

CUMBERLAND WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTER

IMPACT REPORT
2019/2020



Cumberland
**WOMEN'S
HEALTH**
Centre

CONTENTS

1. About Cumberland Women's Health Centre
2. Chairperson's Statement
3. Manager's Statement
4. Women's Health NSW Health framework
5. Our service design
6. Cumberland Women's Health Centre services
7. Community development projects
8. Community engagement work
10. DVPASS; Justice NSW
11. Community Voices
12. Impact Snapshot
13. Governance
14. Financial Statement 2019-2020
15. COVID-19 Service response
15. Thank you to our community partners

We acknowledge that we work on Aboriginal land and that sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We recognise that our efforts towards inclusivity and solidarity must be ongoing and always evolving.



ABOUT CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE

Together we Bloom

Cumberland Women's Health Centre is a non-profit community based organisation, we provide women's health services and domestic violence specialist response services to all women regardless of age, gender or income. We are here to help you.

Our goal is to work collaboratively with women and the rest of the community in order to create stability and empower women with the ability to initiate positive change within their lives.

The members of Cumberland Women's Health Centre Inc. (CWHC) are women who live or work in the Parramatta, Cumberland, Auburn and Baulkham Hills areas.

We are committed to a preventative and holistic approach for the health of women in the local area. We believe that with information and support, women are in a better position to make choices about their own health and have greater control over their own lives. We interpret health to mean not only physical health, but also emotional and social well being.

Our aim is to work towards improving the health of women in the Parramatta, Cumberland, Auburn and Baulkham Hills local government areas.

We hope to do this by working collaboratively with women to create change in their own lives and in the community.

Cumberland Women's Health Centre is:

- Run by women for women
- A place to feel comfortable asking for information and seeking support
- Supportive and friendly
- Open to all women, regardless of ethnicity, sexuality, age, income, disability or class.
- Financially accessible —our services are either free or low cost.

"Feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong, it's about changing the way the world perceives that strength."

G.D. Anderson

CHAIRPERSONS STATEMENT

As Chairperson it gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2019-2020 Annual Report for the Cumberland Women's Health Centre.

It has been a standout year for so many reasons and one we will reflect on for years to come. The pandemic has provided an opportunity to showcase the strong connection Cumberland Women's Health Centre has to the local community and also proved the ability of the services to adapt rapidly to local needs.

In line with a fast-paced year full of changes for everyone, Cumberland Women's Health Centre has now expanded to a larger and dynamic location. This strategic move now enables the service to accommodate for the growing streams of service delivery. New premises has also meant that the many groups and workshops that are conducted as part of the holistic therapeutic approach, unique to the centre, can now be conducted in-house, improving delivery, safety and reducing costs.

Cumberland Women's Health Centre proudly continues to be a key provider for supporting NSW victims of crime under the agreement with the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Victims Services. This agreement now incorporates group support specifically in relation to Domestic and Family Violence expanding the scope of what is delivered from the centre but also opens up further access to support for a different group of vulnerable women.

Under the Fourth Action Plan of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children (2010-2022), Cumberland Women's Health Centre, has formed a consortium with Boronia Multicultural Society, Hope Connect and Parramatta Council, have developed the community-led initiative "Take the Lead" - Preventing Violence against Women in Parramatta & Cumberland. This project will continue to develop sustainable pathways to employment and education for Women who have experienced Domestic and Family Violence in line with the service strategic goals and core values.

It has been my pleasure to serve as chair person through a time of immense and exciting change for Cumberland Women's Health Centre and contribute the values that Cumberland Women's Health Centre stand by providing pathways to self-determination and social justice

JULIA TAI

Chair Person

MANAGERS STATEMENT

Welcome to the annual impact report for Cumberland Women's Health Centre for the 2019- 2020 financial year...one we will always remember for so many reasons!

This year has tested the Cumberland Women's Health Centre core values like never before with some very challenging times. However, I am proud to say we have proven, beyond a doubt, that being responsive and adaptive to changing community needs is at the forefront of all that we do. At Cumberland Women's Health Centre, we practice what we teach... and as such the COVID-19 crisis provided the opportunities to assess how we currently deliver services and platform innovative solutions understanding in more detail the needs of the community's we service.

