Eating Disorders Queensland is a statewide, community-based not-for-profit organisation.

We support both individuals who are living with an eating disorder; and their carers, loved ones, and key support people.

HOPE.
RESILIENCE.
RECOVERY.

(07) 3844 6055 • eatingdisordersqueensland.org.au • admin@edq.org.au
The Eating Disorders Queensland (EDQ) Vision Statement:
A world free from eating disorders.

The Eating Disorders Queensland Mission Statement:
To facilitate hope and recovery for all people affected by eating disorders.
About Us

Eating Disorders Queensland is a statewide, community-based not-for-profit organisation. We support both individuals who are living with an eating disorder; and their carers, loved ones, and key support people.

Support options include therapeutic and psychosocial support for individuals, and coaching and community connection for carers. EDQ also provides early intervention opportunities, with community education events focused on creating healthy relationships with food and our bodies. We are passionate about eradicating weight stigma and diet culture.

Lived experience drives our service delivery. We promote the voices of lived experience through consultation, employment opportunities, and Board representation of both Carer and Peer Lived Experience.

Our Vision: A world free from eating disorders.

Our Mission: To facilitate hope and recovery for all people affected by eating disorders.

Nurture: Creating an inclusive, connected community that inspires hope and compassion.

Empower: Fostering a safe environment where people have the power to lead recovery.

Integrity: Working with deep respect, embracing honesty, trust and empathy.

Innovate: Creating together to provide high-quality responsive programs, services and initiatives.

Collaborate: Valuing diversity through sharing learning among people with eating disorders, carers and sector partners.
General Manager and Chairperson’s Combined Report

It is a challenge not to look at the last twelve months though a COVID-19 lens, as the pandemic hit us in March 2020, and life as we knew it changed overnight. There was however, so much more to this last year with EDQ able to report several significant achievements.

Despite the disruption caused by the lockdowns and new requirements for distancing and remote working arrangements we have delivered on our contractual outcomes/outputs and established new consumer directed and fee for service offerings.

On the 23 March our staff began working remotely from home and we successfully migrated all our individual services and group programs to a telehealth platform.

We are proud to report that within a matter of a day we were up and running in this new service environment, a testament to the team’s agility and adaptability.

We attribute our readiness to the strong leadership of our General Manager, our business continuity planning together with our policies and systems which guided our decision making and practise. Our EDQ clients showed their recovery warrior spirit through these challenging times, persisting with treatment and group work which the team made interactive, responsive and fun.

October 2019 we successfully achieved accreditation against National Standards for Mental Health Services and National Disability Insurance Schemes (NDIS) Practice Standards. We would like to thank and acknowledge Susan Hawkins from PQPlus who assisted EDQ, with a pre-audit review of our policies and systems which ensured that EDQ achieved accreditation with no non-conformities. We must also thank the Board for the hours spent working alongside PQPlus to ensure that we had a deep knowledge of the standards, that we were operating not just to the spirit of compliance but to deliver services that met best practise standards within a culture of continuous improvement. Well done team!

The Chair and General Manager attended a two-day AICD Governance training Advanced Not For Profit directed, including developing and implementing effective strategy, boardroom best practice and organisational performance. It provided us with a unique opportunity to focus on the complex strategic challenges facing the sector. This learning also places us in good stead to confidently innovate and manage the change process and risk management required during the COVID pandemic.

We also attended the first NextCare – Connecting, Inspiring and Transforming Health Leaders conference navigating and exploring health care for the future. The conference was established as a multidisciplinary professional development opportunity for delegates working in any sector of healthcare. We both felt that the conference provided an array of learning opportunities through the inspiring speakers and workshops offered over the two day event.

EDQ has been a driving force in the formation of the Eating Disorder Alliance of Australia (EDAA) which represents the voice of patients, carers and health care professionals. Members agreed to provide a collective voice to the Federal Government on priorities for mental health system reform and to share the intent of state and federal government-funded service agreements to prevent duplication of services, inform activities with local state-based treatment services, drive service excellence and deliver effectively on existing investment.

Members of the Eating Disorder Alliance of Australia (EDAA), include Eating Disorders Queensland (EDQ), Butterfly Foundation (Butterfly), Eating Disorders Families Australia (EDFA), Eating Disorders Victoria (EDV), Bridges Eating Disorders Association of Western Australia (Bridges), and Australia and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders (ANZAED). The Alliance will continue to work with the National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC), as well as state-based service providers and research organisations in the sector, to ensure advocacy, resources and communications are evidence-based and best practice.

Going into the next financial year, Eating Disorders Queensland were among the first to benefit from the $28 million fund established to support Queensland’s community-based health service groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a $130,000 grant. For those living with an eating disorder(s), their families and key supports, we welcome the additional funding to add much needed supports/treatment for this particularly vulnerable group, during and post the pandemic.

We have had a busy transformative year that has seen EDQ thrive under difficult circumstances. We would like to thank and give a shout out to the wonderful EDQ staff team who have given above and beyond ensuring that we have maintained operations and support throughout a challenging year. A big thank you also to the Board who provided steady leadership through turbulent and unchartered waters. We have seen many new opportunities and silver linings as EDQ quickly adapted to the new and ever changing COVID environment.

We have continued our strong commitment to advocacy and systems reform to achieve better and enduring outcomes for individuals and carers impacted by eating disorders.

Our influence included participating in a consultation by the Productivity Commission into Mental Health, contributing to the Million Minds research - TRANSFORM or BELONG (BeLONG)- A Centre for Health System Research and Translation in Eating Disorders. Working with NEDC on a credentialing system for Eating Disorders treatment, cautioning against exclusion, limiting credentialing to a purely medical focus/approach and unwittingly creating an “elite” group of people to work with individually and their loved ones. We were also a proud sponsor of the first international virtual Eating Disorders Conference – ICED 2020, delivering three papers on the world stage. A truly inspiring and exhilarating experience.

We are also very proud of our relationship with local Universities, through student placements, research and program evaluation. To formalise this relationship and give recognition to EDQ, our General Manager Belinda Chelius has been appointed as an Honorary Industry Fellow, School of Public Health and Social Work, at QUT. Belinda has been asked to be guest lecturer where she has had the opportunity to highlight the importance of Eating Disorders treatment training in tertiary institutions for mental health professionals.

Over the last few years we have seen the development and growth of EDQ as it has transformed from a small, first of its kind Eating Disorders treatment, cautioning against exclusion, with NEDC on a credentialing system for Eating Disorders specialist treatment and support service, into a multi-faceted State wide consumer and carer organisation. We have seen a significant growth in funding from Queensland Health, together with new Medicare and NDIS funding treatment options.

We would like to thank and acknowledge Susan Hawkins from PQPlus who assisted EDQ, with a pre-audit review of our policies and systems which ensured that EDQ achieved accreditation with no non-conformities. We must also thank the Board for the hours spent working alongside PQPlus to ensure that we had a deep knowledge of the standards, that we were operating not just to the spirit of compliance but to deliver services that met best practise standards within a culture of continuous improvement. Well done team!

The Chair and General Manager attended a two-day AICD Governance training Advanced Not For Profit Governance: Driving and Monitoring Not For Profit funded by and as guests of Communify.

For Profit Governance: Driving and Monitoring Not For Profit funded by and as guests of Communify.

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Treasurer’s Report

The statement of Comprehensive Income for Eating Disorders Qld Limited (EDQ) shows a profit of $79,941, this is due to cashflow incentives and other revenue.

Other income of $40,929 is made up of a PSMP one off payment of $19,5k and relief funds of $7,648, and Centrelink paid maternity funds of $13,331. EDQ also received a grant from Qld Health totalling $130k for COVID-19 support approved for expenditure in FY21 as well as $20,000 to implement an IT Hub to continue providing services to clients during the pandemic. The impact to the financials from COVID-19 was minimal as EDQ continued to provide clients with services and assistance remotely by transferring many of its services to online platforms.

EDQ again received an increase in funding from Qld Health including a CPI payment of $30k.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incomes/Expenses</th>
<th>FY20 ($)</th>
<th>FY19 ($)</th>
<th>Growth (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>1,133,882</td>
<td>1,112,707</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>285,735</td>
<td>164,873</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Expenses</td>
<td>927,171</td>
<td>713,008</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Support Services</td>
<td>151,030</td>
<td>129,402</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EDA Sub Contract Expenses</td>
<td>52,288</td>
<td>64,412</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit Fees</td>
<td>6,181</td>
<td>5,947</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2,757</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>187,067</td>
<td>176,018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervision</td>
<td>3,090</td>
<td>3,355</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sundry Expenses</td>
<td>12,849</td>
<td>10,677</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current year surplus/(deficit)</td>
<td>79,941</td>
<td>172,004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before Income tax</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Tax Expense</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net year surplus/(deficit)</td>
<td>79,941</td>
<td>172,004</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The statement of Financial position shows an increase in Net Assets from $303k to $370k and an increase in Current Liabilities from $155k to $368k. This is due to the receipt of the Grant payment from Qld Health for COVID-19 support totalling $130k. This payment will be spent during FY21.

