Welcome to the new look Hold the Line

I hope that each and every one of you had a peaceful and happy start to the New Year.

I spent the beginning of the year on the Central Coast at Macmasters Beach surrounded by all of our family, including 7 energised grandchildren between the ages of 9 years and 5 months old. Subsequently not a lot of surfing for me however, this was replaced with lots and lots of sandcastles and shell collecting! All in all a delightful start to 2016.

Thank you for returning to Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury (H2H) this year. We look forward to working with you all again and having another important year supporting people in crisis. 2016 took off at great speed and after a very short break over the Christmas period all of our services were active and busy.

The year to date (among other things) has seen:
- Our Telephone Crisis Supporters (TCSs) reaching new records in the number of calls answered. Our H2H volunteers answered over 4,000 calls in January and our paid overnight TCSs answered over 6,000 – thank you to everyone concerned for this truly amazing result
- Our shops and book fairs raising more funds than ever before – another truly amazing result
- A development application approved to build a large carport type structure at the rear of our Asquith shop for additional warehouse space
- A lease approved for a new Lifeline shop at Waitara
- Valuable work with Lifeline Australia around Lifeline’s national strategic direction

Thank you to everyone for such an exciting start to the year and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in the weeks ahead.

Wendy Carver
Chief Executive Officer
Many of you will know, there has been a considerable amount of time spent looking for a solution to our data collection needs over the past 12 months. During that time advice has been sought from external experts as well as consultation with internal stakeholders to discuss the immediate needs and desires moving forward.

After thorough investigations into numerous software packages and platforms, a decision has been made to go with Salesforce as a whole of business data management solution for Lifeline H2H.

We are aiming to be live at approximately April/May this year and once operational, Salesforce will enable us to:

- Collect meaningful data
- Present evidence based outcomes
- Show the impact we have in a more meaningful way
- Be more attractive to funding bodies
- Report accurately on service histories
- Better manage our relationships with donors and event partners

This is a quantum leap into a modern and efficient IT space for H2H and one that will save time, better enable staff and help present H2H as the professional, effective, achieving and innovative centre it is.

Over the Christmas break, a few hard working volunteers gave their time to paint the reception area.

While the changes may not be that obvious in our picture here, the:
- New paint
- New notice board
- New plants and planter boxes
- Cushions
- Air conditioning

have all made a large difference. We have received several lovely comments from visitors, including one from Pete Shimgel, Lifeline CEO who came to visit our centre recently, and commented on how welcoming and relaxing he felt the space was.

Thank you so much to everyone that gave their time to help make this change.
The Bobbin Head Cycle Classic, which takes place in just over 2 weeks’ time, needs more volunteers.

To be specific, they need 400 marshals, 40 drink-stop assistants and 60 volunteers for their various support teams, such as logistics, signage, the BBQ, hospitality, Karuah Oval set-up etc. Just a couple of hours on the day of the event (or prior) would be hugely appreciated.

Can you support Lifeline by volunteering at the event? Or do you know someone - friends, family or colleagues - who might be able to do so?

Volunteers don’t need specialist skills or knowledge – just a genuine desire to help and, (for marshals), some basic road sense and road rules awareness. Beyond that, volunteers are given all the information and training that they will need.


This world-class cycling event is a vitally important fund-raiser for Lifeline H2H, which is the primary Charity partner (ie. beneficiary) of the event. Please support us, and the Bobbo, by giving a few hours of your time if you possibly can. You can see more about the event at [www.bobbinheadcycleclassic.com.au](http://www.bobbinheadcycleclassic.com.au)

Volunteering at the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic is an incredible experience – you don’t realise how much fun you’ll have until you do it, as these four Lifeline H2H team-members below found when they volunteered at last year’s event.

**Quotes from some volunteers…..**

"It's wonderful to be a part of such a significant fundraiser for an important cause - the whole event is brilliantly organised and wonderful fun"

**Connie**

"The Bobbo is a really great community event. The best part of it for me was cheering everyone on, encouraging them and then receiving their grateful waves, thank you’s and good-humoured banter”

**Olivia**

"It was so good to see broad grins from the riders as we clapped and cheered them as they passed. Many called out “thanks!”. It was all great fun, easy, and well organised”

**Adrienne**

"It was very rewarding to catch up with some of the riders at the bbq afterwards, and to hear their stories about the race and why they were keen to participate. This put the whole thing in perspective – the event is all about putting time and effort into saving lives”

**Merlyne**
This year we will be running 2 Crisis Support Workplace Training (CSWT training) courses.

The February course has just started with 32 students and the next course will begin in July. I would like to once again thank all the accredited crisis supporters who assist in the training through facilitating and mentoring.

I came across this quote from Elizabeth Andrew and it reminded me of our telephone crisis supporters– Thank you for having the heart!