I would like to thank our local community and clients, who have continued to grow and learn with us during this period. We saw intake and referral increases of over 100% during the initial COVID-19 crisis period, the staff at CWHC have performed above and beyond to ensure that the Women we service remained connected and supported.

We have welcomed new corporate partners throughout the year working in collaboration with Westfield Parramatta, Big W and Bakers Delight to deliver events and much needed basic supplies to the local Women we serve and we hope to continue to grow these partnerships.

Finally, I would like to thank the current board of Cumberland Women's Health Centre for proving the strength in our approach and for the time and dedication it has taken to see the organisation through one of the fastest paced year we have seen to date. We hope to continue the momentum that has been established during this period by incorporating new and innovative ideas into the framework of the existing strategic plan and we are already walking in the new normal to service delivery and growing our community impact even further.



SALWA ALBAZ

Manager

NSW WOMEN'S HEALTH FRAMEWORK

While Cumberland Women’s Health Centre strives to provide services that provide a localised response, the strategic direction is informed by the NSW Women’s health priorities and in line with the current NSW Women’s Health framework 2019 and strategy. With this in mind, we develop a specialised approach to services and programs to meet particular needs of women throughout every stage of their life and adapt them to suit the needs of the local community. Programming for the 19–20 year has considered the core state health priorities, which remain heavily focused on Women and reducing the long term effects and impact of Domestic and Family Violence as evident in the numerous strategies within the framework providing safety and support. Prevention and early intervention is the key value of all Cumberland Women’s Health Centre service delivery.

Purpose: To deliver services and foster environments in NSW that help women to meet their physical, emotional, social and economic potential by increasing opportunities for women and girls to experience better health and wellbeing at every stage of their lives.

Scope: This Framework applies across the NSW Health system and across the intersections with the broader health and wellbeing system including private sector organisations, not-for-profit organisations, and other government agencies. It recognises and provides an overarching perspective and principles to combine and apply the wide range of frameworks, strategies, policies, and plans that seek to improve or affect the health and wellbeing of women and girls.

Goals & strategies:

Goals – All women and girls in NSW have:					
healthy relationships	healthy minds	healthy lifestyles	healthy bodies	safety and support	integrating care
Strategies – All women and girls in NSW are:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>informed</i> about healthier relationships • <i>empowered</i> to make healthier choices • <i>engaged</i> with families, peers, and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>supported</i> to build resilience • <i>supported</i> through major life changes • <i>empowered</i> to feel more confident and comfortable with their bodies • <i>informed</i> about mental health and wellbeing and support services • <i>supported</i> by appropriate mental health and wellbeing services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>informed</i> and able to access high quality health and wellbeing information • <i>empowered</i> and supported to make healthier choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>supported</i> to have better reproductive and sexual health • <i>provided</i> with access to contraception and maternal support • <i>engaged</i> in prevention and early intervention to reduce illness • <i>supported</i> to prevent or manage chronic illnesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>protected</i> and helped to recover from violence and the effects of trauma • <i>able to access</i> sensitive and approachable services • <i>supported</i> with caring responsibilities • <i>informed</i>, confident and safe using technology • <i>able to access</i> stable housing, adequate financial resources and other support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>able</i> to access services in a convenient time and place • <i>able</i> to access services and information that they can understand and that understand them • <i>able to access</i> services that are safe and trauma informed • <i>engaged</i> with health and wellbeing services

OUR SERVICE DESIGN

Preventive health activities are those that are designed to reduce the likelihood that something harmful to health will occur; or to minimise that harm if it does occur (*National Public Health Partnership, 2006*). It focuses on those health problems which are known to be amenable to intervention; and requires the identification of modifiable risk and protective factors, and the implementation of strategies to eliminate or reduce risk factors and maximise and increase protective.



At Cumberland Women's Health Centre we strive to adopt a holistic and person-centred approach to service delivery. We understand that not all interventions are going to be effective for all women all of the time and recovery is rarely a linear process nor a cycle.

Our service design allows for a customised approach, not only with each client, but with each and every engagement at any point in the clients journey.

