

Annual General Meeting 2024-2025

Tuesday 11 November 2025



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Pregnancy Counselling & Education Services Limited Annual Report 2024 - 2025

Introduction

It is with pleasure that I present the Annual Report for Pregnancy Counselling and Education Services Limited (PCESL), which operates the nonprofit entity known as Pregnancy Counselling Link (PCL).

I would like to begin by expressing my gratitude to Jane Pires, our former Chair, who stepped down from the Board in April 2025. Working alongside Jane during a time of significant organisational change was both a privilege and a pleasure. Her steady guidance made a lasting impact, and we very much appreciate the support she continues to offer PCL and its mission.

In the past 12 months the Board has been future focused, seeking to identify and action opportunities aligned to our purpose while building financial sustainability. We are committed to growing and extending the skills base of our own members to nurture and grow PCL, drive strong donor stewardship and secure new funding partners.

We rely on the leadership of our Executive Officer (Clinical Director) and the PCL team to enact our mission and purpose through the services we provide, and they never disappoint. I am excited at the path we are on and am grateful to have been offered the opportunity to take up the role of Chair as we enter this next chapter for PCL.

I look forward to sharing this journey with you.

Lindy Fentiman
Board Chair



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Our Board



Lindy Fentiman

Lindy Fentiman is a senior executive leader with over 30 years' experience across the health, education, and community services sectors. Her professional career began as a registered nurse and has been driven by a passion for improving the lives of others. With a Masters in Leadership, Lindy is known for her collaborative, values-driven approach and community-aligned solutions that reflect local strengths and aspirations. She currently serves as Board Chair and is a member of the Fundraising Committee.



Margaret Vider

Margaret Vider is an outstanding health executive with a stellar career in nursing and administration spanning more than 20 years. Previous board appointments include national health care committees and local community health care providers. Since joining PCL in 2005, Margaret has served as both a member and Chair of the Board. She has been instrumental in stewarding the changes made by PCL to its governance structure in 2023 and is currently the Company Chair. Margaret is often heard to say although the world has changed, the focus and intent of the service remains unchanged.



Tom Howard

Tom Howard is a Chartered Accountant (CA, GAICD, B.Comm, B.Econ) and a specialist tax advisor who assists public and private groups with their complex taxation matters. Tom is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and chairs the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee.



Mary Masson

Mary brings over 40 years' experience in surgical nursing, health management, and risk management. Mary brings deep clinical insight and leadership to the Board, driven by a strong commitment to supporting women facing challenges in relationships, parenting, and reproductive health. Her work reflects a lifelong dedication to safe, compassionate care and giving back to the community. Mary is also a member of the Fundraising Committee.



Mathiska Anenden

Mathishka Anenden has significant experience working within the family support and community mental health sector across a variety of roles from service delivery, program management, operations, and strategy. Mathishka is an affiliate member of the Governance Institute of Australia and is currently pursuing qualifications in Law, also a member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee.



Sharon Wood

Sharon Wood (CFRE, MFIA) is a highly experienced and passionate leader in the philanthropic and fundraising sectors. She currently serves as the Head of Fundraising at Endeavour Foundation, where she has also held the role of Philanthropy Manager. With a strong background in developing and implementing fundraising strategies Sharon has a proven track record of building major donor relationships, securing corporate and community partnerships, and leading teams to achieve significant social change. Sharon chairs the Fundraising Committee.



Kersty Christensen

Kersty Christensen is a seasoned executive with extensive leadership experience in Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and Human Resources. Kersty is committed to fostering safe, inclusive, and effective workplace environments, with a focus on aligning organisational strategy with people-centric practices. Passionate about maternal mental health, Kersty is particularly motivated by the opportunity to advocate for and support women and families during critical times of transition. Kersty is also a member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee.

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Our Purpose

Pregnancy Counselling Link (PCL) is a specialist counselling service that supports women and families through pregnancy, birth, and early parenting. Established in 1973, we have delivered more than 50 years of care, building trusted relationships during some of life's most vulnerable stages.

Our mission is to enhance the lives of women and their families by providing counselling and education to anyone affected by pregnancy and reproductive-health related matters. All our services are completely free of charge. We are powered by the generosity of our community, supporters and funding partners who share our vision.

Our counselling service provides access to expert support. Our staff are tertiary-qualified and skilled in trauma-informed, person-centred nondirective practice. We walk beside some of the most vulnerable people facing social and cultural disadvantage as they navigate perinatal mental health challenges, domestic and family violence, grief and loss, fertility and the complex transition to early parenthood.