**DV-Alert**
We are continuing to deliver the nationally sponsored 2-day DV-Alert program covering Domestic and Family Violence to front line workers. Our workshop in March is fully subscribed and we have been asked to do 2 extra workshops before June. With the increase in government funding for workshops we are looking at an additional 7 workshops in the next financial year to be delivered by Lifeline H2H.

**Mental Health First Aid Training**
This 2 day course is now part of the CSWT Training so it is run 3 – 4 times a year by Ceiny Maybury and Jan Blenkinsop. There are also spaces open for people from the community to attend or if any crisis supporters would like a refresher.

Jan has also delivered 3 Mental Health Aware Training sessions to the tax office, Suncorp and Atrium. This involves e-learning and 4 hours face to face training.

**ASIST**
All of our crisis supporters are now trained in ASIST 11. It has been a massive task to meet the criteria of having all crisis supporters re-trained by the end of 2015. Well done to all of you and also to Ceiny and her ASIST trainers for achieving this task.

For any queries regarding training, please call 9498 8805 or contact:

Rosanne Petters;  
rosanne.petters@lifelineh2h.org.au or

Jan Blenkinsop;  
jan.blenkinsop@lifelineh2h.org.au
Reach Depression/Bipolar Group – Day Program

The R.E.A.C.H group is a 9-week educational support group program developed by the Black Dog Institute for individuals with a mood disorder. It focuses on strategies for managing your illness and increasing well-being.

- 16 February – 12 April 2016
- 3 May - 28 June 2016
- 26 July – 20 September 2016

Men’s Anger Management Program – Evening Program

The Men’s Anger Management Program is a Wednesday evening 8-week program providing a supportive environment in which the men learn skills to effectively manage their own reactive angry, and improve their communication and relationship capacities.

- 4 May – 22 June 2016

Anger Management Program – Evening Program

Wednesday evening 8-week program providing a supportive environment in which the men and woman can learn skills to effectively manage their own reactive angry, and improve their communication and relationship capacities.


Hoarding Treatment Program – Day Program

The Hoarding Treatment program includes a 15 week group program and individual therapy sessions. It is for people who can’t stop accumulating possessions and have persistent difficulty parting with their possessions.

- 9 March – 15 June 2016
- 8 August–14 November 2016

Gambling Support Group – Evening Program

A 6-week group for people who are seeking support to reduce their gambling. This is an evening program run on Wednesday:

- 17 February – 30 March 2016

Suicide Bereavement Support Group – Evening Program

A 8-week group for anyone who is bereaved by suicide. This is an evening program run on Thursday:

- 10 March – 28 April 2016

H2H WELCOMES NEW INTERN
JILL MURPHY

It’s always interesting finding out how other people see Lifeline.

“After a period of working full time, doing a number of different jobs in the horse racing and sporting industry, Jill felt the time had come to review her various options and decide on a study/career path. She settled on Clinical Psychology.

“I’m here to learn,” she continues. “For me personally, being here at Lifeline is an incredible opportunity. I am passionate about working with people, so I am hoping this internship will give me some exposure both to one-on-one counselling of individual clients, and to group work.

There’s a huge amount of experience around me here, and I want to learn as much as I can while I’m here. So whatever comes my way, I’m sure I’ll enjoy it and I’ll learn a lot from it.”
The Gambling Help service at Lifeline H2H continues to provide face-to-face counselling (personal and financial) for problem gamblers, family members and friends adversely impacted by gambling. The service is FREE, funded by the Responsible Gambling Fund (RGF). In addition, a support group for problem gamblers is provided bi-annually and the first Gambling Help Support Group for 2016 started on 17 February 2016.

Problem gamblers experience significant shame and denial about their gambling. It is often a well-kept secret. As a consequence, less than 10% of problem gamblers seek help. One client recently described how he watched friends place small bets at the TAB, telling them not to waste their money. Meanwhile, he was placing large bets on his smartphone under the table without anyone knowing.

So, how do we encourage problem gamblers to seek help?

Stuart MacDonald, from Lifeline H2H’s social media team has worked with Jeanette Svehla, Gambling Help manager, David Hollier, Gambling Help counsellor and group facilitator and ‘Cliff’, problem gambler to create a series of u-tube videos. The u-tube videos aim to demystify the help-seeking process and can be viewed on You-tube at:

Gambling Help Counselling:
https://youtu.be/Ua9kcuh1SI0

Relapse:
https://youtu.be/GWgf_0cbYR0

Support Groups:
https://youtu.be/Vt_-aMoAW_c

Our financial counsellors are again very busy. Referrals are made to us by a large number of community organisations—banks, hospitals, Centrelink, AFSA, refuges, courts, police, gambling support agencies, parole officers, and past clients. Consequently, our clients come from a very diverse range of socio economic groups and have varying issues. As financial counsellors we need to have an increasing amount of knowledge at our fingertips.

We are very fortunate to have a new financial counsellor, Paul in training.

“We are extremely lucky to have Richard Brading, Senior Solicitor at Wesley Mission at the end of an email or the phone. His knowledge about family law, bankruptcy and gambling is amazing and he is always happy to give us guidance and support”.