Additionally, keeping wellness practices at the top of each engagement provides a soft entry point for all of our clients, many whom may never have engaged with any services before and may not be able to identify what support they need. This element is also critical for sustainable client engagement as it means that even when a woman may have completed a full therapeutic intervention, through recovery and back to wellness, this model ensures every woman can continue to engage with the centre for years to come and always feel they belong and continue to ensure positive long term health outcomes.

CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Information and Referral

This service is usually the first engagement point for many vulnerable women who often have never have engaged in any service support previously. Clients are welcomed through our easy to use online self-referral portal and professional referrals are always quick to access through our new website.

Support approaches can include:

- Housing Advocacy
- Domestic and Family Violence awareness counselling and support
- Depression and Anxiety counselling and support
- Preventative Health and wellbeing referrals
- Community and social Isolation

Women Who Have Experienced Violence

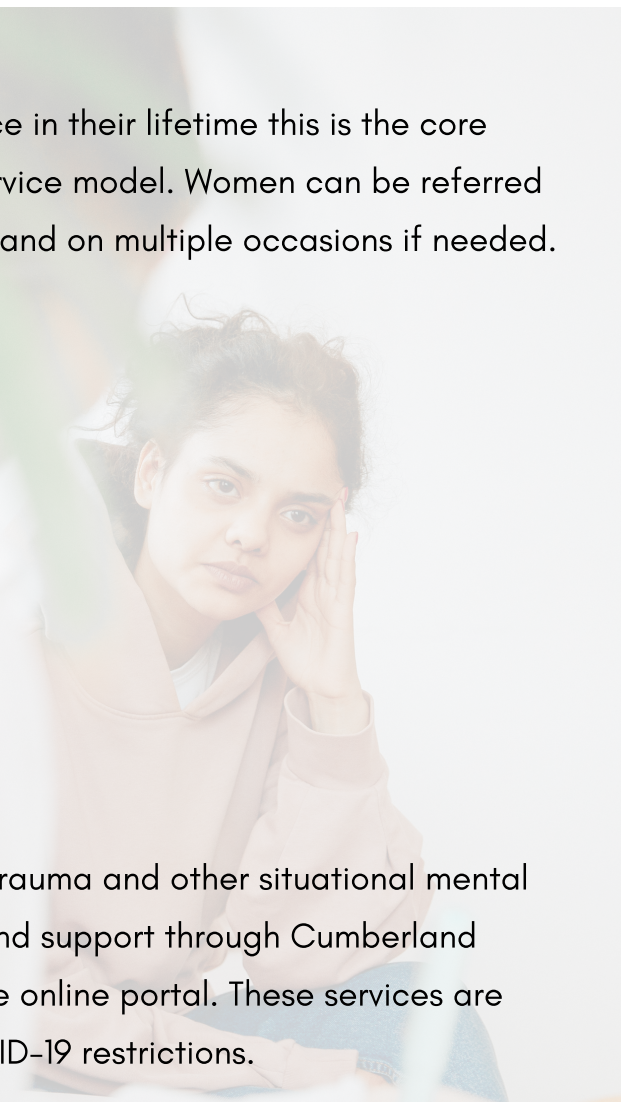
With more than one in 3 women experiencing violence in their lifetime this is the core focus of the Cumberland Women's Health Centre service model. Women can be referred by a professional but can also self-refer at any time and on multiple occasions if needed.

Support and interventions provided include:

- Crisis Support
- Case management and Advocacy
- Counselling
- Domestic and Family Violence support group
- Information about rights
- Court Support
- Trauma informed groups and workshops

General Counselling

Women experiencing anxiety, depression, historical trauma and other situational mental health stressor can access one on one counselling and support through Cumberland Women's Health centre easily by self-referring via the online portal. These services are continuously available remotely throughout the COVID-19 restrictions.



CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Massage and Aromatherapy

As part of the Women's Health approach to preventative health services, massage therapy and aromatherapy consultation forms part of the holistic approach to wellness. Throughout the COVID-19 restrictions, massage services were ceased, however wellness packs including essential oils, meditation cd's and other items were delivered to women in need.

Groups and Workshops

Group programming is an essential and ongoing part of the work of the work of Cumberland Women's Health Centre. Group work allows clients to explore their challenges with the support and learnings of others with common needs and goals, an important part to recovery. This modality also provides an platform for safe and supported social interactions, some who have no other social networks at all.