We also provide a range of community services including soft entry groups called Koala Joeys where people sharing similar journeys can talk and support one another, meeting weekly. The program focuses on enhancing children's literacy and social/emotional intelligence and the development of secure attachment between caregivers and their children through music, play and storytelling.

Governance

Over the past 12 months, the Board has navigated a period of significant transition and strategic development, marked by leadership changes, governance reviews, and a renewed focus on service delivery and financial sustainability.

We began with notable shifts in Board membership. Jane Pires stepped down from her role as Chair, and Jane Pennissi resigned as Company Secretary. Their contributions were formally acknowledged and the Board expressed deep appreciation for their service. In response to these departures, Kersty Christensen was appointed to the Board, bringing valuable expertise in workplace health and safety, industrial relations, and human resources across the nonprofit and private sectors. The Company Secretary position remains vacant with the search for a strong candidate underway.

Amid these changes, the Board remained focused on strategic priorities. A dedicated strategy session was held in March 2025 to recalibrate our direction and ramp up planned fundraising.

Service demand has remained high, with a persistent waitlist reflecting ongoing community needs. The organisation continues to respond to complex social challenges, including cost-of-living pressures, housing instability, and rising rates of domestic violence. The client base has grown increasingly complex, with higher acuity needs and 64% of families identifying as culturally and linguistically diverse.

Financial management has also been a central focus. The Board agreed to transition the company's financial year from a calendar year ending 31 December to a fiscal year ending 30 June. This change will take effect from 1 January 2025, necessitating two Annual General Meetings in 2025.

Governance processes were strengthened through a review of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee (FARM) Terms of Reference, the Risk Register and the Board Charter. These updates ensure continued alignment with best practice and support the Board's oversight responsibilities. Recognising the importance of capacity building, it was agreed to revisit the Board's onboarding program to better equip new Directors.

Financial Performance

Pregnancy Counselling and Education Services Limited (PCESL), a nonprofit company limited by guarantee (ABN 78 025 273 714), operates the entity known as Pregnancy Counselling Link (PCL).

The audited financials and this report represent a 12-month operating period (1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025) as required by the Australian Charities and Not for profit Commission.

It should be noted that PCL previously had a 31 December end to its fiscal year, however, this arrangement was proving commercially difficult, and the decision was made to transition back to a July - June fiscal year. A "one-off" 18-month financial report up to 31 December 2024 was completed along with the ACNC Annual Information Statement requirement for July 2023 to December 2024.

Financial statements covering the period from 1 January through 30 June 2025 have also been prepared, completing the transition to the new fiscal year. Pleasingly, PCL recorded a small surplus during this period and the balance sheet continues to show a healthy level of net assets.



Funding Partners

Following our incorporation, PCL adopted a strategic focus on diversifying its revenue streams. Our services are in extremely high demand and grant funding has not kept pace with the rising cost of living in recent years. Ongoing employment costs are a result of our obligations under the SCHADS Award and are a fixed cost to our organisation, given that we cannot serve the community without our team of specialist counsellors, administration and managerial staff.

While PCL received \$388,831 (ex GST) in funding from the Queensland Government's Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety - Targeted Family Support Program (2023-2028) and \$115,000 (ex GST) from the Brisbane South Primary Health Network - Supporting Recovery Service (2024-2026) during the 24-25 FY, we are actively seeking additional sources of income to ensure the organisation continues to provide crucial services to women and families in the long-term.

Finance, Risk and Compliance

The FARM Committee oversees our financial obligations, compliance and accreditation status. Key decisions and actions completed during the 24-25 FY include a review of current pay points, backpay entitlements, superannuation and leave loading for staff employed under the SCHADS Award, with legal advice provided by HR Partners. While current liabilities, including backpay, were able to be covered, leave accruals will be monitored as a future financial and wellbeing concern with staff encouraged to take regular periods of leave going forward.

A comprehensive review of the Risk Register has commenced including structure, reporting frequency, and risk ratings. Cyber risk remains a priority. Staff and Board training on Privacy Act reforms and cyber safety is planned, and a Data Breach Response Plan and Privacy Policy review are underway.

Budget Planning for 25-26 FY is in progress with a draft budget completed for review. The process has been delayed slightly while we awaited the outcome of the backpay review.

In February 2025, PCL successfully completed its Human Services Quality Framework mid-term maintenance assessment with no noted non-conformities.

