evoke personal feelings, how we interpret the emotions of the artist, and whether we can sense what the artist was trying to portray in that moment. We

then moved into the adjoining room, which showcased the history of Chinese artwork. This included a projected story on the wall and striking visual artifacts hanging from the ceiling, offering a unique cultural perspective. The group consisted of five clients and two staff members, with Suzanne guiding the experience. After the exhibition, we enjoyed lunch together at The Lane Café, which gave everyone an opportunity to reflect and connect in a relaxed setting.

## Sexual and Women's Health Workshop

In June we held a sexual and women's health workshop for ROCC for Women clients, led by our former case worker, Liz, now a registered nurse with NSW Health specialising in women's health. The session covered important topics such as cervical and bowel screening, contraception, and peri-menopause and menopause. It provided a safe and supportive space for clients to ask questions, share experiences, and access reliable information, empowering them to take control of their health and wellbeing.

## Gambling Awareness

In February, we ran a Gambling Awareness workshop for ROCC for Women clients. The educational session aimed to increase understanding of the impact of gambling, including its potential links to intimate partner violence. A guest speaker with lived experience shared their story, highlighting how gambling can affect lives and relationships. The workshop also provided information on how to access support, including services offered by the Gambling Impact Society, helping clients feel informed and supported in seeking assistance.

## Client Feedback

"I now know about how many chemicals are in vapes and how it affects you."

## Client Feedback

"I learnt about women's health and things I didn't know about."

## Smoking and Vaping

In May, ROCC for Women hosted a Smoking and Vaping Awareness workshop, led by Connie, a Health Promotion Officer with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District. The session provided clients with information, guidance, and practical support for quitting or reducing smoking and vaping, including being provided with a starter pack containing a week's supply of patches, lozenges, gums, and mouth spray. Held in a safe and supportive environment, the workshop offered participants the opportunity to explore challenges around addiction, ask questions, and consider treatment options tailored to their needs.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

# Issues Affecting Housing

Australia's housing crisis – and what it means for the Shoalhaven

## Client Feedback:

"My caseworker gets me even though no one else does. She doesn't judge me for being different and I feel safe with her."

## Availability vs demand

Across Australia, demand for homes is outpacing supply. National commitments have set ambitious housing targets, but industry analysis suggests completions will still fall short. One visible outcome is the extremely tight rental market, with vacancy rates well below the "balanced" range.

In the Shoalhaven, the pressure is clear. Census data and local strategies show significant numbers of households in housing stress and hundreds of people experiencing homelessness. A high proportion of unoccupied dwellings used as holiday homes or short-stay accommodation further reduces availability for local residents.

## Why supply isn't meeting need

There are several overlapping reasons the supply of homes is failing to match need:

- Construction delays caused by labour shortages, rising costs, and limited capacity.
- Planning and approval processes that slow delivery, particularly of diverse, medium-density housing near jobs and services.
- Population growth and migration recovery, which have increased demand faster than supply can keep up.
- Persistently low rental vacancy rates that keep rents high and make it difficult for people to transition from crisis to stable housing.
- Limited social and affordable housing, leaving lower-income households and people leaving crisis situations without viable long-term options.

## Impacts: people and community

The shortage of housing has broad consequences across society:

- **Homelessness and insecurity:**

Women and children escaping domestic and family violence remain one of the largest groups in need of housing and homelessness services.

- **Mental health:** A significant proportion of people seeking homelessness support also

present with mental health issues yet face major barriers to securing safe accommodation.

- **Co-occurring issues:** Domestic and family

violence, alcohol and other drugs, trauma, and generational poverty often intersect, making housing instability both a symptom and a driver of further disadvantage.

- **Strain on local services:** In regional areas like the

Shoalhaven, tight markets mean longer waits and placements further away from support networks, deepening social dislocation.



Homeless week – meet and greet.

## What governments are doing now

Nationally, governments have launched new housing accords, funding mechanisms, and social housing investment initiatives to try to increase supply. There is also a renewed focus on expanding social and affordable housing, as well as supporting "Housing First" models (immediate access to permanent, safe housing without preconditions) to address chronic homelessness.

In New South Wales, reforms to planning aim to deliver more diverse and well-located housing, with

significant budget commitments to social housing and homelessness programs. Initiatives like Together Home, which has transitioned rough sleepers into long-term housing with wrap-around support, are being used to inform the next generation of Housing First policies. The state's Homelessness Strategy 2025–2035 commits to making homelessness "rare, brief and not repeated."

## What this means for Shoalhaven women and families

In the Shoalhaven, too few affordable rentals and social housing options exist to meet the rising demand. The local housing mix, shaped partly by the prevalence

of holiday housing, further restricts availability. For women experiencing domestic violence, mental health challenges, trauma, or poverty, this means access to stable, secure housing is severely limited, prolonging vulnerability and hardship. Without it, the risk of harm is prolonged, and the cycle of crisis becomes harder to break.