This year group work programming was the most heavily impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions. For a short period much of the group programming had to be ceased while the service staff and board quickly implemented new ways and policies to continue running groups through the use of technology, this was a learning curve for staff and clients. Group programming across 19-20 included:

Women's Health Group

This essential group has been run for the past 5 years at Cumberland Women's Health and due to its success it continues to be active with new members participating each and every month and over 150 attendees across this year. Topics of learning have included, breast health and screening, healthy eating and stroke prevention and many more.

New Beginnings

As core service delivery, the Domestic Violence support group run each term and is a closed group for women needing to begin their healing journey. This group has engaged over 30 women in support during this period and often in combination with other services modalities.



1033 Women
attended the 111
group sessions
delivered in
19-20

CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Trauma Informed Yoga

This specialised form of Yoga allows Women to feel supported to connect with their bodies and minds after trauma.

Meditation

Women are taught mindfulness theory and practice's that they can easily adopted into their every day life and practice at home.

Art Therapy

Self expression for Women's who have often not had a voice can sometimes be an effective way to begin to process trauma. Women are encouraged to use various art mediums including painting, clay and charcoal to reflect the different emotions in a supported environment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Health

Aboriginal women, both on country and visiting have always had a strong affiliation with Cumberland Women's Health Centre. Throughout the 19-20 year we have provided the platform for three Women's Gatherings for those that identify as First Nations Australians. These events give the opportunity to meet with other local women, reducing social isolation and keeping culture alive in the Parramatta and Cumberland districts. The groups also provide a soft entry for service delivery, with 7% of Cumberland Women's Health Centre being of First Nations descent additional health referrals and support needs are made. The group continues to be supported by Cumberland Council.

LINDA BURNEY

*I say this in the strongest possible terms:
Governments come and go. Public opinion
waves and wanes. We ain't going nowhere.
This is our country. We will never forgo the
pursuit of our rights."*



CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Community Development Projects

Community development is an important element of our service design where we strive to support our community members to identify and take collective action on issues which are important to them. Community development considers women to be experts in their lives and communities, and values community knowledge and wisdom and self directed need identification.

Employment Boost - this program is for women aged 20-45 and who are looking for new opportunities in the area of work and study, to move towards independence. Women learn what emotional barriers may be preventing them from finding meaningful pathways to work and finding their passion. Women are also guided through the practical elements of finding exciting and new opportunities through; mentorship, group learning and confidence building. This year we partnered with the Australian Retail Association meaning all 15 participants receive accredited qualifications, as well as participating in work experience at the completion of this program.



Bill Assist - This is a new partnership with Christian Community Aid to provide financial support and stability to those Women in crisis who access our services. Women receive emergency access to food vouchers, travel vouchers and support and advocacy with household bills.

Aqua Aerobics - A primary health and fitness program, more than 30 women were able to participate in a weekly exercise program, followed by a health related education workshop and a light nutritious lunch.



