

# Strategic Plan 2016-2021



*"Guthrie gave me the chance to get my life together. I got to do some programs that helped give me confidence to move on with my life and the workers also helped find me a place to live so I could begin to start again." (former resident)*

## Building on a strong foundation

Guthrie House was founded in 1979 by Sandra Wilson, with the core service delivery being the community integration of high risk female parolees transitioning from prison into the community. Having spent time in jail herself, Sandra realised the importance of support after prison to help women re-connect to the community.

Guthrie House was named after Bessie Guthrie, a tireless activist who fought for the rights of women and children and was one of a small group of women who established the first refuge in Australia for women and children.

Guthrie House has been and continues to be the only service of its kind that exclusively supports women and children who have a history of alcohol and other drug abuse and current involvement in the criminal justice system.

This plan establishes the strategic direction for Guthrie House for 2016-2019. By 2019 Guthrie aims to be recognized for the high quality of services and outreach we provide to women and children in need, with a priority on Aboriginal women.

This plan was informed by a planning workshop which was facilitated by Matrix on Board. The current board, staff, and clients, have all contributed to the creation of this plan. This engagement process has resulted in an inclusive plan that will form a valuable guide for both service delivery and the strategic direction of Guthrie House.

Eleni North  
Chair

Glenda Milne  
Executive Director

## What we stand for

 **Vision** to empower women to build positive futures

 **Purpose** to provide a holistic residential program for women involved in the criminal justice system, and their accompanying children, to successfully transition to the community.

 **Values** **Compassion:** we seek to understand our clients and act without judgment.

**Empowerment:** We seek to empower our clients so they can independently transition back to the community.

**Collaboration:** We recognise that no one service can solve the complex issues our clients experience and therefore seek to work with partners to create a network of support around our clients.

**Community based:** We work within the local community and respect the country and traditional owners.

**Accountability:** We measure our results and review our performance to ensure our standards are of the highest quality.

## About Guthrie House

Guthrie House Co-operative Incorporated is a not-for-profit transitional service for women, including women with pre-school aged children in their full-time care.

Guthrie House is the only service of its kind that supports women who have a history of alcohol and other drug abuse and current involvement in the criminal justice system. This can include release from a correctional centre on bail and/or community-based sentence such as a Parole Order, Probation Order, Drug Court Order or Intensive Correction Order.

To be eligible for admission to the Program a women must:

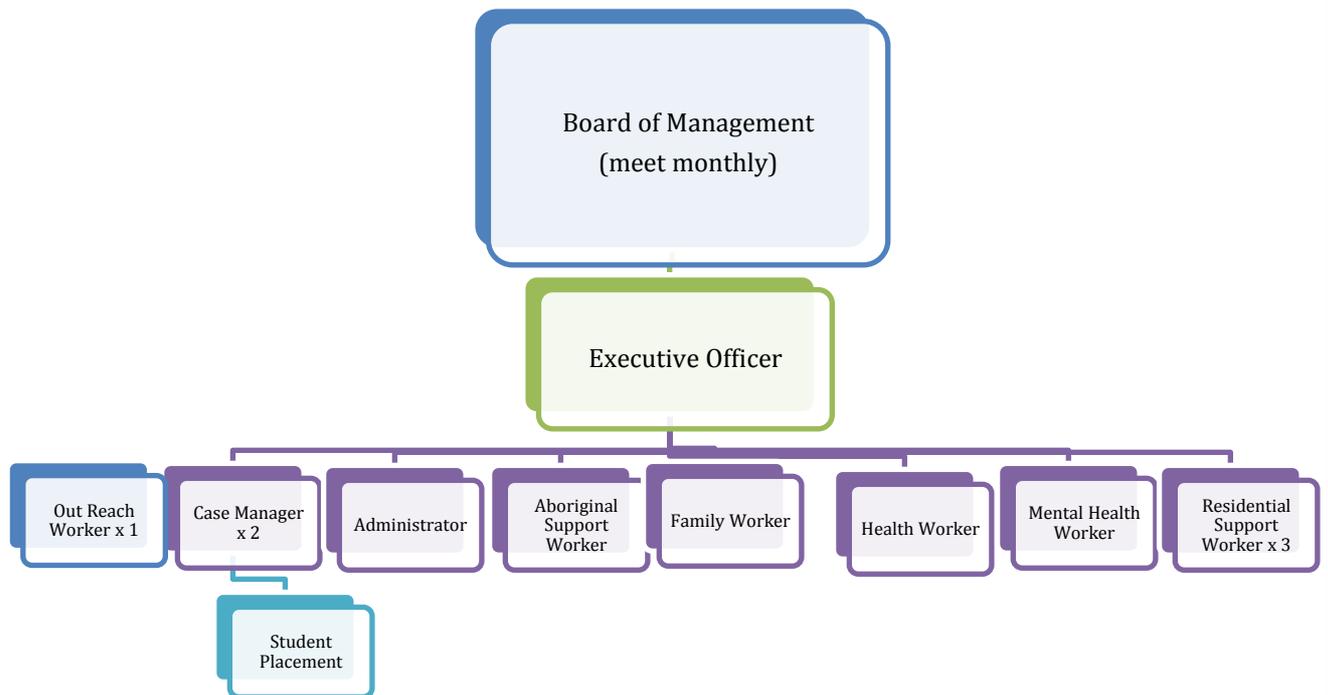
- be involved in the criminal justice system;
- be homeless or at risk of homelessness;
- have a history of drug and alcohol issues; or
- be a pregnant women with one or more of the above criteria

Guthrie House accepts women who are aged 18 years and over. It is one of the few services that accept women who have dependent pre-school aged children in their full-time care and/or are participating in pharmacotherapy treatment, including methadone or buprenorphine.