## What helps

- Expanding the supply of social and affordable homes locally.
- Embedding Housing First approaches with strong wrap-around supports in domestic violence, mental health, substance use, and financial wellbeing.
- Unlocking well-located, medium-density housing near services and transport, while protecting genuinely affordable rental stock.

With sustained delivery and targeted support, the Shoalhaven can reduce homelessness and help women and families rebuild safety, stability, and wellbeing. ROCC for Women is part of the solution, supporting clients navigating housing challenges by providing case management, advocacy, and pathways to safe and stable housing, ensuring women have the support they need to rebuild their lives.

## References and Further Reading

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Specialist Homelessness Services Annual Report 2023–24*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/summary>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Clients who have experienced family, domestic and sexual violence*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/clients-who-have-experienced-fdsv>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Clients with a current mental health issue*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-annual-report/contents/clients-with-a-current-mental-health-issue>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia*. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence>

National Housing Supply & Affordability Council (NHSAC). *State of the Housing System 2025*. <https://nhsac.gov.au/reports-and-submissions/state-housing-system-2025>

Prime Minister of Australia. *Meeting of National Cabinet – Working Together to Deliver Better Housing Outcomes* (Media release, August 2023). <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/meeting-national-cabinet-working-together-deliver-better-housing-outcomes>

Treasury. *National Housing Accord*. <https://treasury.gov.au/policy-topics/housing/accord>

Treasury. *Increasing Housing Supply*. <https://treasury.gov.au/policy-topics/housing/increasing-housing-supply>

SQM Research. *National Vacancy Rates – June 2025*. [https://sqmresearch.com.au/uploads/11\\_6\\_25\\_National\\_Vacancy\\_Rates\\_June\\_2025.pdf](https://sqmresearch.com.au/uploads/11_6_25_National_Vacancy_Rates_June_2025.pdf)

id.community. Shoalhaven City <https://profile.id.com.au/shoalhaven>

NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. *Diverse and Well-located Housing*. <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-11/diverse-and-well-located-housing-reforms-fact-sheet.pdf>

NSW Government. *Building Homes for NSW*. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/homes-nsw/building-homes-for-nsw>

NSW Government. *Together Home Program Overview*. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/homes-nsw/social-housing-resources/overview-of-together-home-program>

Centre for Social Impact (CSI). *Together Home Program Evaluation*. <https://www.csiedu.au/research/together-home-program-evaluation>

NSW Government. *NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025–2035*. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/homes-nsw/nsw-government-response-to-homelessness/nsw-homelessness-strategy-2025-2035>

Shoalhaven City Council. *Affordable Housing Strategy – Factsheet*. [https://doc.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/LinkGeneratorAPI/record/9405428/preview\\_latest\\_final\\_version\\_pdf](https://doc.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/LinkGeneratorAPI/record/9405428/preview_latest_final_version_pdf)

Shoalhaven City Council. *New Affordable Housing Strategy Finalised* (Media release, 2024). <https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/News-and-feedback/News-and-media/News/New-Affordable-Housing-Strategy-finalised>

Shoalhaven City Council. *Draft Affordable Housing Strategy* (Community engagement page). <https://getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/draft-affordable-housing-strategy>



### Client Feedback

"I am currently houseless, and coming to the group has been a place of real support for me during this time. For my final artwork, I made an image of the moon in its different phases of transition, which connected me to my own knowledge that feelings and experiences will change and pass through different stages—just like the moon."

## ROCC Client Service Information 2024-2025

**110**  
(KPI is 98)

**3946**

**2210**

Total Clients seen in the year.

Total number of contacts.

Total number of hours working with clients.

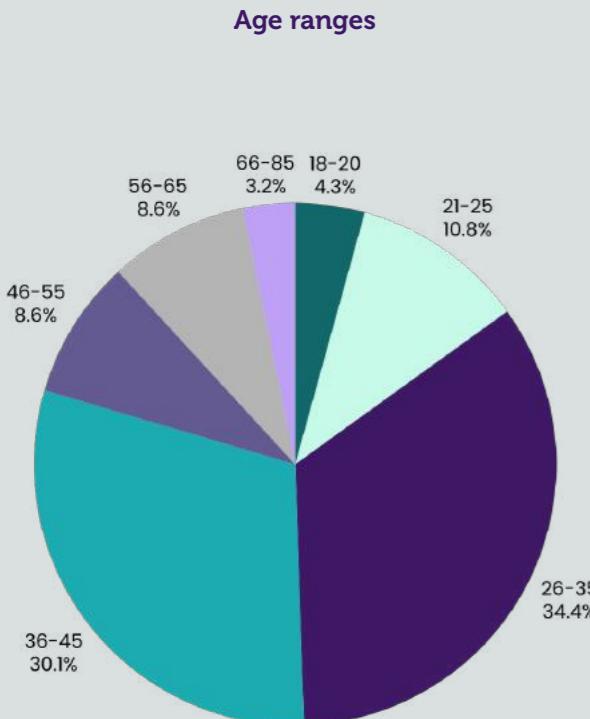
The majority of clients come from Nowra, North Nowra and Bomaderry. We have some clients in the Bay and Basin and Ulladulla areas.