EDQ continues to hold sufficient funds to cover all it’s liabilities and provisions. The Staff and Board of EDQ are to be commended for their continued efforts in providing a high standard of service to the community, especially during this time of COVID-19 uncertainty.

Karolina Pemberton
Treasurer
Our People

Board members

Karen Dare - Chairperson, Director • Expertise: Community Sector
Karen has a social sciences background and over 35 years of experience in the community sector, working with Community since 1994. She works with a strong community development focus and has extensive experience as a board member for prominent community and other organisations. Karen is recipient of the 2001 Centenary Medal and the Brisbane Australia Day Award for her contribution to the community sector.

Stacey Horder - Secretary, Director • Expertise: HR
Stacey has worked across the full growth cycle of companies – from start-ups, to mergers and acquisitions, alongside managing billion-dollar ventures. Throughout her career, Stacey has consistently advocated for culture and creating organisations that have a strong sense of community. She also spends time mentoring for start-ups and being involved in a Director capacity for not-for-profits.

Karolina Pemberton - Treasurer, Director • Expertise: Finance
Karolina is a qualified accountant with over 17 years of experience across a range of sectors and specialities, including Financial and Management accounting, Budgeting and Forecasting, and not-for-profits. Outside her professional life, Karolina has a love of family, cooking and tennis.

Susan Gobbart - Banking Signatory • Expertise: Psychology/Service Delivery
Susan is a psychologist with a special interest in complex trauma, co-occurring AOD and mental health concerns, and Clinical Governance, particularly program evaluation and service/client outcome measures. She is currently working with an Indigenous Birthing program as a Perinatal and Parenting Psychologist. She has over 30 years of professional experience across a range of areas in the mental health field.

Rex Brar - Ordinary Member • Expertise: Finance and Business Development
Rex is a Chartered Accountant with public practice experience and with commercial exposure in business operations, financial and management reporting, leading ERP implementation, improving business efficiencies, project management, M&A deals and currently setting up a start-up business.

Anastasia Blake - Ordinary Member (banking signatory) • Expertise: Nutrition
Anastasia worked in Education for more than 20 years, primarily in Computer Education and Policy managing initiatives. She has extensive experience in managing and delivering food programmes in various settings. Anastasia first began volunteering with EDQ in its very early days. She now supervises Health Science Dietetics students and is finalising a cookbook with Dr. Leanne Barron for those recovering from eating disorders.

Marc Bryant - Ordinary Member • Expertise: Carer/IT
Marc is a current member of the Qld Government Advisory Group (Eating Disorders), and also has more than 20 years’ experience in State Government public service, including various expert panels and consulting groups, with special interest in IT systems and information management. Marc has had approximately 6 years’ lived experience with eating disorders as a carer and has mentored other carers.

Suzannah D’Juliet - Director • Expertise: Legal
Suzannah is a commercial lawyer who works in Executive Management in the Resources Industry. She has special interests in finance, risk and compliance and has experience as a Non-Executive Director in the private sector. Suzannah has a lived experience of eating disorders and is passionate about EDQ’s quality, client-centered care and service delivery model.

I sit on the Board in the hope that my experience and knowledge might in some way help reduce the impact of EDs and contribute to a better understanding, awareness and perhaps one day making EDs a thing of the past. I want to bring a sense of hope, resilience and guidance to all carers and be an example of a life without the presence of an ED in theirs and their loved one’s lives and that recovery is truly possible.

- Marc Bryant

As a community member I’ve volunteered at EDQ for seven years, watching it grow from ISIS, with minimal staff, to the much larger organisation of today, offering broader and wider services and supported my many more staff members. My skills include programme and project management, teaching, and writing and editing. EDQ also draws on my cooking and nutrition knowledge to support food related initiatives. This combined expertise and experience of the board members ensures EDQ achieves its goals.

- Anastasia Blake

Susan Gobbart (on right) is a board member and psychologist at Institute of Urban and Indigenous Health. Susan invited Belinda (on left) for a visit at the Indigenous Birthing program to build connection and referral pathways between EDQ and IUIH.
Our People

EDQ Clinical Team
Emily Stanley Pickering, Emma Trappett, Lisa Kelly, Nat Scales, Amber Dwinell, Christophe Langlasse, David Langford

EDQ Carer Team
Melissa Cheras, Mel Marks, Mary-Ann Kissane, Sarah Larsen

EDQ Program Support
Rohie Marshall, Marina Nassif, Lisa Fetherstonhaugh

EDQ Allied Health Contractors
Jane Bowman, Megan Bray, Rosalind Quinlan, Carolyn Uhlmann

EDQ COVID Rapid Response Team (This is a new stream of services that commenced in June 2020)
Amanda Long, Tanya Kretschmann, Amber Dwinell, Emily Stanley Pickering
**Referral Pathways In**

- COVID-19 Rapid Response
- QuEDS Hospital Inpatient
- Primary Health Care GP, PHN Hubs
- Self/Carer/Family

**Individual ED Clinical Treatment**

- Target Group: aged 16 years and over

**FUNDING**

- NDIS
- Medicare
- QHealth
- PHN

**Carer/Family/Loved Ones**

- Targeted Short term coaching/support

**Psychosocial Peer Support**

- 6 monthly PMP
- 5 week Meal Support Program
- 30 Clinical Counselling Intentional Peer Support sessions

**Carer Peer Mentoring**

- 10 Weekly Therapeutic ED treatment group
- ED Community Reconnect groups
- Peer Support

**Support Groups Online into sessions**

**Fostering Recovery Skills Workshop**

**Single Session Coaching**

**Community Connection and events**

**Specialist Care Coordination**

**Psychosocial Peer Recovery Coaches**

**Recovery and Discovery Hub**

**Prevention/Early Intervention Schools’ Program**

**Dietician**

**Stepped Care Model**

Eating Disorders Queensland

FY20 Annual Report
Service Delivery Model

Hope, Resilience, Recovery
Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021

Build evidence, through innovation and research to improve clinical treatment responses
- Address gaps in services identified through client feedback.
- Service delivery referral pathway from HHS to EDQ.
- Build an evidence-based innovative program.
- Identify options for addressing growing waitlist, including a private practice arm, NDIS and other funding sources.
- Ensure an emphasis on research development across all services.

Build evidence, through innovation and research to improve carer and family services
- Grow an online presence in carer and family services.
- Review carer and family services through evaluation and client feedback.
- Build partnerships with other carer organisations to identify and meet community needs.
- Ensure an emphasis on research development across all services.
- Build an evidence-based innovative program.

Provide education to diverse communities and health care professionals
- Build connections with Primary Health Networks across the state.
- Develop specialist training sessions for multi-disciplinary practitioners.
- Develop an Early Intervention/Prevention strategy targeting young people in schools.

Build a community of peer leaders to guide recovery and hope
- Develop leadership and governance arrangements for peer mentors in order to increase their input and inclusion.
- Improve support for peer mentors across the sector.
- Identify funding options to pay for senior mentor services.

Build our capacity to deliver state wide services, leading sector and system reform
- Ensure effective responses to eating disorders are represented on statewide and national agendas.
- Identify service delivery hubs to enhance coordinated response to eating disorders in QLD.
- Develop a need identification process to inform QLD Health of statewide needs.
- Safe, effective online presence - Telehealth.

Program overview

Individual Clinical Treatment and Support
QHealth Funding
- Brief contacts
- Information, referrals
- Clinical Counselling sessions per client (30 Max)
- Intentional Peer Support sessions
- X2 10 Week Therapeutic ED treatment group
- X8 ED Community Reconnect groups
- Peer Support group – Co-Facilitated by Mentors and workers with a lived experience
- X2 6 monthly Peer Mentor Program
- X6 (5 week) Meal Support program (Community Table) – Co-Facilitated by QuEDS
- X2 (6 week) Trauma informed Yoga group
- Quarterly Vodcast and downloadable E-page resources
- Quarterly Newsletter

Carer, Families and Key Support People Support
QHealth Funding
- Single Session Coaching
- Single Session Family Coaching
- Information, Referrals
- Community Education
- Carer Peer Mentoring
- X4 Fostering Recovery Skills Workshop
- X3 QuEDS day program Fostering Recovery
- Monthly Carer Connect Support groups
- X2 Online Information sessions/Webinar
- Shared Table – Web-based Meal support training
- Quarterly newsletter

Medicare
- Up to 40 Sessions Via EDP
- Up to 20 Sessions Via MHP
- Dietician via EPC & EDP

PHN Funding - Through Community’s Recovery and Discovery Hub
- X1 11 Week Psychoeducation - Wise Choices (ACT) group
- Monthly - Psychoeducation Group - Support for individuals on Waitlist - Recovery Warriors

NDIS
Capacity Building-Support Coordination and Improved Daily Living:
- Therapeutic Supports
- Level 3 Specialist Support Coordination
- Psychosocial Recovery Coaches
- Support Letters

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COVID-19

How did we respond?