Fundraising

The new 3 year Fundraising Strategy (2025 - 2028) developed by the Fundraising Committee and endorsed by the Board in October 2024, is designed to build a sustainable and diverse revenue model. The primary objective is to raise \$300,000 per year within three years, establishing a robust financial foundation for PCL's future growth and service delivery. The plan details the key strategies, activities, and financial forecasts across multiple fundraising pillars, including individual giving, events, grants, and corporate partnerships.

To date, these strategies have resulted in donations equalling \$12,812 raised in part by our first ever tax appeal and \$7,555 raised at the annual Mother's Day Morning Tea event. Changes to the PCL web site in late 2024 also enabled a direct link to an online giving platform to drive our regular giving program.

Service Delivery

Women who receive our services are often faced with compounding disadvantages. Many are navigating pregnancy or early parenthood while carrying the weight of trauma, violence, homelessness, economic and cultural disadvantage, or social isolation. Our approach is grounded in this compassionate understanding, and we deliver with safety, trust, and recovery in mind.

Removing barriers to access is something that we tirelessly commit to. We know that circumstance can play a critical factor in getting support, and with this in mind, PCL delivers services in easily accessible formats, including in-person, by phone, and online, so no matter how a person wants or needs to connect, they can find us with ease.

In this 12-month period, the team delivered support to 495 clients across the two funding streams, including a mix of individual counselling and Koala Joey's group sessions. More importantly, 97% of clients reported an improved quality of life, and 99% of clients believed the program supported their relationship with their child.

Service Partners

We truly partner with other services to deliver expert support in response to changing needs and emerging trends. Through this collaboration, we know that over 30% of PCL clients report domestic violence in their current or past relationship, around 20% disclose childhood sexual abuse

(a factor linked with increased pregnancy complications, fear, and stress), 40% of families who access PCL identify as culturally and linguistically diverse, with many facing additional systemic barriers and women in Logan (Queensland) remain particularly disadvantaged, with limited access to free perinatal counselling support in the region.

Our People

The PCL team has demonstrated remarkable resilience and professionalism throughout a year marked by considerable change. Comprising seven dedicated staff members, including five Counsellors, an Administration Manager, and the Executive Officer who also serves as Clinical Director, the team has continued to deliver support and care to the community. Their adaptability in the face of evolving demands, and unwavering focus on client wellbeing have not gone unnoticed. The Board extends its sincere appreciation for the exceptional work the PCL team does. Their efforts remain central to our mission and impact, and their contribution is deeply valued.

New Initiatives

Our network helps us to deliver wraparound support, parenting programs, and culturally safe environments. With an eye to the future, we are proudly growing new partnerships and sponsors enabling us to more fully understand the challenges facing the women and families who come to us, collaborating with Luxe Little One, founded by Emma - a courageous former client and successful business woman who received support from PCL during her own pregnancy journey and Ketim Technologies, founded by Dr Clarissa Yates, paving the way with ground breaking research to identify early predictors of postnatal depression and transform mental health care, right here in Brisbane.

Targeted activities for 2025-2026 include the opportunity to secure significant funding from a philanthropic investor and subscription to GEMS Local, a targeted grants database which will enable us to identify suitable grant opportunities which are closely aligned to PCL's mission and purpose.

In July 2025, PCL was successful in securing a Gambling Community Benefit Fund (GCBF) grant valued at \$31,088 (ex GST). The funds will enable us to purchase new laptops, mobile phones and software upgrades, in addition to engaging the services of a new IT provider for help desk support and data security protection, to lighten the load on our Administration Manager.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all our supporters and donors, both old and new. The service would not be able to operate without your generosity and financial support.

- The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety which enables us to provide free counselling services for the client cohort we serve.
- Brisbane South Primary Health Network funding enabling us to support clients who have or are currently experiencing Domestic and Family Violence, Sexual Assault or Child Sexual Assault.
- Service partners including Nundah Community Health Centre, Metro North Perinatal Mental Health Unit, The Family Place, Kingston East Neighbourhood Centre, ForWhen Perinatal Mental Health, Logan Hospital and Centacare.
- Viv Kissane OAM (CEO) and the Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness team for our ongoing collaboration, partnership and shared tenancies.
- Gerry Pearce (CPA) at Pearce Accounting for providing ongoing financial advice and guidance.
- MarshTincknell our appointed auditors.
- Kristin Ramsey (Practice Group Leader) at HR Partners for assisting us to navigate the changing SCHADS award, pay scale reviews and new employment legislation.
- Courtney Evans (CEO) at funraisin who offered us access to a new online giving platform for minimal cost.
- Michelle Beecroft (Director) at Shell Graphix for supporting our web site and online functionality.