At the end of the period, 59 people had an active case plan and were regularly being seen by a case manager. 49 of these clients were not homeless.

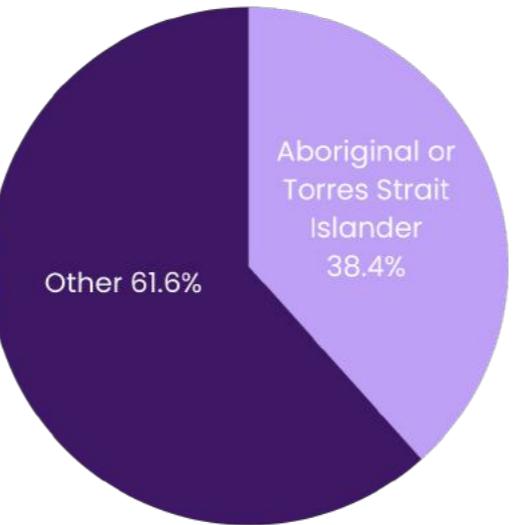
Client's solicitor

from Legal Aid said "we love you guys" and "having you at court supporting the client makes my job so much easier, it's a huge help"

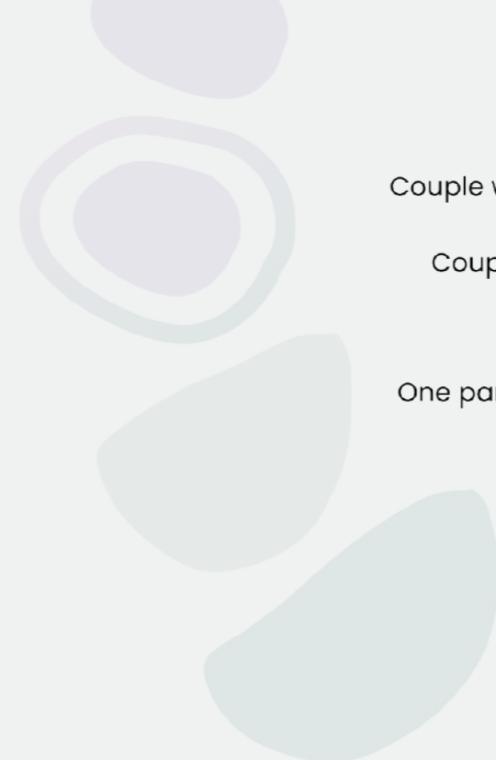
The following statistics are sourced through the Client Information System



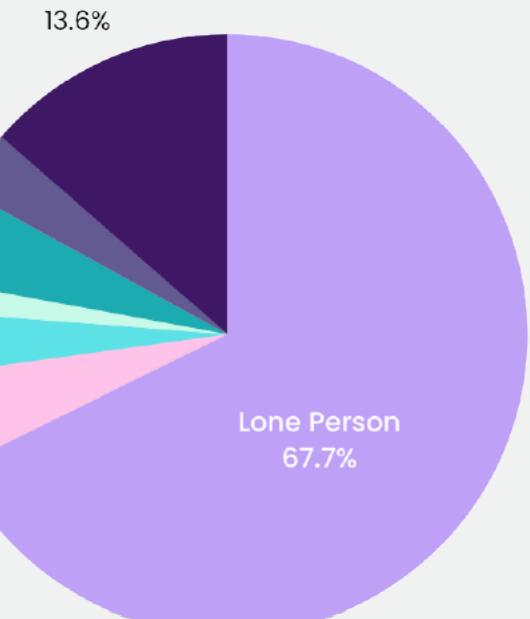
### Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander



At the end of the period, of the 59 clients with active case plan and were regularly being seen by a case manager:

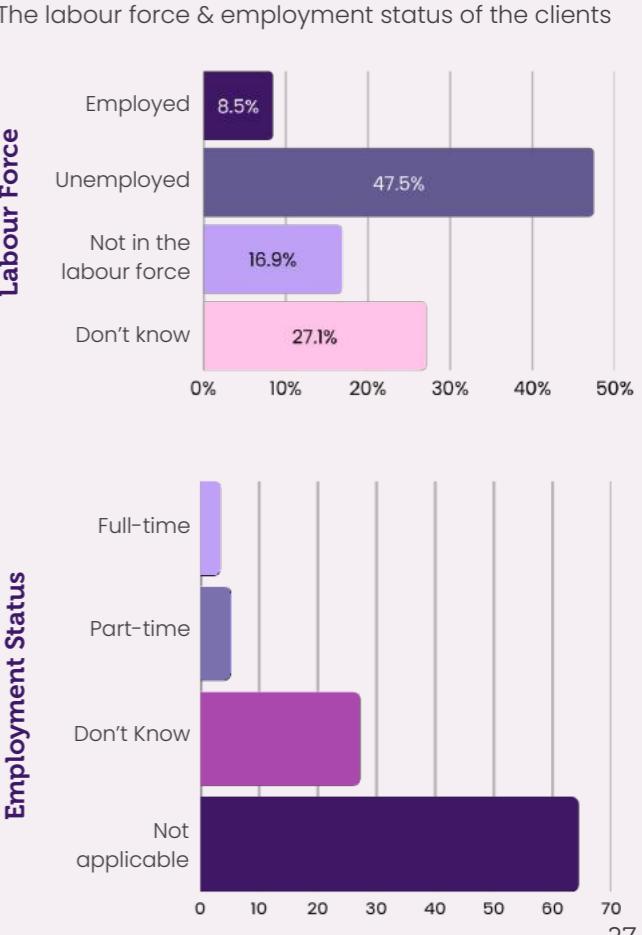
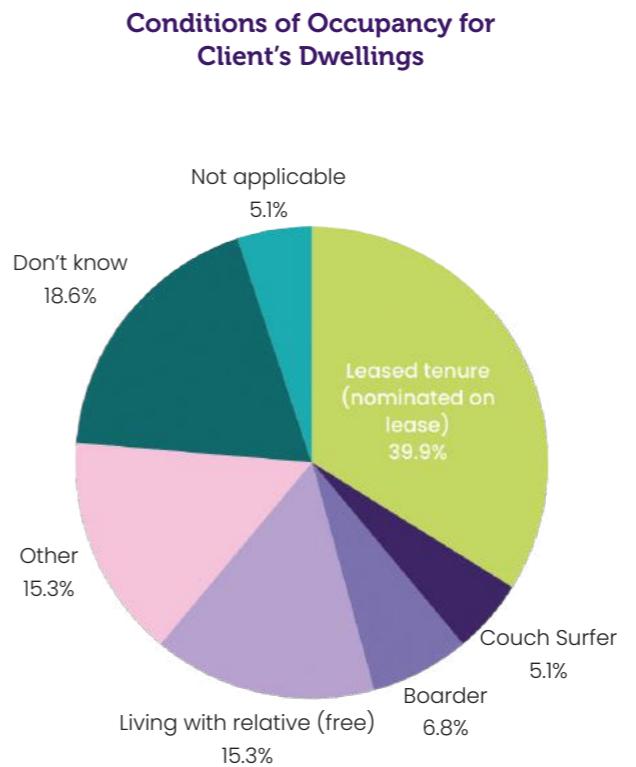
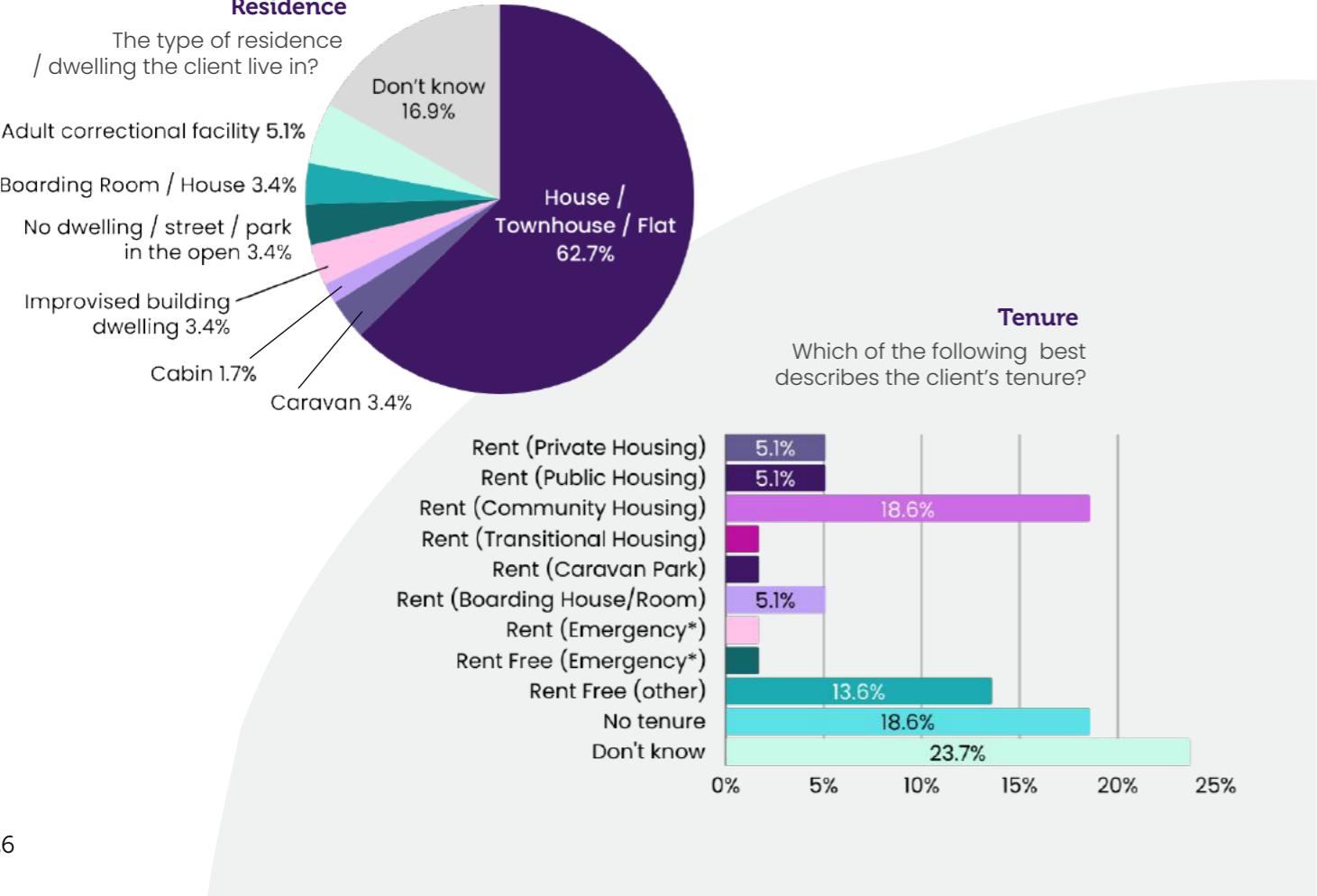