EDQ is committed to delivering our support services in a safe, practical and innovative way. In March 2020, following the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in Australia, we closed our physical offices and committed to providing online support until we could safely return to in-person services.

EDQ’s culture has been and still is about strong community connection, recovery, hope and resilience. As a team we worked hard at translating our core values into services that are meaningful, aids ongoing recovery, connection, and community generated support.

Mindful that the increased difficulty in accessing standard grocery items, along with the forced physical isolation that many of our clients found themselves facing, could lead to increased eating disorder symptomology and distress, EDQ committed to transferring the majority of their support services to online delivery.

This was achieved very quickly, with minimal disruption to scheduled programs. Where a group could not be held online, as with Community Table, a temporary proxy was created in the form of 1:1 meal support sessions with a Support Worker. Additional funding from Qld Health enabled EDQ to provide a ‘Rapid Response Model’, providing increased support to those clients experiencing high acuity due to COVID-19, with the aim of diversion away from presenting at hospital if they are better suited for support and care within a community setting.

Additionally, we significantly increased our social media presence, with staff providing regular mindfulness and wellness tips inspired by their own experiences of working from home. Clients were also encouraged to share their experiences with us, with some clients providing self-care tips, or silver linings. We created an activity guide, filled with free resources that could be accessed easily from home. Our cooking volunteer Anastasia created several nutritious and simple recipes that relied only on easily-sourced ingredients, and filmed cooking tutorial videos along with our General Manager Belinda.

Finally, EDQ staff ensured they remained visible to our clients, sharing frequent ‘group photos’ during Zoom meetings and morning teas with clients. This allowed clients to remain engaged with the team, as would normally occur naturally when they entered the building for an appointment.

During this period, we saw an increase of 54% in the number of client contacts with EDQ, reflecting a high number of both existing and new clients in need of support. While some clients found that the period of time spent in the home environment allowed them the space to focus on recovery, others found that the stressors of the situation led to an increase in severity or frequency of symptoms. Regardless of the situation, EDQ committed to maintaining a steady community presence, as well as providing support services to those who required it.
Our Clients and Services

Who did we support?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ED Diagnostic Impression</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDNOS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.41%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anorexia</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>39.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atypical Anorexia Nervosa (of low frequency and/or of limited duration)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binge Eating Disorder</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Binge eating disorder (of low frequency and/or of limited duration)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulimia</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>26.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulimia Nervosa (of low frequency and/or of limited duration)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compulsive Eating</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Night Eating Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orthorexia</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSFED</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purging Disorder</td>
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<td>0.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unspecified Feeding or Eating Disorders</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.14%</td>
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<td>(No value entered)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.66%</td>
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</table>

Total Client Count: 483 (100%)

Note: Clients may have more than one diagnostic impression

Do you identify as part of the LGBTIQ+?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>37.68%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>12.63%</td>
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<td>185</td>
<td>38.30%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Client Count: 483 (100%)

To be counted as a client, a person must have received at least one contact with the service, during a non-administration related service provision. For example, brief intervention, counselling, web education or care coordination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Sessions/Contacts</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Volunteer/Student Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Referral and Info (phone calls)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Note: Some services have low hours due to a high number of attendees per group - e.g. speaking events. Some services have a high number of clients but a low number of hours, due to a larger number of short duration services, e.g. phone calls.
Clinical Services

EDQ has continued to provide quality therapeutic services to individuals throughout the financial year. Clients have been able to access services via our Qld Health funded stream, our Medicare counselling stream, or using their NDIS package.

Individual Counselling

Our one-on-one counselling services are firmly grounded in evidence-based models and techniques underpinned by a feminist practice framework which are client driven, respectful and work to empower the individual. We work in a holistic way; working closely with an individual’s treatment team. We also work collaboratively with clients to grow and develop their support networks and connecting clients with lived experience mentors and/or peer workers.

The team strives for continuous improvement and the delivery of high-quality services. All practitioners (including Medicare and NDIS practitioners) undertake regular clinical, peer and external supervision. Practitioners keep themselves updated with the latest research through conferences and regular professional development.

In March 2020, due to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, EDQ moved completely online to deliver individual counselling sessions via telehealth. EDQ acknowledge this was a huge shift for staff and clients but EDQ staff were able to continue to deliver high-quality services throughout the transition, ensuring clients had access to ongoing support. We commend all staff and clients in their efforts to be adaptable and resilient in the face of rapid change.

EDQ has continued to use the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE-Q), Recovery Assessment Scale (RASS) and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) with all individual counselling clients. This enables the collection and evaluation of rich data that continues to inform and improve our service delivery and continuous improvement. Our process including initial intakes and waitlists have continued to be monitored and streamlined to adapt to EDQ’s growth and to ensure clients are connected to supports (please see other groups).

EDQ acknowledges the valuable contributions made by students, volunteers and Medicare-rebated counsellors to our counselling services who are integral to our service delivery and continuous improvement.

Therapeutic Group Program

Our well-established group therapy program is open to people of all genders from age 16 years. The highly sought-after therapeutic group aims to create a safe and supportive environment for people to explore some of the underlying reasons why we might be struggling with eating issues.

We look at a range of topics including feelings and needs, relationships and communication, body relationship and acceptance, mindfulness and a critical analysis of how gender roles, cultural, family and societal expectations might play a factor in eating issues. This recognises our feminist underpinning, critiquing the impact of diet culture and patriarchy on the experiences of people with eating disorders. We also added an exploration of values to the content of the group which provided an important connection to self and hopes for future for participants.

The group explores these different topics through discussions and expressively based therapeutic activities which serve to explore the reasons underlying our eating disorder and build our support networks, skills and resources in our recovery journey.

The sense of community created in the groups and the story sharing by participants support people to counter the sense of shame, guilt and isolation that can come with having an eating issue. While people are nervous to share, the support, connection, validation and recognition of self are valued from the experience.

EDQ acknowledges the valuable contributions made by students, volunteers and Medicare-rebated counsellors to our counselling services who are integral to our service delivery and continuous improvement.

Our second therapeutic group was unfortunately disrupted by COVID-19. The group had initially started as a face-to-face group, but after three sessions, EDQ made the difficult decision to temporarily pause the group. After communicating with all group participants and evaluating the risks and benefits of conducting the group online, the decision was made to continue delivering the group via a telehealth platform. Most participants stated that they felt safe to participate in the group via a telehealth setting. While COVID-19 altered the delivery of the group, the participants showed flexibility and resilience in change. Delivering the group via telehealth provided the opportunity for continued connection during the difficult time, as well as story sharing and continued therapeutic exploration of eating issues and a variety of different themes.

We continue to include two speakers from the EDQ community to come into group towards the end to speak about their experience of recovery. This is an opportunity for group participants to ask these speakers questions that they had in relation to recovery, ideas and what was helpful and not helpful.

Invited speakers share in the group meal, providing an opportunity for the group to hear more about their recovery journey. Group participants shared that they really loved this aspect of the group and found it motivating, inspiring and gave them hope recovery was possible.

Feedback from our groups continues to be really supportive and inspiring!

I feel I deserve to take up space, deserve love, deserve to ask for what I need, I deserve to eat
I like the openness and acceptance of EDQ groups
I can give myself permission to eat and not have to worry about others when eating
I now have more recognition about what I need and how to ask for it

During this financial year, two 10-week therapeutic groups were run. The first group ran from 14 October – 16 December. Participants have often given feedback that a structured opportunity for connection at that time of year helps enormously due to increased stressors around food and family during holiday time.

This is what counselling can look like! - EDQ Client pictured here with EIP Emily over zoom chat.

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Community Table

Recovery Through Connected Eating

The Community Table is a group-based meal support program that aims to provide a supportive environment for individuals working toward nutrition related goals (i.e. adequate eating, variety, and social eating). The program also aims to provide a supportive environment for individuals to manage meal related anxiety and distress in the moment and practice skills and activities that may be helpful in managing meal related anxiety and distress. The Community Table included a range of craft, gardening, sensory and mindfulness-based activities.

After the initial success in the development and delivery of The Community Table in the previous financial year, EDQ facilitated four rounds of the program between July 2019 and February 2020.

For the second year in a row, EDQ partnered with the Queensland Eating Disorder Service Day Program who provided a co-facilitator for each round. Eating Issues Practitioner David co-facilitated the first, third and fourth rounds and Senior Eating Issues Practitioner Emma co-facilitated the second round. Eating Issues Practitioner Lisa also co-facilitated the fourth round of the program.

Due to COVID-19, EDQ made the difficult decision to not deliver the program via a telehealth platform as there were concerns that there would be unique difficulties in providing a safe and supportive environment for a group-based meal support program. Instead, EDQ shifted to telehealth based individual meal support as this was it provided a greater level of safety and support for the client.

EDQ will recommence the delivery of The Community Table when it is safe to facilitate group-based programs in person.

Participant Quotes:

I found it helpful that it didn’t focus solely on the meal but more on the time before and afterwards.

I found the activities to be very calming. I enjoyed making the eye masks which I have used to relax when anxious.

