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## ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Once again, it has been a busy year for the Foundation as we worked on our various projects and activities. I am happy to report, as I reflect back on the challenges and accomplishments of the past year, that the Foundation has been very successful in the management of all of its activities and has had direct, effective impact on vulnerable populations in the north.

Without support from the community, it would be very hard to achieve so many of the outcomes of our initiatives. I am constantly amazed and deeply appreciative of the support that is given to the Foundation, both monetary and physical. Donations and sponsorships have been regularly coming in, especially for the Declan Crouch Fund, which fundraises for projects with a youth focus. Our volunteers continue to play a large part in the organisational framework of the Foundation and many community members come forward when required for special events.

In June 2015, we celebrated 20 years of the Dr Edward Koch Foundation and the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce. To make this an occasion of note, we included a Walk Through Time segment at the Suicide & Self-harm Prevention Conference 2015 which the Foundation hosted. Past and present volunteers, sponsors and supporters of the Foundation joined together to enjoy a celebratory morning tea. Posters depicting highlights from our 20 years were on display for attendees to view. Federal Member for Leichhardt, the Hon. Warren Entsch was guest speaker at the event. Our thanks go to the Cairns Regional Council for its sponsorship acknowledging our 20 years of community service.

Also of note was our successful Suicide & Self-harm Prevention Conference 2015. There is most definitely a need for those involved in this difficult area of suicide and self-harm to meet and share ideas on ways to find strategies and gain information on this most pressing social problem. The Foundation's Conference enabled this to happen and was one of the highlights of our year.

It is also with great pleasure that we officially announced that His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland became our new patron. I look forward to our future years being as rewarding as our past has been.

*Graham Koch, Chairman*

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I report that we have had a very productive year. I consider the Suicide & Self-harm Prevention Conference held in June 2015 as the main highlight of the year. It was exceptional, with fabulous keynote speakers and offered a wealth of information through the impressive and stimulating program that aimed at challenging and stimulating discussion surrounding the Conference theme of "Suicide & Self-harm Prevention: Across the lifespan: different ages and stages". I believe that researchers, practitioners, health workers, the "key players" within the suicide prevention sector, those within the community and anyone affected by suicide were able to take much away from such an informative, educative Conference.

Work is still progressing towards a trial that will see suicide prevention workshops for youth implemented in some schools in Far North Queensland. It is a slow process, but hopefully I will be able to advise the commencement of the delivery of the workshops in my next report.

The petition that we kickstarted by sending a letter to our state members requesting a mental health ward and facilities for adolescents and young people has yielded laudable results. Michael Trout, former Member for Barron River, announced that a \$6 million facility, The Step Up Step Down Unit, targeting youth and young adults, is to be built in Cairns. In addition, a further eight beds within Cairns Hospital, catering to the region's youngest mental health patients, are being made available. The petition, garnering 10,000 signatures was promoted avidly by one of our team, Ruth Crouch. Thanks is extended to her for her valuable work with this petition.

I and my fellow directors are extremely appreciative of the support of the community, the dedicated team of staff and volunteers, members of the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce and all of our funding sponsors.