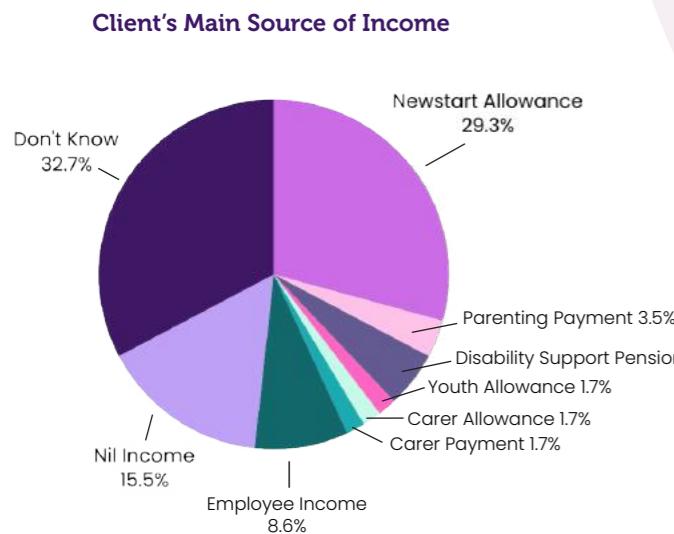
### Household Composition



### Client Feedback:

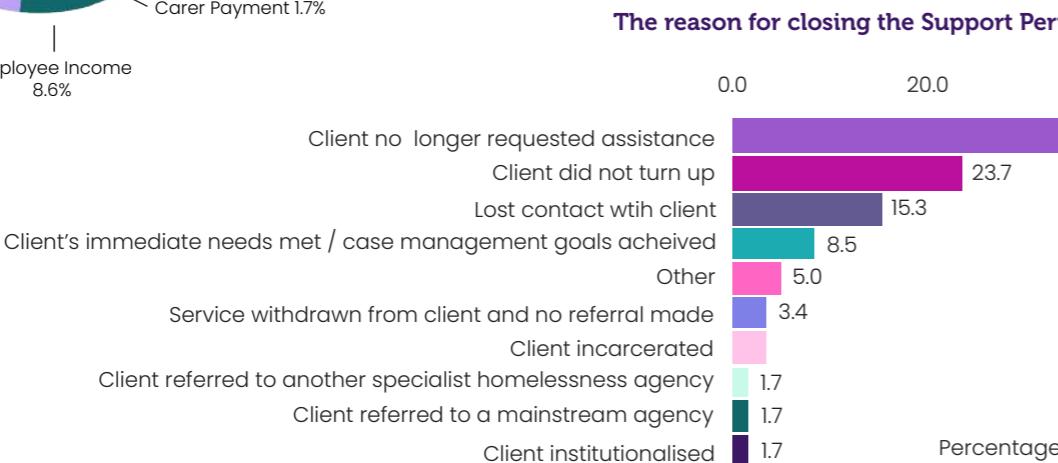
Client attended art therapy while waiting for court matter to be heard and said that it really helped to feel calm on a stressful day, and she is glad that she didn't spend the time alone at home.