Paul will be completing six month training with FCAN and will then start sitting in with counsellors and their clients. It takes an enormous amount of time to give support and on the job training to new financial counsellors. We look forward to welcoming Paul to our team later in the year.
The New Year is off to a busy start with a large number of donations coming in over the holiday period keeping the volunteers busy, cleaning, sorting, pricing and packing.

Last year record results were achieved at all the sales, including the final December Fiction Sale ($1 and $2) which made $13,000, an amazing increase of 50% on 2014’s result.

This was a great achievement, which was assisted by wonderful weather, the lovely leafy environment and the ability to display books in marquees in both carparks as well as in the hall. As a result the Lindfield depot total sales in 2015 exceeded $200,000 for the first time in our history.

The support at the sales by our volunteers was fantastic, which means the workload is shared and our overheads remain minimal which means the majority of money raised goes to Lifeline’s vital services.

With the increase in book donations we are now able to donate books to other charities, which include: books for schools in Zimbabwe; Paint the Town REaD (books for children to have read to them when they are in hospital waiting rooms, visiting goals, government agencies and the like and then take them home); and Life Without Barriers (books for asylum seekers and refugees). Life Without Barriers has developed a small reading nook at their centre for clients to enjoy (pictured).

Last week we also gave some books to a charity for the homeless in Sydney.
Brendan Cowell Visits H2H

Charismatic stage and screen actor, award-winning playwright, director and author Brendan Cowell dropped into our Gordon centre just before Christmas to say hi and thank-you to a cross-section of our telephone crisis supporters past and present.

“We were fortunate and privileged to have Brendan take time out from his very busy schedule to meet our team and congratulate them on the work they do. Immediately afterwards, Brendan went into one of our counselling rooms to record a video message promoting our TCS Training.

There’s nothing like a celebrity endorsement to inject rocket-propulsion into an important Lifeline cause such as this TCS training announcement. If you haven’t yet seen the video, click on the link below or copy and paste the following https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAuiTo7hIRA into your web browser.”
Our lovely Pennant Hills Lifeline store was inundated with donations in early January. Gold and silver jewellery, quality homewares, vintage dining tables, designer shoes and handbags... A bumper New Year crop!

Our Pennant Hills volunteers worked like Trojans to get all these post-Christmas donations out on the shop floor. Shop manager Sophie took this picture of Monday volunteers (left to right) Zita, Caitlin and Arielle pricing clothing donations.

I must admit I never realised pricing could be so much fun! But then there’s always fun to be had at your local Lifeline store ....

Psst....Watch out for some news on a brand new retail shop.

There is a small team working behind the scenes trying to secure new and exciting premises that will continue to grow our successful retail business

What a gorgeous couple!

And just to show that our Pennant Hills workers really know how to relax too, here’s Pennant Hills staff member Mai-Anh and her husband Justin, photographed on the red carpet at the opening night of Opera Australia’s ‘The Pearl Fishers’ at the Sydney Opera House in January.

(PHoto by Katje Ford shared with thanks from Opera Australia)
At the end of January, our longest-serving team-member finally decided to call it a day, after an incredible 35 years of dedicated service to our organisation in a variety of roles. Octogenarian Eileen Field has finally retired. But what a glorious and inspirational Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury career she has had!

Eileen joined Lifeline as a telephone counsellor in the early 1980s. After nearly two decades of service on our phones, Eileen received a tap on the shoulder one day from Sheila Knight, who at that time was a Lifeline H2H board member & telephone counsellor trainer. Lifeline H2H needed urgent help at their Asquith Shop and that was when Eileen received the tap.

“I was roped in!” says Eileen today. “But I admit that I was very happy to be roped in. It looked like an exciting challenge – and what an understatement that turned out to be. It took us nine months just to get that shop clean.”

“At that time the staff in the shop were very set in their ways, with fixed ideas about what an op shop should be and what it should sell. I wanted to make the shop relevant and appealing to a much wider cross-section of our local community. To do that, our standards needed to be higher. “Would you yourself wear that?” I would ask our staff. If the answer was No, I’d say, “then we shouldn’t be trying to sell it!”

Today she looks back on her more than fifteen years at Asquith with pride and pleasure. “Doing that job provided the most wonderful opportunity to see people grow,” she explains.

“The need for Lifeline may have changed over the years, with more and more people coming to Lifeline for help these days. But what is unchanged is that Lifeline is a caring organisation. It really cares about people. And it’s a very special place. For me it always has been, and it always will be.”

And Eileen, you are a very special person. Lifeline has been immensely privileged to have you in our team for such a big slice of your life.

“Eileen is simply one of the most generous, giving, good-hearted people I have ever known,” says our Lifeline H2H Retail Manager Bob Williamson. “She is a legend, and deservedly so. For so long she has been the heart and soul of our volunteer work force. And for so many of us, she has been the go-to person for just about everything!

Thank you Eileen

Eileen and husband John today