Statistical analysis of quantitative data was completed by Dr Yvette Miller at the School of Public Health and Social at the Queensland University of Technology. This evaluation examined the outcomes of all nine programs completed in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years. As with the evaluation of the pilot program, the results were promising and included a statistically significant reduction in eating disorder symptomology across the Restraint and Shape concerns subscales of the Eating Disorder Examination Questionnaire (EDE Q). The evaluation also identified a very confident reduction in the global EDE Q score.

Participants reported that they found the structure and activities of the program helpful in managing meal related anxiety and distress. Participants also reported that they found the group environment supportive when working toward nutritional goals.
Support Worker Role

EDQ offered a peer support worker role which sought to complement other therapies and offer a safe, compassionate space to connect with a peer who understands the struggle involved with overcoming an eating disorder.

Peer Worker Lisa undertook training in Intentional Peer Support, a methodology that prioritises a reciprocal learning relationship, with the goal of building community-oriented help. This helped to inform the peer worker role as a role where “recovery” becomes a mutual, dynamic relational process and outcome. Lisa provided non-judgemental, compassionate support through one-on-one intentional peer support sessions, connecting, and relating to the lived experience of recovery through art activities and meal support. The peer support worker role values all individuals as experts of their own experience and seeks to reduce the experience of isolation that can be a key issue in the eating issues community.

Following Lisa’s promotion to EDQ Practitioner, EDQ then engaged a support worker role from February ‘20 to June ‘20. The role was directly informed by Lisa’s training and experience in Peer Work. Support work provides a practical adjunct to client’s current therapy, giving clients the opportunity to practice the skills learnt in therapy in a safe and supportive space. The session entailed of a strengths focused approach, where both client and worker worked together to manage meal-time distress. Amber and her clients created Distress Tolerance Toolboxes, engaged in Supportive Meal therapy and pre and post meal activities to manage discomfort.

This service continued via ZOOM as we transitioned to working from home in March ‘20. Online, one-on-one Meal Support was helpful in bringing support to our clients in their homes. Amber provided this service to 12 clients who on average received 10 sessions before transitioning to another group or service within EDQ. Amber then transitioned to the COVID Rapid Response Team. The Support Worker role became an important informant to the creation of the Peer Worker Role in the COVID Rapid Response Team.

Medicare Services

EDQ has continued to successfully run a Medicare counselling stream through 2019 and 2020. Clients with a mental health care plan, Eating Disorder Care Plan (introduced November 2019) and Enhanced Primary Care Plan can access Medicare-subsidised individual counselling or dietetic sessions.

EDQ’s Medicare counselling team consisted of Jane Bowman (Mental Health Social Worker) and Rosie Quinlan (Clinical Psychologist). Carolyn Uhlmann (Psychologist) provided Medicare services throughout 2019. Megan Bray (Dietitian) provides Medicare-subsidised dietetic sessions and this has continued to remain successful with Megan increasing her hours throughout 2019/2020.

In November 2019, new Medicare item number were introduced by the Federal Government. The Eating Disorder Care Plan (Medicare benefits scheme item numbers) can deliver up to 40 psychotherapeutic sessions and 20 dietetic sessions across a range of eating disorders and requires a GP assessment.

This has increased access and affordability to evidence-based treatment for our clients and continues to grow.

The Medicare team have adapted to the ongoing changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of new Medicare telehealth items has allowed clients to continue to access their practitioner via telehealth. As restrictions eased, clients have decided with their practitioner if they will continue with telehealth sessions or re-commence face-to-face. EDQ stayed up to date with announcements and ongoing recommendations during the pandemic.

The growing demand for counselling and dietetic sessions under the Medicare stream has led EDQ to bringing on another contractor to provide services and increase accessibility to support.

Preparing the Covid Stream

Rapid Stand-Up Stand-down Model

EDQ’s Rapid Stand-Up Stand-Down Covid Stream is made up of:

- Senior Practitioner Emily
- Eating Disorders Practitioner Amber
- Two Lived Experience Peer/Psychosocial Support Workers - Mandy and Tanya
- Dietitian - Megan

As people across Queensland experienced the impact of Covid-19, EDQ gratefully received funding from Qld Health to develop and roll-out a time-limited, Rapid Stand Up-Stand Down COVID response stream. In collaboration with HHS and QuEDS, EDQ developed a service aimed to support those individuals living with an eating disorder who are acutely impacted, lacking supports, and at risk due to Covid-19.

In May 2020 the Covid Stream team commenced weekly meetings with the first intakes of clients referred by and QuEDS. The stream is funded until June 2021 and, given the positive response to this new stream, we are optimistic the service will have a profound impact on the lives of those most impacted by Covid-19.
The Peer Support Group is a new addition to EDQ’s lineup of support options and was created in January in response to the scarcity of existing options for clients to connect with other people who also had experienced the recovery process. Peer Support Group is made up entirely of people with lived experience of an eating disorder. People in the group have a whole range of eating disorders and range from the very beginning stages of seeking support for their eating disorder, all the way to long-term recovery.

Clients can choose to attend on a week-by-week basis, so there is no obligation to attend each session. The purpose of the group is to foster and support recovery and offer an opportunity to connect with others who are currently in recovery as well. We have created this group based on feedback from our existing clients that it would be nice to have a place to connect with peers, that provides a bit of a break from therapy but is still a supportive and safe environment. The group also provides a support option for those who are on a waitlist for individual counselling or other services, ensuring that motivation to recover is not lost due to lack of support.

The group can share their common experiences and resources and work together to build a safe and supportive community, where they feel comfortable exploring common areas of concern, difficulty, and triumph.

The Peer Support Group meeting 21 times in its first six months of existence (~ 37 hours of contact time). The increased frequency of the groups has been helpful in allowing clients to maintain community connections during a period of forced social isolation. We are also able to run the weekly groups at alternating times in order to accommodate differing schedules.

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From the program’s beginning as a fortnightly in-person group, we soon switched to a more frequent online meeting. This has proven to be a sustainable option, with Peer Support Group meeting 21 times in its first six months of existence (~37 hours of contact time). The increased frequency of the groups has been helpful in allowing clients to maintain community connections during a period of forced social isolation. We are also able to run the weekly groups at alternating times in order to accommodate differing schedules.

Opportunity for support and connection. To be part of a Community of people who have had similar experiences.

Hearing about how other people go through the same stuff that I do, have the same thoughts that I do, and feeling less isolated.

To feel less alone. It’s nice talking to others who get it and really encouraging I think to hear from those a little further along in recovery.

Knowing that I have found the group beneficial and supportive motivates me to attend each week. I look forward to attending it.

Speaker Program

EDQ’s approach of highly valuing people with a lived experience has been recognised globally as a key element of best practice for a holistic approach to mental health.

The EDQ Speaker Program began in 2016, in response to requests from the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital, seeking greater support for those transitioning from hospital into the community. There is a power in hearing someone who is in recovery speak about their own recovery journey that is unlike any other treatment available. The Speaker Program sits alongside the Peer Mentor Program, which offers a longer-term one-on-one opportunity for connection.

In later stage recovery I find it hard to connect with friends who have not experienced an ED and look for connection at group with people who have experienced / are experiencing similar things living life / recovery in such a weight / body obsessed society. It’s a very different way of thinking that we have than non-ED people and it’s hard to keep that up when everyone / thing else around us is diet / thin obsessed. Group helps me connect with people who have similar experience to me and motivates me to know I’m on the right track and keep doing what I’m doing in recovery.

Feedback:

WHY DO YOU ATTEND PSG?

Knowing that I have found the group beneficial and supportive motivates me to attend each week. I look forward to attending it.

INCREASE HOPE IN THE POSSIBILITY OF RECOVERY

INCREASE UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE ARE MANY PATHWAYS TO RECOVERY

EXPLORE STRATEGIES FOR RECOVERY

INCREASE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

IN LIGHT OF THE IMPACTS OF COVID, THE SPEAKER PROGRAMS ANNUAL TRAINING EVENTS AND STORY-SHARING WORKSHOPS WERE MOVED ONTO AN ONLINE PLATFORM FOR THE FIRST TIME. SPEAKERS CONTINUED TO SHARE THEIR STORIES OF RECOVERY AT INPATIENT TRAINING EVENTS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA AND ZOOM.
For Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness Week (BIDeAW) Chloe also responded to questions around body image for the EDQ community:

Do you feel ‘body positive’ all the time? What about ‘body neutral’ or ‘body accepting’?
I don’t feel body positive in the traditional sense of being positive of the appearance of my body but instead I’m body positive in the sense I’m positive and love the fact I have a body, and it functions! I have a beating heart, a stomach, arms and legs that allows me to live, eat, give hugs and stand tall.

What have you found influences your body image and how do you manage that?
A big thing that influences my body image is being a twin, we are constantly being compared to each other and as we are identical I often think I should look like her because of this. I manage this by reminding myself we are different people and it’s okay to look different and be individual.