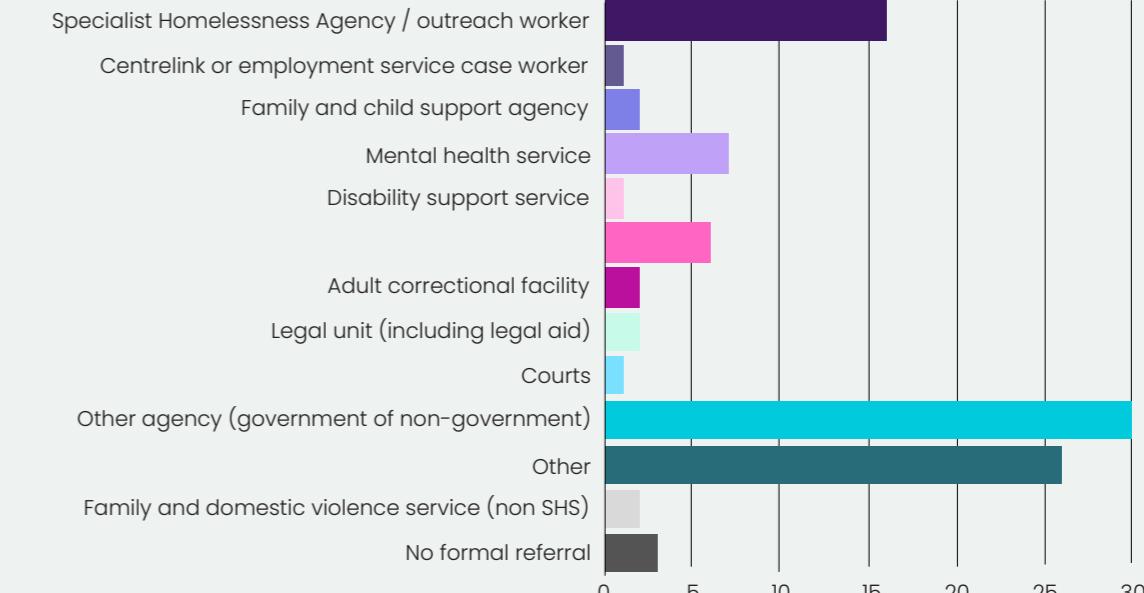
**Client Feedback**

"You are the first person in a very very long time who is there for only me and so far hasn't left. So I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It sure does mean a lot."



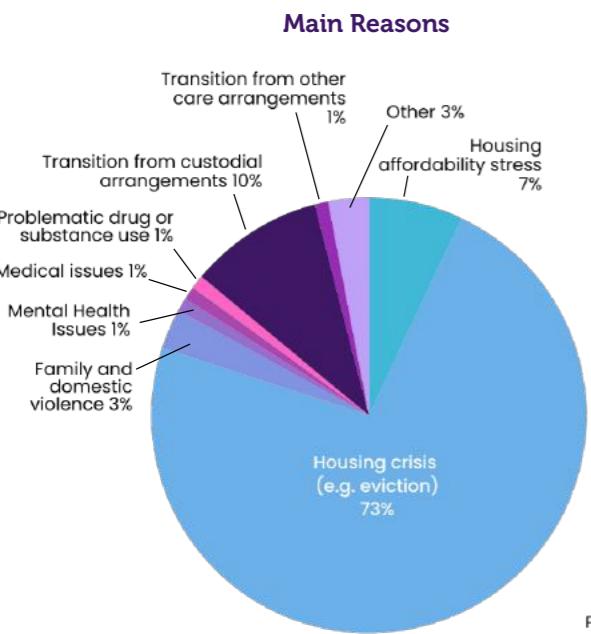
The following Statistics are sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Statistical Summary 1 July 24 - 31 March 25 concerning ROCC for Women service

### Source of Referral to ROCC

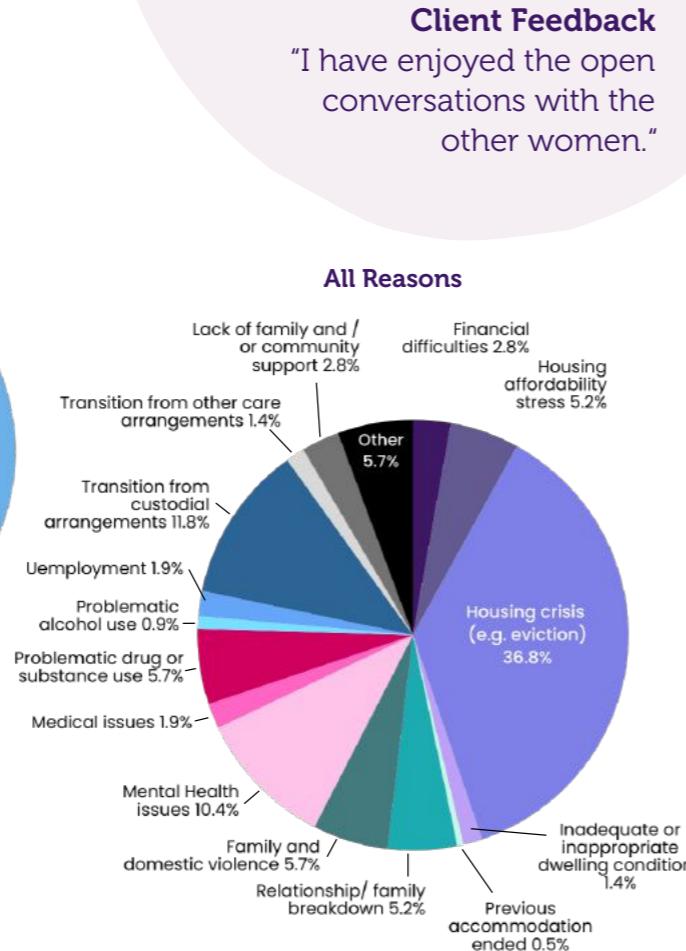


**Note:** The response 'Family and domestic violence service (non SHS)' only applies to support periods that started on or after 1 July 2019.

