

RESEARCH AGENDA 2009-2013

Research at Anglicare SA takes many forms, encompassing studies undertaken internally by staff within the organisation, joint projects conducted in partnership with other organisations, and research carried out by undergraduate or postgraduate students, academics and other external researchers who have contact with Anglicare staff and/or clients.

The role of research within our organisation is to support our work in making a positive difference to quality of life for South Australians. It is conducted in a way that is consistent with our values of equality, integrity, compassion, innovation, collaboration, safety, excellence, sustainability and accountability. The findings from our research contribute to our understanding of how best to respond to needs and issues in ways that enhance dignity and integrity, and promote social justice.

This agenda has been produced to assist both staff conducting research within Anglicare, and external researchers accessing Anglicare programs, staff and/or clients, to plan and conduct research that will contribute to the efforts of our organisation in working towards these objectives. Based on our strategic directions, and developed through consultation across the organisation, this agenda provides an overview of the priority areas for research for Anglicare SA from 2009 to 2013.

In keeping with our strategic directions, the four themes listed below underpin research conducted within Anglicare and it is anticipated that all research conducted within, or through, our organisation will fit within at least one of these themes:

1. Developing our understanding of barriers to participation in the social and economic life of our society, and mechanisms for empowering marginalised people and communities to overcome these barriers to become active participants in the wider community;
2. Identifying and increasing our understanding of the root causes of injustice, and exploring effective, sustainable solutions that may positively influence public policy, community values and the environment;
3. Investigating opportunities for, and successful approaches to, building strong productive partnerships with the broader church community, business, other community service organisations, government and the wider community in order to assist Anglicare to achieve its vision; and
4. Examining the needs and aspirations of older people, and exploring opportunities to contribute to their enhanced wellbeing, active participation in the community and positive experience of ageing.

Aligned with these broad themes, a series of more specific research questions have been identified across Anglicare's portfolio areas - economic participation, families, older people, vulnerable people and communities, housing and corporate functioning. Focussing our research efforts on these areas allows our research findings to inform and enhance Anglicare's organisational functioning, service provision and advocacy work, and in doing so contribute to the realisation of our strategic directions – growing capacity and opportunity, creating a more just and sustainable society, building partnerships and promoting positive ageing.

1. Economic Participation

- 1.1. How is the global economic downturn affecting South Australians, and what impact is this likely to have on demand for Anglicare SA services?
- 1.2. How can initiatives such as social enterprise ventures and labour market programs most effectively empower people to overcome social exclusion, and where are they most needed?
- 1.3. What are the likely impacts of public policies designed to address climate change on people experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage, and how can this be addressed?
- 1.4. What are the implications of activities such as 'pay day lending' and income management for low income and financially vulnerable households?

2. Families

- 2.1. What are the key features of programs that are successful in building the resilience and strengths of families and communities to care, protect and nurture children, particularly where families are dealing with mental illness and/or addictions?
- 2.2. What kinds of services are of most assistance to families from particular population subgroups, for example low income working families, families at risk of or experiencing breakdown, families caring for older relatives and/or children with a disability, grandparents who are primary caregivers for their grandchildren and families experiencing homelessness?

- 2.3. What models of alternative care provision are most nurturing and empowering for children and young people living in out-of-home care, and what supports are needed by carers?
- 2.4. What are the key features of peer mentoring programs and alternative education models that are successful in providing positive learning experiences and pathways for children and young people who are disengaged or at risk of being excluded from mainstream schooling?

3. Older People

- 3.1. What kinds of health, lifestyle and recreational information, activities and resources are older people interested in and/or needing, and how can Anglicare most effectively facilitate access to these to promote social inclusion, quality of life and healthy ageing in the community?
- 3.2. What kinds of transitional and ongoing supports improve the quality of life of people moving into and living in residential aged care facilities?
- 3.3. How can people at risk of prematurely ageing or who are impacted by addictions, mental illness (including depression), other complex health issues or homelessness in older age best be supported?
- 3.4. What supports do people living with dementia, and their carers, need and how can they best be provided?

4. Vulnerable People and Communities

- 4.1. To what extent do existing services meet the needs of Aboriginal Australians, and what additional supports and services could be provided, particularly for Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness and those moving to the city from interstate or regional areas?
- 4.2. What kinds of support, therapy and specialist services are needed by people (including older people) with an addiction, disability, chronic health condition, mental illness, hoarding issue or experiencing homelessness, and their carers, where are the services most needed and how can they be made more accessible?
- 4.3. What types of support would be of most benefit to particularly vulnerable subgroups of the population, such as refugees, asylum seekers, people from CALD communities and overseas students?
- 4.4. What areas of metropolitan, rural and remote South Australia are most in need of services for vulnerable people and communities, and what specific types of services do they need?

5. Housing

- 5.1. To what extent are middle income renters and home owners experiencing financial stress, and how can they most effectively be supported?
- 5.2. Which South Australian regional centres are experiencing a particular demand for affordable housing for low to modest income individuals and families?
- 5.3. What are the key features of successful supportive housing models for particular sub-groups of the population including youth, young to middle aged frail or vulnerable people, and people at risk of or experiencing homelessness?
- 5.4. What kinds of housing do people want and need as they age, and in what regions is there a particular demand for housing and services for older people?

6. Corporate Functioning

- 6.1. What are the emerging innovations in financial giving, knowledge management, communication and infrastructure development, and how can these be applied to enhance corporate functioning within Anglicare?
- 6.2. What do existing employees think of working for Anglicare and how can the working conditions, remuneration and benefits on offer be marketed to encourage staff retention and promote Anglicare as an employer of choice to potential future employees?
- 6.3. How can Anglicare best promote and maintain staff wellbeing, particularly in the context of an ageing workforce?
- 6.4. What attracts volunteers to work for Anglicare, what keeps them volunteering and what makes certain volunteer roles more attractive than others?
- 6.5. What implications are current and emerging approaches to funding for aged services and disability services likely to have on the viability of these sectors into the future?