Why did you first join the speaker program at EDQ?
C: I first joined the speaker program at EDQ as when I was unwell I had the honour of hearing one of the speakers from EDQ share their story and it was the first time I had heard of someone who was in recovery and it inspired me on my own recovery journey so I told myself when I was well I wanted to be able to share my story and help others not only going through an eating disorder but those working in the eating disorders field and the greater community.

What do you wish someone had told you about the recovery process?
I wish someone had told me that it’s okay and normal to struggle and to miss the eating disorder in my recovery journey especially in the beginning I have that I was building a life worth living and one that was actually bringing me joy but there was a part of me that missed the eating disorder.

What have you learnt about yourself in recovery?
I have learnt a lot about myself in recovery, I have learnt I am brave, creative, kind and loving. I have learnt I really love and enjoy cooking, but most importantly I have learnt that I’m a good person who deserved to be treated nicely and loved especially by myself.

Round 1: February-July 2020
Seven mentors and mentees were matched and commenced the program. Key differences in the running of this round were the having to deal with challenges related to COVID-19 and as result using the video conferencing platform Zoom to conduct the events (except Meet and Greet). Two senior mentors completed the program. Completion rate of matched pairs: five of seven.

Mentor: “I found the program to be a positive experience. As a mentor I believe I gained a greater insight into myself and my ongoing eating disorder recovery. I think it was run well in the face of a very disruptive year and maintained good community and connection despite these difficulties (Covid19, 2020).”

Mentee: “The chief benefit of the program for me has been to have supportive person to talk to who understands the issues that I’m going through. Hearing how my mentor navigated similar issues and having her check in with me have supportive person to talk to who understands the issues that I’m going through. Hearing how my mentor navigated similar issues and having her check in with me made me feel very supported”.

Round 2: July-December 2019
Nine mentors and mentees were matched and commenced the program. Part-way through the program one mentor was unable to complete the program due to personal reasons and their mentee decided not to continue. Another mentee chose to withdraw from the program for personal reasons and their mentor therefore also did not complete the program. Two senior mentors completed the program. Completion rate of matched pairs: seven of nine.

At the end of each program we receive feedback from our mentors and senior mentors regarding their own wellbeing and recovery in the context of mentoring relationships. This is what some of our mentors and senior mentors reflected when asked about their learnings and perceived benefits of being a part of the program:

Mentor: “A really great experience! Learnt a lot about myself and trusting others. Was challenged by my mentor weekly for recovery and to be a better person in society”.

Mentee: “I found the program to be a positive experience. As a mentor I believe I gained a greater insight into myself and my ongoing eating disorder recovery. I think it was run well in the face of a very disruptive year and maintained good community and connection despite these difficulties (Covid19, 2020).”
Non-therapeutic Groups

Trauma Informed Yoga

EDQ added to the holistic nature of its services by introducing our Yoga for Recovery program.

For thousands of years, Yoga has been offered as a practice to enhance connection between mind and body and can provide another way to support people with eating disorders, anxiety and depression in their recovery journey.

Through the practice of yoga, a person can start to regain that sense of connection to their body that may have been lost through their struggle with an eating disorder. Yoga provides the opportunity to feel and experience different sensations in the body in a safe and supported way.

A yoga practice can be a way for people to make peace with the body, reclaim the body, and learn that the body can be reliable, safe, and effective again.

Yoga also offers the opportunity to practice present moment attention and to learn and recognise the ability of the brain to change and find new ways of thinking and being.

The overarching principles of yoga at EDQ include:

- A safe and supportive environment in which to practice, experience and explore.
- Gentle approaches which encourage self-compassion and kindness to oneself
- Different options and complete choice over what you do with your body
- Encourage each person’s own exploration of the forms and breathing practices for their own benefit (stay with own experience)
- Invitational Language

The yoga program was put on pause due to the impact of COVID-19 but will recommence late 2020.

The main goal for Yoga for Recovery is to give the person the opportunity to connect to and notice sensations in their body and then be able to interact with what they feel in various self-directed compassionate ways.

Sessions start with a centreing practice and a series of gentle warmups. Then explore different forms, finishing with a rest/relaxation time. Sessions will also include connection to breath, exploring different breathing practices and practices of meditation and mantra.

Sessions will also be informed by the philosophical principles and understanding of Yoga such as Ahimsa (non-harming). Sessions have consistency each week with slight variations to encourage feelings of safety and predictability.

This allows people to focus more on turning their attention to their inner experience of the practice.

Here’s some feedback from the participants:

- Judgement free zone
- Body positive
- Relaxing
- At your own pace
- LGBT+ safe
- Friendly and safe environment
- Learning and being reminded of techniques to connect with my body
- Learning about the philosophy of yoga while practicing and trying to be still
- A safe place to come together to explore moving my body in different ways
- Comfortable, kind environment
- I enjoyed that the environment consisted of a small group of individuals dealing with eating disorder recovery who also wanted to reap the benefits of yoga! The instructor was compassionate and gentle and gave us intention for each practice!

What was helpful about Yoga for where you are currently at with your eating issue?

- I felt as though my mind was connected to my body.
- Options and acceptance to do what suited me.
- Helped me take a moment for me and physically connecting with my body.
- The focus on mantras and compassion as a reminder to not always push myself so far.
- I think learning to sit in my body was an interesting challenge. For me, sitting in my skin/shell is a tough one and doing yoga allowed me to slow down and do that.
- The yoga group was calming and I felt quite connected to everyone while still being able to focus on myself. It made me feel very safe and accepted while exploring parts of myself (physically, mentally and emotionally) that I hadn’t touched on before.
- The yoga group was calming and I felt quite connected to everyone while still being able to focus on myself. It made me feel very safe and accepted while exploring parts of myself (physically, mentally and emotionally) that I hadn’t touched on before.
- I appreciated the emphasis on the healing aspects of yoga! This helped me look at yoga in a new light that has been beneficial for my relationship with my mind and body!
Community Education

As part of EDQ’s commitment to preventing the development of eating disorders, and encouraging early access to the appropriate treatment, EDQ dedicates time each year to community education.

This can take a number of forms, including taking part in mental health forums and events; delivering educational visits to schools; competing and presenting at conferences; media appearances; guest speaking at forums; contributing to professional working groups; and holding public awareness events each year.

Throughout this financial year, we were very active in the community education space, and were able to pivot many of our planned events and activities online in response to COVID-19.

In particular, our annual World Eating Disorder Day was shifted from a traditionally in-person, single day event, to a week-long, interactive online festival.

World Eating Disorders Action Day (WEDAD) is an international day of awareness and action, held on June 2nd each year, is dedicated to disseminating accurate information and raising the awareness that eating disorders are serious, treatable, illnesses that result from a complex interplay of genetics, biology, and environment.

World Eating Disorders Action Day (WEDAD) is a key event on our advocacy calendar, and we were keen to ensure that the event was shifted from a traditionally in-person, single day event, to a week-long, interactive online festival.

World Eating Disorders Action Day

MONDAY 1ST

11AM Weight Stigma

Weight stigma is a well-documented contributor to both fat phobia, and the development of disordered eating. EDQ and Janet Lowndes (Mind Body Well) will discuss the impacts of weight related beliefs and health anxiety on weight and eating health. This session promotes an approach to thinking that fosters body positivity and size inclusivity.

TUESDAY 2ND

1PM Connect with EDQ

Curious about what counselling and coaching looks like? Join EDQ Practitioners Chris and Cara for a Q&A. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions about the therapy process and gaining insight into what EDQ can offer. No question is silly here.

WEDNESDAY 3RD

2PM Recovery through Connected Eating

EDQ practitioners David & Amber will talk about EDQ’s Community Table and Telephone community meal support programs, sharing ideas, resources, and updates on the quest for supported meal therapy at EDQ. Join us to create a virtual conversation.

THURSDAY 4TH

11AM Residential Treatment - a first for Australia

Many are familiar with EDQ’s mission for recovery, and the need for increased treatment options for people with eating disorders. Are you interested in the possible future of access to residential treatment? This session is a great opportunity to ask questions and gain insight into the experience of people who are in recovery.

FRIDAY 5TH

11AM Recovery is Possible - the individual experience

Time in to this session to talk about a recovery journey, and learn how to move forward. This session is an opportunity to share stories and gain insight into the experience of others.

2PM Recovery through Counselling

Senior ED Practitioners Emma and Emily will be continuing the counselling conversation, exploring different approaches to therapy, and providing a platform for those with lived experience to share their stories.

Each session was then recorded and uploaded to EDQ’s website for later viewing.

In addition, a number of individuals and carers with lived experience filmed and shared videos on their experience of the journey of recovery from an eating disorder.

These videos were shared on EDQ’s social media channels and website, and were very popular, with one video reaching over 1800 viewers.

EDQ recognised this opportunity to disseminate the messages of this important day online.

EDQ’s #ShareYourStory initiative for WEDAD 2020 included a series of short videos with people from all genders, ethnicities, sizes, nationalities, and ages. The 2020 theme of the campaign was ‘#ShareYourStory - the diversity within the eating disorder sector’.