**60%** of clients have been diagnosed with a Mental Health condition.



At ROCC for Women, every client's story is different, but the challenges that bring women to our service are often shared. The following charts show why women reach out to us



## Client Feedback

"I have enjoyed the open conversations with the other women."

## Support Provided

Top 7 support types provided

- 1 **100% Assistance to sustain tenancy or prevent tenancy failure or eviction**
- 2 **96% Basic assistance**
- 3 **57% Advocacy and liaison**

- 4 **48% Advice and information**
- 5 **46% Assistance for trauma**
- 6 **44.5% Living skills and personal development**
- 7 **41% Family and relationship assistance**

Client created a painting as a gift for ROCC. Client said that ROCC has been helping her out so much that she wanted to gift this painting to the service as a thank you.

# SHS Client Satisfaction Survey

prepared by Community Housing Association NSW (CHIA NSW) on behalf of Homelessness NSW

The most recent survey was conducted during the period of 1 July – 16 August 2024.

**Twelve ROCC clients (15%) participated (Note limited response rate)**

The following snapshot captures the main results

**100%**

**have participated in setting case  
say, "Staff understood my needs" plan goals  
say, "Staff have made me feel accepted for who I am"**

**92%**

**say, "Staff explained how to make a complaint against the organisation"  
say, "Staff were sensitive to ethnic and cultural backgrounds"**

**91%**

**Overall satisfaction with service provided**

**83%**

**Report that their emotional state improved  
say, 'Staff referred me to other services to support my other needs'  
say, 'Staff told me about my accommodation options'**

## Types of Homelessness

### Housing and homeless Data for Shoalhaven City Council

Types of homelessness for the 429 people experiencing homelessness in Shoalhaven

People living in supported accommodation for the homeless



137

People staying temporarily with other households



111

People living in boarding houses



4

People in other temporary lodgings



23

People living in 'severely' crowded dwellings



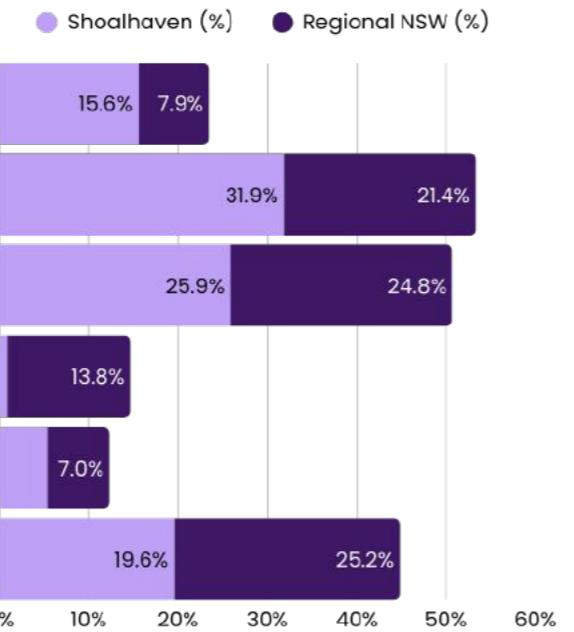
84

Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2021.  
Compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions).

**426 people homeless at Census in 2021**

**17.6% Aboriginal and/or Torres Straight Islander, 22% over 55, 44% Female**

- People living in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out
- People living in supported accommodation for the homeless
- People staying temporarily with other households
- People living in boarding houses
- People in other temporary lodgings
- People living in 'severely' crowded dwellings



## Referrals

In the 2024-2025 financial year we received referrals from the following

- Self
- SAHSSI
- Legal Aid
- Safe Shelter
- Southern Cross Housing
- YWCA
- Waminda
- ISLHD Mental Health
- Noahs Inclusion Services
- Community Corrections
- Dilwinya Correctional Facility
- SALT
- Max Employment Solutions
- Shoalhaven Mental Health Hub
- Rural Outreach Mental Health Service (ROMHS)
- Family
- Wellways
- Onedoor
- Links2Home
- Justice Health
- Campbell Page Parenting Plus
- WDVCAS
- South Coast AMS
- Anglicare

**Client Feedback:**  
 "I really appreciate you talking to me yesterday. You helped me so much. I opened my eyes. I opened my ears and I opened my heart. I appreciate you and your kindness. Thank you."

## Client Feedback

The client told caseworker that during her first art therapy workshop it was the most relaxed she can remember being without utilising Valium or alcohol.