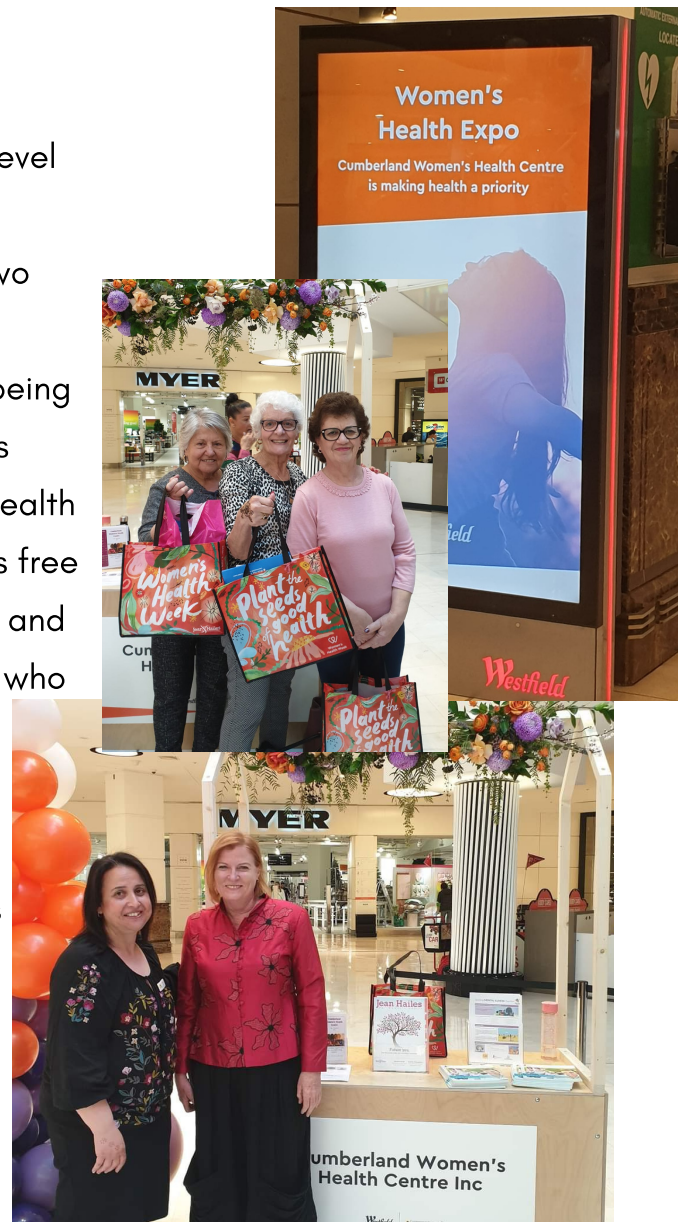
CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Community Engagement Work

This year took our community events to a new level with large corporate partnerships including Westfield Parramatta. Aiming to address the two biggest barriers for women not maintaining a healthy lifestyle: 'lack of time' and 'health not being a priority', Women's Health Week featured stalls providing information on a range of women's health concerns, as well as self-care activities such as free Henna hand painting, 5-minute hand massages and a meditative mandala colouring station. Those who attended were also able to enjoy the 100 official Jean Hailes gift bags that were given out during the event. Thanks to the efforts of participating organisations, Women's Health Week was attended by more than 300 women across the two days including special guests, Julia Finn MP and Julie Owens MP.

Community Market Day

Cumberland Women's Health Centre with partnership of Good 360 and Big W held a "Free Market Day" on the 22nd of November, 2019 which invited women from local shelters, refuges and associate services to come in and take home new branded women's and children's clothing, shoes, accessories and toys. Around 70 women attended this event which took place at Hilltop Public School.



With thanks to our partners:
Breast Screen NSW, Cancer Council Western Sydney Local Health District, Continence Foundation Bailey, Fernwood Women's Health Club, Boost Juice, T2 AND Woolworths

CUMBERLAND WOMENS HEALTH CENTRE SERVICES

Parramatta Cumberland Family and Domestic Violence Prevention Committee

Over the past 12 years Cumberland Women's Health Centre has lead and convened the Committee, and this year was no exception to the quality and engagement of local prevention initiatives. Driven by the international campaign; 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence to challenge violence against women and girls, the campaign aims to involve and educate the general public about the issues around violence and understanding we all have a role to play in prevention.



White Ribbon Breakfast 2019

The annual White Ribbon Breakfast was again sponsored by Guildford Leagues Club and attended 150 local community members. The event aims to bring together community members and in particular local business in supporting public awareness and social responsibility.