*Dulcie Bird, Chief Executive Officer*

## DIRECTORS

	<p><b>Mr. Graham Koch (Chairman)</b>          Graham Koch Dip.FS(Financial Planning) Com.Dec. – Graham was appointed a director in March, 1997 and became chairman in 2001. Graham has been involved in the financial services industry for over 40 years. He is a director of KIB Insurance Brokers and holds an advanced diploma in financial services (financial planning) and is a member of the Association of Financial Advisers. Graham also serves the community as a Commissioner for Declarations and is a Past District Governor of Rotary International. Dr Edward Koch was Graham’s great-grandfather.</p>
	<p><b>Mrs. Dulcie Bird (Chief Executive Officer)</b>          Dulcie, born in Cairns is well aware of many of the problems which are relevant to living in Far North Qld. Dulcie has always involved herself in community work, and is well regarded for her support of children who have disabilities and her work in suicide prevention. Dulcie has a Bachelor of Social Science (with a major in Sociology and French), from James Cook University. Dulcie has been honoured with an Australia Day Award for services both to art and the Dr Edward Koch Foundation.</p>
	<p><b>Mr. Neil Parsons</b>          Neil Parsons’ family has a long history with North Queensland stretching back six generations. Growing up in the north has broadened his awareness of unique public health issues that many face in the tropics because of isolation, environment and climate. He has worked in the international freight forwarding industry for the past 30 years. Neil is also a Commissioner for Declarations.</p>
	<p><b>Prof. Komla Tsey</b>          Professor Komla Tsey is Tropical Leader and Research Professor in Education for Social Sustainability within the School of Education and The Cairns Institute. He is a highly qualified research professor with more than 25 years experience who provides leadership as part of transdisciplinary teams across the School of Education, The Cairns Institute and beyond in the field of education for social sustainability. Over the past decade, Komla has also led a research team at JCU and The University of Queensland to operationalise and build research evidence-base for Aboriginal-developed community empowerment programs.</p>
	<p><b>Dr Mark Wenitong</b>          Dr Mark Wenitong is of Kabi Kabi Aboriginal descent. He is the senior medical officer for Apunipima Cape York Health Council. He is also the immediate past president and founding member of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association. He speaks regularly at national events and conferences on Indigenous health, education, workforce leadership and cultural issues. He has a particular interest in Indigenous men’s health.</p>
	<p><b>Mr Phil Dempster</b>          Phil retired at the start of 2011 after over 40 years in the printing and copying industry. He is currently National Chair of Rotarians Against Malaria, on the Executive of Northern Region Rotary Australia World Community Service, Secretary of the Cairns Earlville Rotary Club, Past District Governor of Rotary District 9550 and member of Rotary District 9550 College of Governors.</p>
	<p><b>Ms Shane Devenish</b>          Shane Devenish is an Associate at Devenish Law, Cairns and practises in property and commercial law. Originally from Goondiwindi, Queensland, Shane has an appreciation of the issues faced by young people living in regional and remote areas. Following her graduation from James Cook University, Cairns in 2006 Shane tutored indigenous law students. Shane is a volunteer with Rosies Friends on the Street and is a registered mentor with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation Mentoring for Growth Program.</p>
	<p>Michael Trout was raised on a cattle property, lived in the Barron River electorate since 1996, and has raised four beautiful daughters. With more than 20 years of small business and tourism experience, he currently sits on the Tourism Tropical North Qld (TTNQ) Board and chairs Tropical Tablelands Tourism (TTT). In 1992, Michael’s family purchased “Mungalli Falls” on the Atherton Tablelands, now a successful outdoor education centre. In 1993, his family built ‘Sunshine Daycare’ at Aeroglen, and operates “Blazing Saddles Adventures”, a highly successful tourism venture. Elected Barron River State Member of Parliament in 2012, he was active in building a stronger, safer community, fighting for small business and tourism growth and listening to the electorate’s needs. Since early 2015 he has been consulting for the private sector and actively encouraging business growth in Far North Qld.</p>

# PROJECTS

## LIFE PROGRAM

The Life Program incorporates the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce, the Life Workshops, the Life Bereavement Support Service, the Life Community Plans and the Life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide & Other Sudden Unexpected Death Bereavement Support Group. All facets of the program are strongly utilised by the community and all of our suicide prevention projects are carried out within the Life Program framework.

### **FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce**

In December 2014, the Foundation launched its' new website for the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce. Member for Barron River, Michael Trout officially launched the website. The launch was officially attended by numerous guests representing the wider community. The website, very user friendly and able to be self-managed by the Foundation, caters to those "at risk" and those who wish to help those who are "at risk". The website is a valuable suicide prevention resource.

The Taskforce meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Foundation premises.

### **FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce Resource Unit**

A library of resources for community use has been compiled by the Taskforce. It has been operating since the Taskforce's inception and is free of charge.

