

ARCS
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arcs

Adoption Research & Counselling Service

connecting and strengthening families

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ARCS - Issues for our service

The dominant issues for this reporting period have been accommodation and reduced income and the Apology.

Accommodation:

ARCS has leased our current premises from Perth College for the past 14 years. They now require the premises for their own purposes. This is problematic in that we need to acquire new premises. It is made more difficult because historically we have not received funding for accommodation but have always had accommodation provided. Initially this was provided by the University of WA at UWA, then DCP with a house in Mt Lawley and for the last 14 years Perth College. The rent paid to Perth College is nominal - \$150 per week. This history of having accommodation provided leaves us in an untenable position where we are now faced with entering the commercial market with no allocated funds.

Finance/Funding:

Last financial year ARCS faced viability difficulties due to the sudden reduction in the numbers from Pre-Adoption Education Workshops. Therefore we sustained a substantial loss that we were unprepared for and not able to budget for.

In the period July to Dec 2010 the loss of income from these workshops was:	\$31,340.
In the previous 12 months July 2009 to June 2010 the loss of this income was:	<u>\$30,076</u>
Making this a total loss of:	\$61,416

Despite providing the education for at least 20 years, the drastic drop in the numbers attending the workshops forced us to make a very difficult financial decision and not put in for the government tender. We were making a loss from the workshops and could have no guarantee that numbers would increase in the near future. This fear has been born out. In fact our financial situation would have been far worse if we had continued providing the education workshops.

ARCS received a one off payment from DCP of \$20,000 to cover the cost of provisions. This money is in the cash management account and has not been touched.

ARCS developed a budget to address the shortfall caused by the loss of income from the education programme.

We reduced the operating hours to those funded for the contracted service. We have covered the cost of out of hours counselling from the fees generated across the service.

We did not go for the tender for the Pre-Adoption Education Programme as it was not financially viable to do so.

We are planning on developing a business plan once our accommodation issue has been addressed.

Apology:

Parliamentary Apology for the impact of past adoption practices on those affected.

The apology itself generated a lot of work of ARCS. Prior to the Apology feelings amongst those affected were diverse and the publicity surrounding the apology triggered memories of painful pasts. We had increased phone calls from those affected and also from politicians and media outlets.

The Apology acknowledged the trauma associated with adoption loss and its ongoing impact. This has assisted many in the adoption community in not feeling alone/strange and allowed them to seek help.