The WEDAD campaign aims to raise global awareness that eating disorders are serious, treatable, illnesses that result from a complex interplay of genetics, biology, and environment.

EDQ is committed to preventing the development of eating disorders, and encouraging early access to the appropriate treatment, through community education and raising awareness.

EDQ utilised Instagram Live to host a variety of health professionals from the eating disorder sector, alongside people with a lived experience of eating disorders, both as individuals, and as carers/loved ones/key supporters. Interested participants were invited to submit questions on the daily topic ahead of time, and tune into the live-streamed session to participate in a conversation about eating disorder awareness and the events that impact us.

World Eating Disorders Action Day

FY20 Annual Report
Community Education Events

Student Diana, Practice Coordinator Rohie, and Carer Coach Mary-Ann were invited to UQ’s SAS Land Fair, an event designed to showcase external support services available to UQ’s students.

Two of EDQ’s Senior Peer Mentors, Alexandra and Mandy, in our Peer Mentor Program contributed to the development of the National Eating Disorders Research and Translation Strategy 2020-2030 document, a project which is being led by Inside Out.

Senior Practitioner Emily attended the NEDC Member’s Meeting in Melbourne in February 2020, providing EDQ’s contribution to the project ‘Building the System of Care for Eating Disorders’. At this meeting, the new resource ‘Developing a Peer Workforce for Eating Disorders’ was also launched.

Practice Coordinator Rohie attended QLD Mental Health Commission’s launch of Queensland’s Framework for the development of the Mental Health Lived Experience Workforce, hosted by BrookRED – a Peer Operated Mental Health Service.

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Practitioner David and Public Health Student Hannah delivered a Body Acceptance Workshop at Fairholme College. Student feedback from this presentation is currently being used to inform development of EDQ’s new school-based early intervention project.

Practitioner Melissa and Health Promotion Officer Marina held an information stall at Roses in the Ocean’s Suicide Prevention event in 2019. Suicide prevention is an important facet of eating disorder awareness.

In her role as Peer Support Worker, Lisa was featured on a WIN News TV report discussing eating disorders and her journey to access support.

Carer Coach Sarah, Senior Practitioner Emily, and Carer Coach Mary-Ann are pictured here at the Mental Health Expo in Redcliffe Place. This event is always well attended by both community members and professionals.

Senior Peer Mentor Tanya and General Manager Belinda took some time to speak on ABC Radio Brisbane, discussing Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness Week. Radio appearances such as this one ensure our messages reach wide audiences, including those who are not experiencing body image issues or disordered eating behaviours, but who may know someone who is.

General Manager Belinda, Senior Mentor Tanya, and CEO of the National Mental Health Commission and National Suicide Prevention Adviser to Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Christine Morgan pictured here at the Leading Reform summit held by Qld Mental Health Commission.

Carer Coaches Mel and Mel held a badge making and information stall at a school wellbeing fair in 2019.

Practitioner David and Public Health Student Hannah delivered a Body Acceptance Workshop at Fairholme College. Student feedback from this presentation is currently being used to inform development of EDQ’s new school-based early intervention project.

Practitioner Melissa and Health Promotion Officer Marina held an information stall at Roses in the Ocean’s Suicide Prevention event in 2019. Suicide prevention is an important facet of eating disorder awareness.

In her role as Peer Support Worker, Lisa was featured on a WIN News TV report discussing eating disorders and her journey to access support.

Carer Coach Sarah, Senior Practitioner Emily, and Carer Coach Mary-Ann are pictured here at the Mental Health Expo in Redcliffe Place. This event is always well attended by both community members and professionals.
Carers Feedback Quotes:

- It was very reassuring to hear similar stories, particularly from a parent who has come out the other side. Very inspiring.
- Such a privilege to hear from a person herself who has been through recovery. Inspiring and helps me a lot in understanding...the processes she has been through.

Carer Connect Support Group

The Carer Connect Support Group provides a supportive and collaborative environment for family members, carers and key support people to connect with others who are going through a similar journey in supporting their loved ones through eating disorder recovery.

The Group is facilitated by EDQ Family and Carer Coaches and is an opportunity to learn about information and skills, as well as the sharing of experiences and insights between carers.

Throughout 2019-20 Carer Connect has run monthly from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Each month focuses on a different theme/topic and at times includes guest speakers. Facilitators have received feedback from carers expressing how much they appreciate having the opportunity to connect with others who understand how they are feeling, in a safe and non-judgmental environment. Carers have also shared that attending this monthly group is a key part of managing their own self-care and wellbeing.

This financial year there were 10 Carer Connect Support Groups, with a total of 93 participants (with an average of 9 carers per group). From April 2020 the group has met via ZOOM in the context of COVID-19. With this change in delivery mode EDQ have been able to reach carers across Queensland who otherwise would be unable to attend. In addition, some carers based in Brisbane have shared that the online platform has afforded them the opportunity to join Carer Connect when previously they were unable to attend in person due to their caring responsibilities. Therefore, although the opportunity for informal connection and chat before/after the group has reduced, there have also been notable benefits in the change in delivery mode.

After each group carers are encouraged to provide meaningful feedback via evaluation forms (including what they liked most/least and suggestions for future topics). This feedback is used in an ongoing nature to inform future groups. Highlights of the 2019-20 year included the below guest speakers:

- A carer who supported his loved one through recovery
- An individual who has been through her own recovery journey
- Arofni Ltd who provided information about their carer support services
- Dr Leanne Barron (GP) and Megan Bray (Dietitian) who provided insights into eating disorder recovery from a medical and dietetic perspective

Of note was the special Carer Connect dinner, which brought carers together over a shared meal, cooked and prepared by our wonderful EDQ casual cook Claire, and included a carer guest speaker.

Individual Coaching

Throughout 2019 and 2020 Eating Disorders Queensland has continued to provide coaching services to carers and key support people. Over the last 12 months the carer and family team have worked on expanding our services to reach as many carers in the community.

We have been actively promoting our coaching service on social media, EDQ’s newsletter, the updated carer help kit and on the My Mental Health Website. Further, the team have met with service providers including Carers Queensland, Aratmi, Community, GWMBS Greenslopes and QLeBAs in order to promote our coaching support service.

Our coaching service aims to collaboratively identify the key issues/ challenges that the carer/key support person is experiencing in supporting their loved one through their eating disorder recovery. Sessions focus on practical skills, strategies, and action plans to support carers/key support people to support their loved ones.

Feedback has been provided by clients who have accessed the coaching service:

- “(coaching) has helped to provide insight, compassion and tools for me to use for my loved one”
- “I have felt incredibly grateful to speak with an understanding coach who can ‘lift me up’, again and provide encouragement and strength when I have felt depleted”.

In addition to coaching service we have been encouraging carers to link into other services including Carer Connect, Fostering Recovery and the Carer Peer Mentor Program.

Carer Peer Mentor Program

Throughout 2019 and 2020 EDQ has continued to provide coaching services to carers and key support people. Over the last 12 months the carers and family team have worked on expanding our services to reach as many carers in the community as possible. The purpose of the program is to connect Queensland carers who are currently supporting a loved one (mentees) with carers who have supported a loved one in their recovery (mentors). Three mentees and three mentors were matched, with all mentors undergoing a comprehensive training before the program.

Mentors also engaged in one-on-one supervision with facilitators throughout the program. Mentees were supported by program facilitators in one-on-one coaching sessions throughout the duration of the program.

The program was impacted by COVID-19, and following the meet and greet event, the group moved to an online format. The midpoint and final celebration were delivered via web-based video conferencing.

At the end of the program we received feedback from both mentees and mentors regarding their experience of the program, and the impact the program has had on their support roles.
Skills Based Training

Our long-running Fostering Recovery Skills Based Workshop is open to family members and carers across Queensland. The workshop is based on the evidence informed work of Professor Janet Treasure, which focuses on a collaborative approach to supporting a loved one.

The workshop aims to:

- Support family members and carers in deepening their understanding of eating disorders
- Offer collaborative ways to support loved ones with recovery
- Understand carer emotional and behavioural responses
- Understand stages of recovery
- Communicate strategies and meal support strategies

EDQ partnered with QuEDS to deliver the Fostering Recovery QuEDS Group for family members and carers of loved ones attending the QuEDS Day Program. The group is run over 3 nights and is co-facilitated by an EDQ Carer and Family Coach and a member of the QuEDS Day Program team. As with the Fostering Recovery Workshop, this group is based on the evidence informed work of Professor Janet Treasure, which focuses on a collaborative approach to supporting a loved one.

The group aims to:

- Support family members and carers in deepening their understanding of eating disorders
- Collaborative ways to support loved ones with recovery
- Understanding carer emotional and behavioural responses
- Understanding stages of recovery
- Communication strategies and meal support strategies

Supportive environment, skilled facilitators who allowed people to have their voice/say, but made themes relevant to the whole group. Diversity of people’s experiences and hearing others’ stories was great.