### **Mates at Work, Mates on the Field, Mates in Life**

This wonderful event took place in March 2015. It was a free, informative presentation by four international and national speakers focusing on how people are not really alone. The message included that many men face issues that put them at risk, but these can be dealt with. Coping skills were presented and information provided on further support that is available. The speakers were John Brady, Operations Manager for MATES in Construction Qld, a partner in this event, Sean McCarthy (Ireland), Kevin Briggs (USA), and Kevin Hines (USA) who each had wide experience in the areas of suicide prevention and suicide bereavement. These men volunteered their time for this event following a conference commitment.

### **The Recovery Room**

The Recovery Room Project aims to reduce the stigma of mental health or illness, and increase wellness - helping us learn how to cope with life's great challenges, recover and regain hope. The Cairns Post continues to publish a variety of articles submitted by the Foundation that seek to improve the general well-being of our community, inform about services and ways to help ourselves, our mates and loved ones. The articles are also available on our website.

### **Life Suicide Awareness and Prevention Skills Workshops**

The Life Workshops continue to give valuable training to members of the community. These workshops are evaluated after each one and we are pleased to report that the average score remains high after every workshop. Comments include expressions such as "Excellent presenters. Good workshop."

### **Life Suicide Prevention Youth Workshops**

One of the Foundation's principal projects is to trial our newly developed Life Suicide Prevention Youth Workshop in schools. This school-based project aims to address the abnormally high incidences of self-harm and suicide among Queensland youth. Young people are provided with information on what they should do when they become aware that a friend, family member or fellow student is at possible risk of suicide. The workshops provide a safe environment to facilitate discussion and learning on issues related to suicide. There are several processes to go through before the trial can commence.

### **Life Suicide & Sudden Unexpected Death Bereavement Support Service**

This 24/7 service continues to operate free of charge to those who wish for some counselling either by phone or face to face contact.

### **Life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide & Sudden Unexpected Death Bereavement Support Group (LATSIS&SUDBSG)**

The Life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide & Sudden Unexpected Death Bereavement Support Group offers the opportunity to talk about the loss of a loved one and also provides community members with basic coping strategies and other information that they can access and use if they are supporting someone who is at risk of suicide. The Group is facilitated by trained counsellors including an Aboriginal person. Anglicare partnered with the Foundation this year to enhance the resources available for the meetings. The Group meets on a regular basis and is free to attend.

### **The Far North Queensland Suicide Issues Community Forum**

Outcomes of the FNQ Suicide Issues Community Forum held in November 2013 by the Foundation were presented at the Suicide & Self-harm Prevention Conference 2015. Further dissemination of the information gained and outcomes achieved will be published in the Conference Proceedings.

### **Suicide and Self-harm Prevention Conference 2015**

The very successful conference was held from June 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> at the Cairns Convention Centre and was an event not to be missed. The theme for the conference was *"Suicide & Self-harm Prevention: Across the lifespan: different ages and stages."* Keynote speakers and workshop presenters came from interstate and overseas. Of particular note was Professor Darcy Haag Granello Ph.D who is a Professor of Counsellor Education and Director of the Ohio State University Suicide Prevention Program. She runs the largest college suicide prevention program in the USA.

The Conference was kickstarted through a breakfast with Jeff Kennett, Chair of Beyond Blue and included fourteen other keynote speakers. Professor Darcy Haag Granello, Assoc. Prof. Paul Granello, Mr Warren Mundine, Dr Lesley van Schoubroek, Professor George Patton, Professor Helen Christensen, Assoc. Professor Judith Murray, Mr Rick Welsh, Ms Alexandra Culloden, Prof. Abd Malak, Prof. Edward Helmes, Dr Diana Sands, Dr Kairi Kolves and Adjunct Assoc. Professor Darryl Krook.

Many fabulous sponsors and contributors came on board for the Conference and thanks is extended for their generous contributions – Capta Group, The Ian Potter Foundation, The Gambling Community Benefit Fund, Health Reimagined (formerly FNQ Medicare Local), Centacare Cairns, Pullman Cairns International Hotel, Qld Mental Health Commission, Bolton Print, Cairns Regional Council, Cairns District Lions Club and the Cairns & District Woodworking Guild.