The Guthrie House Program is comprised of a residential component of three months and an after-care component of up to twelve months. The Program provides women with safe and secure medium-term, transitional accommodation and the wrap around supports needed to address their offending behaviour, prevent and reduce re-offending, and successfully transition to sustainable long term housing.

Clients have access to a full range of support services to address their needs, including accommodation, twenty-four hour support and supervision; programs focused on relapse prevention, life skills, and healthy living; specialist 'in house' support services including a Family Worker, Health Worker, Mental Health Clinician and Psychologist; and established partnerships that facilitate access to both specialist and mainstream support services.

## Our Structure



## Our Principles

**Guthrie House's** guiding principles inform the organisation's approach and underpin our programs and services. Our guiding principles include:

- 1 Providing a safe space that operates with integrity and fairness for women to maintain a drug and alcohol free lifestyle
- 2 Designing services that are culturally inclusive of people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and the Aboriginal community, and which reflect dignity, respect, and diversity.
- 3 Working with the strengths of the individual and help clients build on existing knowledge and skills while developing new ones.

**Guthrie House provides integrated evidence based services and programs to assist women to meet their potential****Strategies**

- All our programs are evidence based and staff use a trauma informed approach to address housing, health, and criminogenic needs.
- All Guthrie House clients have a case management plan, including an assessment for capacity for engagement.

**Measuring our Performance**

We will use a range of qualitative and quantitative information to measure our success. This will include:

- The number of clients who engage with our programs.
- The number of clients who complete the residential program.
- The number of clients who successfully integrate back into the community.
- A process evaluation that measures the fidelity and use of evidence-based services and the use of a trauma informed approach.
- Case studies to help staff adapt evidence-based programs to meet the needs of our clients.

## **Strategic Direction 2**

## **Meets the needs of Aboriginal Clients**

### **Guthrie house has provides culturally competent services**

#### **Strategies**

- Guthrie house has an Aboriginal policy that informs practice.
- Guthrie employees Aboriginal Staff.
- Guthrie has an Aboriginal representative on the board.
- Guthrie provides cultural competency training for all staff.
- Guthrie house engages with the local Aboriginal community to inform service delivery for Aboriginal Clients.

#### **Measuring our performance**

- The extent to which we are able to employ Aboriginal staff and a board member.
- The extent to which the Aboriginal policy informs practice.
- The number of Aboriginal women who successfully complete the program and transition back to the community.
- Feedback from Aboriginal women.

**Guthrie has reliable sources of revenue to meet the needs of the organisation****Strategies**

- Guthrie House is 'partner ready' to identify, approach and respond to potential partnerships.
- Guthrie House is a sound organisation that is accredited, well governed, and has appropriate policies and procedures in place.
- Guthrie House is open to other opportunities and sources of income.

**Measuring our Performance**

- The extent to which we are able to build partnerships.
- The extent to which we are able to successfully tender for grants.
- The extent to which we are able to use other sources of revenue to fund Guthrie House.

**Guthrie house has a professional skills based board to drive and support our strategic direction**

**Strategies**

- Guthrie House will strengthen our governance capability with position descriptions and an annual board skills audit.
- The recruitment process for new board members will address the skills gap.
- Appropriate sub committees will be in place to support strong board performance.
- New board members are provided with induction.
- All board members participate in governance training annually.

**Measuring our Performance**

- The Guthrie board is reviewed and evaluated.
- A risk analysis is conducted annually.
- The extent to which our policies procedures support our operations.

**Guthrie house continues to be a unique  
specialist service**

**Strategies**

- Guthrie House provides a specialised, individualised service for women with complex needs.
- We collaborate and build partnerships with others services to help build a network of support around our clients.

**Measuring our Performance**

- The extent to which our services and programs respond to the needs of women with complex needs.
- The extent to which we use client and program data to inform and monitor our services and program to ensure we are meeting the needs of our clients.
- The extent to which we build partnerships with other services and how these services are used by our clients to improve their outcomes.

**Guthrie house has a skilled workforce and appropriate systems to support operations and client services.**

**Strategies**

- We maintain accreditation and implement a system of quality improvement.
- Guthrie House provides professional development training and support to maintain a healthy and capable workforce.

**Measuring our performance**

- Human resource policies and procedures
- Human resource data including staff retention rates and levels of unplanned leave and sick leave.
- Workplace safety data including critical incidents.
- Staff feedback on the extent to which they feel valued and supported and have professional development opportunities, skills and resources to work effectively with our clients.

## Who we work with

**Guthrie House** works first and foremost with recently incarcerated women in the inner west of Sydney.

Our key partners and stakeholders include:

- » NSW Drug Court
- » Emu Plains Correctional Facility
- » Silverwater Correctional Facility
- » Jarrah House
- » Glebe House
- » Rainbow Lodge
- » Relationships Australia
- » NADA
- » Kathleen York House
- » Women in Prison's Advocacy Network
- » Aboriginal Medical Centre
- » Dr. Divina Hiley
- » Dr. Lucy Ballin
- » Housing NSW
- » Metro Housing
- » Bridge Housing
- » FACS
- » Chris Blatch
- » Delphine Bostock
- » Corrective Services
- » Community corrections
- » Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre
- » Centrelink

## **Guthrie House**

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