The Shared Table is an innovative online meal support training program for carers which has been funded by the LINK Innovation Fund, Metro North Hospital and Health Service. This training has been designed to assist carers in the provision of meal support.

It includes information about the stages of meal support, communication skills, setting rules, boundaries and non-negotiables, and provides an in-depth look at the role nutrition plays in recovery. We launched the program in February 2020 and have since had over 230 registrations for the training.

This training module is simply outstanding. To say I would have given a lot to have this resource is a huge understatement.
Medicare Reform 1 November 2019
In November 2019, following much lobbying from the eating disorder sector, Medicare announced a landmark reform with the introduction of 54 new MBS items to support a model of best practice, evidence-based care for patients with anorexia nervosa and other eligible patients with eating disorders. The introduction of these items, along with the new Eating Disorder Treatment Plan (EDP), enables eligible clients to access up to 40 subsidised sessions of counselling with an experienced mental health clinician and up to 20 subsidised sessions of dietician support. The EDP Model has been designed to foster communication between all treating practitioners of a client and also encourages the inclusion of supportive family members in treatment planning.

Vodcast Episodes 3 (Carer Fatigue) 4 December 2019
Lived Experience Carer Marc joined General Manager Belinda to discuss Carer Fatigue for Episode 3 of EDQ’s Vodcast. Exercise Physiologist Alanah Dobinson and General Manager Belinda discussing how exercise can be safely incorporated into eating disorder recovery.

Introduced NDIS Arm 6 December 2019
EDQ is now an accredited NDIS provider, registered to deliver Therapeutic Supports and Capacity Building (Daily Living Skills).

Carer Help Kit website 11 December 2019
We were thrilled to announce the launch of the Carer Help Kit! Designed to supersede the existing EDA Carer Help Kit, which was very popular and contained lots of useful information for carers, loved ones, and health professionals. All the information was updated, and a new ‘For Professionals’ tab was added, which features newly created resources for GPs caring for those living with an eating disorder. eatingdisordercareerhelpkit.com.au.

International Women’s Day 4 March 2020
To celebrate International Women’s Day this year, using the theme #TechForEquity, EDQ screened the ABC documentary ‘You Can’t Ask That: Eating Disorders’.

Shared Table Launch 6 March 2020
The Shared Table is an innovative online meal support training program for carers which has been funded by the UHN Innovation Fund, Metro North Hospital and Health Service. This training has been designed to assist carers in the provision of meal support. It includes information about the stages of meal support, communication skills, setting rules, boundaries, and non-negotiables, and provides an in-depth look at the role nutrition plays in recovery. “This training module is simply outstanding. To say I would have given a lot to have this resource is a huge understatement.” - Marc, carer
Events continued

Vodcast Episodes 4 (Exercise and Eating Disorders)
1 April 2020
Lived Experience Carer Marc joined General Manager Belinda to discuss Carer Fatigue for Episode 3 of EDQ’s Vodcast. Exercise Physiologist Alanah Dobinson and General Manager Belinda discussing how exercise can be safely incorporated into eating disorder recovery.

WEDAD Online
1 - 5 September 2019
Another event that was significantly impacted by COVID-19 was our annual World Eating Disorder Ac-
tion Day. Where we would normally hold an in-person event, this year we instead moved to an entirely
digital platform. We took to Instagram, programming a week-long schedule of discussions with to various
health professionals from the eating disorder sector, alongside people with a lived experience of eating
disorders, both as individuals, and as care/treated ones/sey supports. Speakers were encouraged to
use our platform to share their story, sharing how they act against eating disorders and change the way
that eating disorders are understood and perceived. Topics included Weight Stigma, Recovery Through
Connected Eating, Residential Treatment, Recovery through Counselling, and Recovery is Possible - the
Individual Experience and the Carer Experience. We were also able to share several videos from people
with lived experience, sharing their experiences of the recovery journey.

Additional COVID funding
9 June 2020
EDQ was among the first to benefit from the $28 million fund established to support Queensland’s
community-based health service groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a $130,000 grant.
Assistant Minister for Health Nikki Boyd said it was critical to provide support to the most vulnerable in
our community. “In the first round of this initiative, we have supported Eating Disorders Queensland by
directly allocating funding to ensure individuals needing mental health support can access services
during this difficult time.” Ms Boyd said. “It is critical that we back our community support services during
these difficult times as they respond rapidly to the widespread impact of the virus in Queensland.”

ICED Online
11 - 30 June 2020
EDQ was proud to be a silver sponsor of the inaugural Virtual International Conference on Eating
Disorders (ICED), co-hosted by the Australia and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders (ANZADE
and Academy for Eating Disorders (AED). The International Conference this year has the theme of
“Taking A Different Perspective”. In particular, EDQ sponsored two streams of discussion, research, and
presentation - Emerging Ideas in Research and Practice, and Innovative Embodied and Creative
Therapies. Members of our team also recorded three different presentations, available to be viewed by
all conference participants.

Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness
Week 2019

Banners and Frankie, EDN Collab
9 - 15 September 2019
This year’s Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness Week was EDQ’s biggest yet. We partnered with
the Eating Disorder Network to commission several large banners, which were then hung in high-traffic
locations across Brisbane for several weeks in September. We also held a large public event in King
George Square, creating an updated version of the original ISIS paper mache figure. By public consensus,
this non-binary figure was named “Frankie”.

Below: The construction and painting process of statue Frankie.
Above: For the first time, EDQ was able to display banners on the Story Bridge, and also light up the
city with purple as part of Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness Week.

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all conference participants.

Other Events:
Accreditation: August 2019
World Suicide Prevention Day – stall: 10 September 2019
Body Acceptance Workshop Toowoomba: 12 September 2019
Weight Stigma Awareness Week: 23 September 2019
ARAFMI Carer Forum – stall: 16 October 2019
Productivity Commission: 2 December 2019
Launch Peer Support Group: 20 February 2020
Staff and clients wrote down their mental health promises on origami cranes as part of Mental Health Week celebrations.

EDQ kept up their regular staff meetings over Zoom during the telehealth-only period, and made good use of the background function.

Board Chair Karen is here pictured with Aunty Dawn, who performed a Welcome to Country at EDQ’s International Women’s Day event.

Assistant Health Minister Nikki Boyd with General Manager Belinda, announcing that Eating Disorders Queensland will be among the first to benefit from the $28 million fund established to support Queensland’s community-based health service groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a $130,000 grant.

General Manager Belinda was invited to the ‘breaking ground’ ceremony of the endED Butterfly House – the first residential treatment service for eating disorders in Australia. Belinda is pictured here with Butterfly Foundation CEO (Kevin Barrow, on left), and Andrew Wallace MP (centre).

Our photographer and videographer Tim is shown here filming for our series of cooking videos, with all recipes created by volunteer and board member Anastasia.

In December 2019, EDQ staff took a day to kayak along the Tingalpa Creek waterways. This was a great way to bond as a team and spend some time outside.

EDQ staff were able to travel to Adelaide Convention Centre to attend and present at the Australian New Zealand Academy of Eating Disorders Conference in 2019.

During EDQ’s Annual Operational Planning day, we took a break to take a dance class with West End Dance.

General Manager Belinda and QuEDS Psychiatrist Warren Ward filmed an introduction to the newly launched Shared Table Meal Support Training Program, which was developed during 2019 and launched in early 2020.

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Senior Practitioner Emily pictured here working on our 2020 schedule of support options.

Practice Coordinator Rohie (right) and Health Promotion Officer Marina at Mental Health Week event in 2019.

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The EDQ team travelled to Adelaide for the Australian and New Zealand Academy for Eating Disorders (ANZAED) conference in August 2019 to connect with other professionals in the field, present on our programs and develop our professional knowledge around the latest research. EDQ were excited to have their abstracts accepted to talk about two programs, Peer Mentor Program and Community Table.

Belinda Chelius and David Langford presented some pilot research on our program, Community Table – community-based meal support as an innovative program. They described the development and delivery of the program and some preliminary data. Belinda and David reported that there were reductions in eating disorder symptom severity (all subscales) from the pilot data and data would continue to be analysed for future research and continuous improvement.

EDQ were thrilled to be a sponsor of the International Conference for Eating Disorders (ICED) in June 2020. The theme was Taking a Different Perspective. ICED runs conferences internationally every year and in 2020 was set to be hosted in Sydney, Australia. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the conference was moved to an online platform which allowed the team to access the latest international research, network with other professionals and present on our own programs including the Peer Mentor Program, Community Table and 10-wk Therapeutic Group.

EDQ was excited have three abstracts accepted to present on our programs. We presented on:
- Community Table,
- Peer Mentor Program and
- 10-week Therapeutic Group.

The data analyses were completed in conjunction with Dr Yvette Miller from QUT.

David Langford presented on our community meal support program, Community Table. David discussed the origins of the program and delivery and built on the findings from previous evaluations and conferences. The data demonstrated a reduction in eating disorder symptom severity for all EDE-Q subscales following completion of the program. The reduction in restraint and shape concerns was statistically significant. There was a very confident reduction observed in the Global EDE-Q score. David also discussed limitations of the research and future considerations.