## Staff Professional Development and Training

Mental Health First Aid	SSPAN
Consumer Complaints and Feedback	ASES
First Aid – CPR	All Events Medical
Communication	ASES
The Scope of Assessment	ASES
Gambling Workshop	Gambling Impact Society
WDO New Regulations Compliance	ASES
Recommissioning Workshop	Homelessness NSW
Quitting Smoking and Vaping	ALHD
Mastering Influential Leadership	ACWA/ CCWT
Mastering Feedback Essential Skills for Leadership	ACWA/ CCWT
Roles and Responsibilities of WDOs Workshop	NSW Legal Aid
Sexual Health Talk	ALHD
Mastering Risk Assessment and Financial Leadership	ACWA/ CCWT

It left No Marks – Non Fatal Strangulation	Shoalhaven Womens Health Centre
Motivational Interviewing	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Complex Trauma and Mental Health	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Understanding and Responding to Domestic Violence	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
The therapeutics of Trauma Informed Care	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Understanding Aboriginal Cultural Awareness	Centre for Training in Social Housing
Establishing a Culturally Safe Environment for Aboriginal Staff	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Unpacking the complexities of hoarding and squalor	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Managing Aggressive and Violent behaviours	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Trauma and Drug Dependence	DCJ/ ACWA/ CCWT
Measuring Social Impact Data	UNSW Centre for Social Impact

## Areas of Focus for 2025-2026

We are greatly looking forward to the year ahead as we continue working alongside women in our community and increasing the impact of ROCC for Women.

**F**eedback from the 2024 SHS Client Satisfaction Survey (with input from 12 ROCC clients) identified three key areas for improvement: educational opportunities, employment opportunities, and financial stability. These will shape several of our priorities in the coming year.

With the support of Coolaroo Foundation funding, we will introduce a series of educational and employment-based workshops in partnership with Kiama and Shoalhaven Community College. These will include training in budgeting, job search skills, hospitality, and computer literacy. To further enhance employability, we will also be taking clients to Dress for Success sessions, where women can access professional attire suitable for job interviews, commencing employment, or attending court.

To address financial challenges, we will deliver a program of "Money Matters" workshops with Financial Counselling Services NSW, covering topics such as making money last until payday, digital banking, credit

risks, loan sharks, tenancy, and planning for the future. Alongside this, we will continue to provide individual referrals to financial counselling.

Building confidence, wellbeing, and resilience in women remains a core priority. Our long-term, client-centred, trauma-informed approach enables women to work towards multiple goals at their own pace. In 2025-2026 we will expand our wellbeing supports through group programs on personal boundaries and healthy lifestyles, facilitated by a psychologist from Sustainable Lives, and by strengthening cultural connection through on-country experiences and art therapy delivered by Aunty Lisa in partnership with Kiama and Shoalhaven Community College. We will also continue to explore connections with organisations able to tailor content specifically to the needs of our cohort, ensuring programs remain relevant and practical. In addition, clients will be able to access free workshops on health and wellbeing matters through NSW Health, complementing our other initiatives.

- In addition to client-focused initiatives, ROCC for Women has identified several organisational objectives for the year ahead:
- Developing our next Strategic Plan (2026 onward) to guide the future direction of the organisation.
- Securing our Specialist Homelessness Service funding with DCJ for the next five-year contract period.
- Increasing support to women on our wait list, providing early engagement before allocation to a case worker.
- Strengthening relationships with funding providers and clearly communicating the outcomes of their investment.
- Enhancing our data collection and analysis systems beyond contractual requirements, to better measure impact and drive continuous improvement.
- Updating policies and procedures to ensure alignment with ASES accreditation standards ahead of re-accreditation in late 2026, while also reflecting best practice governance and compliance.
- Building strong partnerships locally and connecting with organisations nationally and internationally undertaking similar work, to share knowledge and learnings.
- Continuing to enact actions within our Reconciliation Action Plan and deepen engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.
- Reviewing expenditure to identify efficiencies, ensuring that as much of our resources as possible are directed towards maximising impact for women in our community.

As ROCC for Women builds on the achievements of the past year, we remain committed to promoting the dignity, safety, and wellbeing of women in our community. Through strong partnerships, client-centred initiatives, and rigorous governance, we aim to support more women on their journey toward stability and empowerment.

### Client Feedback

"Since arriving in Nowra I have not received the same amount of support from anyone else as when the caseworker became my worker. If the caseworker had come into my life earlier I believe I would be in a much better place by now. If she (and ROCC) had been in my life from the beginning I would have received the support I needed. She is the only person in all of Nowra I have been able to connect with, fully trust and feel like I was never judged for anything I did no matter how bad I made myself feel."

### Client Feedback

One client commented after the art therapy workshop that, "This was the most relaxed I've felt in a long time, my brain shut off. I really enjoyed the session."



This artwork, featured on the front cover of this report, was created by Maree Lawrence, Team Leader ROCC.



Artwork based on the ROCC logo - created by one of ROCC's Clients in an art workshop. This now hangs on the wall in the ROCC office.

**Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd trading as ROCC for Women**

**Address:** PO Box 449

**Tel:** 02 4444 1103

[www.roccforwomen.org.au](http://www.roccforwomen.org.au)

*ROCC for Women is a not-for-profit Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) with funding provided by NSW Department of Communities and Justice*



This Annual Report has been designed by WebDesign Solutions NSW [webdesignnsw.com.au](http://webdesignnsw.com.au)

All Content & Images © Copyright ROCC for Women 2025