## **PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS**

### **World Suicide Prevention Day 2014**

The theme for 2014 WSPD was "Suicide Prevention: One World Connected". The theme reflects the fact that connections are important at several levels if we are to combat suicide at an individual level, across support services, and across countries. Cairns showed its support by a community walk on the Cairns Esplanade "Out of the Shadows and into the Light" organised by Lifeline. A team of dedicated and caring people from the Dr Edward Koch Foundation were proud to show their support as they walked behind our purposely made banner reading "Reach Out and Ask for Help".

### **Survivors of Suicide Bereavement Support Association**

The Cairns Survivors of Suicide Bereavement Support Association Inc. (a member of the FNQ Suicide Prevention Taskforce) held their annual memorial evening in December 2014. The evening was an opportunity for those who have lost a loved one through suicide to share a quiet time, in a supportive environment, with others who have had similar experiences. The Koch Foundation was proud to again co-sponsor the evening.

### **Cairns Chamber of Commerce**

The Foundation has recently become a member of the Cairns Chamber of Commerce. Through professional networking we hope that being affiliated with the chamber will help promote to other local businesses and organisations the vital role that we play within our community.

## **APPEALS**

The Foundation continues to support public appeals for individuals needing expensive medical treatment and operates the Koch Foundation Community Fund. The Koch Foundation Community Fund facilitates donations to those individuals who find themselves in difficult life threatening situations and are in need of support.

## **FUNDRAISING**

### **Rotary Sunrise Cairns & Avanti Plus Cairns Family Bike Ride**

This wonderful event raised much needed support for the Declan Crouch Fund. Thanks is extended to Rotary Club Cairns Sunrise and Avanti Plus for their support.

### **Rotary Corporate Duck Race 2014**

The 2014 Rotary Corporate Duck Race was held at Palm Cove on Sunday 12 October 2014 as part of the Palm Cove Food Feast. The Foundation is proud to be associated with the Rotary Club of Cairns Mulgrave in this wonderful light-hearted Duck

Race which has captured the spirit of the local community and provided so many needed benefits. All proceeds raised from the event support the Foundation's Every Life Matters Program. The Foundation would like to extend its thanks to our duck sponsors, as well as the many dedicated volunteers, especially Rotarians, who worked hard to make the day such a success.

### **Simply Ballroom Dance School**

The Simply Ballroom Dance School continues to operate as a fundraiser and contributes much needed revenue for the Foundation. The Foundation is appreciative of the teachers who volunteer their services to help our fundraising efforts.

### **Cazalys Trivia Nights**

The Foundation was the lucky recipient of part of the proceeds of the Super Trivia nights held at Cazalys from 28 January 2015 until 1 April 2015. Thank you to Cazalys for this wonderful gesture.

### **Sisters of Charity Support**

The Sisters of Charity have given the Foundation a donation of \$10,000 to support our suicide prevention activities. This is of great significance for the Foundation and is truly appreciated.

### **Donations**

Donations received this year amount to the generous figure of \$110,973.15. This helps the Foundation meet all of its commitments/services to the community, most of which are free. The Foundation is extremely appreciative of all donations, no matter how small.

### **Grants/Research Funds**

Gambling Community Benefit Fund	\$12,400.00
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### **Sponsorships**

Health Reimagined (FNQ Medicare Local)	\$10,000.00
Qld Mental Health Commission	\$5,000.00
Centacare Cairns	\$2,500.00
Other sponsorships	\$6,500.00
Precedence	Website hosting
CAPTA Group	Conference support
Pullman Cairns International	Conference support

### **Consultancies**

Skin Shield Products Ltd  
Blossom Chemicals

## **GENERAL**

### **Foundation Patron – His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland**

The Foundation is proud to have His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland as our new patron. Former Governor of Queensland, Ms Penelope Wensley, AC in October 2008 became the first patron of the Dr Edward Koch Foundation, and retired from office in 2014.

## **THE FUTURE**

The Foundation looks forward to the next year filled with strong partnerships with other community organisations and big events that help us to be more informed on suicide prevention, thus reducing the stigma that is so often attached to this very important issue. We are extremely appreciative of the support of the community for our fundraising endeavours which help us to continue our work in reducing suicides in our region.