Emma Trappett presented on 10-week Therapeutic Group. Emma discussed the history of the group program and previous research findings. The data showed a statistically significant reduction in eating disorder symptom severity on all EDE-Q subscales except eating concern following completion of the program. Overall, there was a statistically significant reduction in overall symptom severity from pre to post program. There was a statistically significant improvement on all subscales on the RAS-DS which looks at recovery focus except doing things I value from which there was still an improvement. Emma also discussed limitations of the research and future considerations.

Emily Stanley-Pickering presented on Peer Mentor Program and built on findings from the previous year. Emily discussed some of the themes present within mentee feedback including a space to share, support, connection, sense of belonging and the mentor relationship as all being important. Emily talked about some ways the PMP program had been helpful for mentees and demonstrated that focus on recovery and eating disorder symptoms remained stable throughout the program.
Barbara Hogan (Master of Social Work, QUT) October 2019 – Feb 2020

My Social Work placement at EDQ was wonderful and rich with learning. The staff were warm, respectful and welcoming, and demonstrated the utmost professionalism, integrity and care. I was fortunate to move across the Therapeutic Group program, the Peer Mentor Program and Recovery Warriors solidifying skills and practice informed by social work theory, feminist and anti-oppressive practice and a trauma informed approach. My experience gave me a greater understanding of the intersectionality between gender inequality and disordered eating on a macro level; as well as the importance of kindness and empathy on an individual level in the recovery space. I feel very grateful for being placed in such an exceptional, contributive organisation.

Hannah Brumm (Bachelor of Public Health, QUT) March 2019 – Nov 2019

Our planned 2020 placements were heavily impacted by COVID-19, with our offices closing for face-to-face services just a few weeks after most placements began. This meant we were no longer able to provide students with the appropriate opportunities for learning.

The respective universities stepped up and created alternative opportunities for all students impacted in this way, and adjusted the required in-person placement hours to reflect the difficult circumstances caused by COVID-19.

We thank Diana Law, Brenda Ward, Georgia Dar and Caitlin Thamm for their understanding in this area, and wish them the best of luck in their studies and careers.

Christophe Langlasse

Christophe has worked in a range of human service fields and has become accustomed the practitioner role along with the importance and fulfillment it brings.

Prior to commencing the role of Eating Issues Practitioner in February 2019, Christophe had been working in a range of community mental health roles working with people experiencing a wide range of complex mental health issues. A mix of individual and group work over nearly the last 10 years provided a useful grounding in the sector where he became more drawn to recovery based mental health work. Christophe has a huge respect and admiration for those willing to take on their recovery and work through some of the toughest psychological barriers possible.

Outside the workplace, Christophe values his roots (Scotland and France) and the cultural diversity that comes with this heritage. He is passionate about the world game (football) and promotes its significance in the context of it being the largest cultural event in the world. Christophe is a big music fan (guitarist, record collector, historian and appreciator) and often refers to music to relate to his world.

Family is extremely important to Christophe as he understands the pain that come with personal loss. He has been married to his soulmate, rock and social work compatriot, Taki since 2014 and they have a young 3 year old son who is their absolute joy.

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Mentor Profile

Mandy has a lived experience of eating issues, addiction and other mental health challenges; possessing knowledge and compassion regarding the journey to recovery. Mandy understands the complexity of living with an eating disorder - the perception of “high functioning” versus the reality of struggling in secret. Mandy’s own recovery journey involved a lot of “self-work”; professional supports for the ED were far less at that time and Mandy struggled to find the right support.

One of the biggest influences in recovery for Mandy was observing and listening to others to relearn more helpful ways of relating to food and herself more broadly. For Mandy, the turning point was realising how much the eating disorder had taken from her; that is wasn’t her true identity and she could do something different with her life after 25yrs of living with an ED.

Mandy is grateful for how the mentoring role reminds her of how far she has come and that, even now, she continues to find more healing, especially being in the EDQ environment which promotes body neutrality and self-love. Fast-forward to 2020 and Mandy has now completed her first PMP round as a senior mentor and, most recently, started in her role as Lived Experience Peer Worker in EDQ’s Covid Stream; something Mandy experiences as “very humbling and a privilege” and very validating of the challenging work of the recovery journey.

In January 2017, Mandy found EDQ’s Peer Mentoring Program. With her children finishing high school, Mandy felt that she was far enough in her own recovery and had the time to give back. After completing mentor training in the February of the same year, Mandy went on to mentor five mentees in five separate PMP rounds. Having personally experienced the importance of learning from others in recovery, a huge part of what motivates her in the mentoring role is being able to connect and “do life with people”. Mandy loves that PMP allows mentors and mentees to be themselves and use their relationship as a vehicle for hope and change. Mandy particularly loves “the moment when someone can see that there is a glimmer of hope.”

In her position as Health Promotions and Practice Coordinator, Rohie has been able to bring her strong feminist background and social justice frameworks to be front and centre, as well as her values of diversity and inclusivity.

Rohie has utilised her knowledge of medical systems and funding bodies to assist clients to navigate the complexities of accessing eating disorder support, and also to assist EDQ to dive into offering both Medicare and NDIS support streams. Using her knowledge of health and wellness as a state of being that encompasses more than just the individual, but the environment and community as well, Rohie has been able to ensure that throughout COVID-19, clients felt supported and engaged via social media, and were able to access a variety of resources to maintain their wellbeing.

In 2020, along with coworker Lisa, Rohie was able to utilise her lived experience of disordered eating to build a community-focussed Peer Support Group. This group enabled both Rohie and clients to share their experiences and support each other throughout the recovery journey – a privilege that Rohie does not take lightly. As a person who felt unable to seek support during her eating issue, the group has solidified the knowledge that community connection can be the strongest protective factor against relapse, and that the lived experience community is filled with generosity.

Rohie’s role continues to evolve to keep up with the growing and ever-changing nature of EDQ, allowing Rohie to utilise all facets of her studies and find fulfillment at work.

Prior to joining EDQ, Rohie had worked in the dental industry in a variety of roles for 10 years, and was near the completion of a degree in Public Health at Queensland University of Technology. These experiences highlighted her interest in client-driven empathetic care.

Rohie joined EDQ in 2018, as a student on placement. Initially not driven to work in mental health, Rohie soon warmed to the idea with the help of the staff and clients at EDQ. Following her positive placement experience, when a position as Practice Coordinator became available a few months later, Rohie successfully applied for the position. After six months of juggling her part-time role with the final semester of her degree, Rohie completed her degree in 2019 and transitioned to full-time work.

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Mentor Profile

Erin Wilkus began her time with EDQ as a client, but since her recovery has remained involved with the organisation in other ways.

Eating Disorders Queensland quickly became my sanctuary. Located in Queenslander-style house, the warm and accommodating atmosphere that the Eating Issues Practitioners, staff and volunteers created, made me feel at home.

My husband also participated in Carers’ training and this brought us closer together at a critical time. I also participated in the 6-month, Peer Mentorship program as a mentee. In this program, I had the chance to connect and be inspired by someone who survived a lived experience with an eating disorder. With the immense support of EDQ, I recovered.

I chose to volunteer for EDQ because I am so deeply grateful for the support I received from this organisation. I am now a Speaker from the speaker program, where I provide insight and stories from my lived experience to audiences that range from groups of medical practitioners, student groups and clubs. I have contributed video footage for educational materials and I completed my training to be a Peer Mentor.

It seems that my journey with EDQ has come full circle, where I will now experience the Peer Mentor program from the Mentor’s perspective. While my role in this community has changed over the years, I have consistently grown and been inspired by this amazing community of healers and recovery warriors.

I first connected with Eating Disorders Queensland (known as the Eating Issues Centre at that time) as a patient rather than a volunteer.

I had been suffering from an eating disorder for nearly a decade when I moved to Brisbane from California. With experience receiving the range of services available in California and finding little relief, I was eager but not optimistic over the prospect of finding services in my new home. Little did I know how lucky I was. I was quickly supported by a general practitioner, anti-diet dietitian and EDQ counselors who all specialised in treating eating disorders. Not only did this team have an acute understanding of eating disorders but they were leaders in the field and I readily connected with them at a personal level.

Except it was better than home, because my struggles surrounding my body and food were quieted here. I benefited from many services including individual counselling and access to literature housed in the Centre’s library.

I talked to people I knew that had pushed into recovery themselves... I also did a lot of research about the medical health effects that were happening to my body.

The most important thing is getting on the Recovery Program. Look for strength, every single person can recover ... you choose and you commit.

EDQ have given me a lot of help and support and understanding and it’s wonderful to know I’m not alone in this journey and that I have the support of many experts.

It became a choice ... and that was an initial stepping stone to teaching my brain ... and talking myself through the feelings.

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Our Supporters

To our supporters and the community, without each and every one of you we wouldn’t be able to do what we do. So thank you!

Other supporters
Dr. Leanne Barron
Dr Mark McGrath
QuEDS