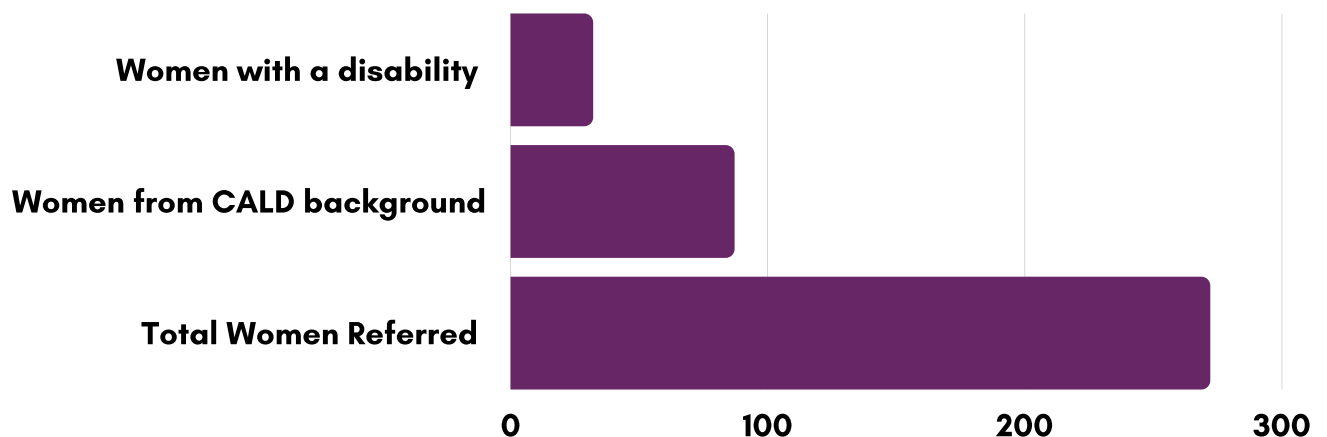


Representation

The 'Raising Strong Families' March took place on the 30th of November 2019 and brought together participating community members, agencies, organisations and schools. During the march the committee distributed 250 USB sticks with a copy of a Domestic Violence Support Service Directory uploaded to the USB to provide a tool for education and response for general community members.

DVPASS: NSW JUSTICE

Domestic and Family Violence Proactive Support Service (DVPASS) is based on a partnership between a domestic violence specialist service and a LAC (NSW Police). As a means to provide integrated support services to victims of domestic violence, the program enables police to obtain formal consent from domestic violence victims for their details to be provided to domestic violence support services. The services are required to follow up with the victim in an agreed time period, commonly 72 hours. Cumberland Women's Health Centre have been working side by side with the Local Police on the program for over 15 years. This partnership referral model, funded by DCJ, continues to prove invaluable for women for clients. This has provided a dedicated anti violence worker who specialises in Domestic Violence casework and advocacy to ensure Cumberland Women's Health Centre is the leading specialist organisation across three districts.



Additional data from the 2019 period indicates the uptake of the program can be met and reflected positively within the existing service delivery model. Data collected shows over 56% of referrals made by police directly translated into intervention and therapeutic service engagement as reflected:

- **Casework/Crisis Support/Advocacy: 26% of clients accessed this service**
- **Information/Referral: 5% of clients accessed this type of service**
- **Counselling: 25% of clients accessed this type of service**

As part of new outcomes measurements, a program evaluation is now completed every 6 months not only recording data around client demographics but also a narrative approach that speaks to the life stories and impact of the program.

COMMUNITY VOICES: ARI'S STORY

Ari arrived in Australia a few years ago with no English speaking skills and no family, apart from, her then husband. At the time Ari was referred to Cumberland Women's Health Centre by police after a serious incident of Domestic Violence in which her husband was the perpetrator. Ari spoke with the caseworker with the help of an interpreter and began to open up about the ongoing abuse and violence she had faced since her arrival in Australia, this was the first time she had spoken to anyone about this. Ari's immigration status had always been a stronghold of her husband with threats to have her visa cancelled if she sort help for the violence. At the time of her first appointment at Cumberland Women's Health Centre she shared she had nine days left on her current visa. With the support of the caseworker Ari received immigration advice from Immigration Rights and Advice Centre (IRAC) and due to the case managers advocacy, the case was prioritised, and she was able to receive emergency immigration assistance. Ari was then successfully granted a protection visa and has just moved into a home of her own. Not only is she better informed about her rights and the services that can support her, but she can now live an empowered life free of violence. Ari now regularly attends The Cumberland Women's Health Centre Women's Health groups as well as the yoga and meditation groups. She is looking forward to joining the workforce in the future and hopes to empower other women.

"It was very hard in the beginning to tell the truth of my situation, i was ashamed. But now i am so grateful i have friends and a hope for my future thanks to Cumberland Women's Health Centre for making me brave and belong"

Ari

