Living on the Edge

An overview of the community of West Belconnen

and the services and service gaps of the area

A project by UnitingCare Kippax
on behalf of the
West Belconnen Inter Agency Liaison Group
funded and supported by
Belconnen Community Services

October 2007
Executive Summary

West Belconnen is an area on the north-western suburban fringe of the ACT that houses approximately 20,000, or 6% of the ACT population. It is an area that combines low levels of income, high levels of housing stress with geographic isolation and relatively poor access to transport to create a community of localised disadvantage with particular needs.

The area has several additional stress points – a younger than average population, larger percentage of pre-school aged children, high levels of unpaid child care and unpaid assistance to people with disabilities as well as a particularly high percentage of single parent households. Indigenous peoples are disproportionately represented in the area’s population.

There is a range of Community, Health and Educational services provided in West Belconnen or available for the people of West Belconnen. The services are provided in an efficient and effective manner largely by community organizations that are stretched to their limit and operate on “shoe string” budgets. They seek to work even more co-operatively with each other and with Government agencies to increase the impact of the services for the sake of the people of the West Belconnen community. However the stretched nature of the organizations in terms of finances and staffing time works against the desire to work more co-operatively.

Organizations and clients regularly and repeatedly name several key areas as gaps that must be addressed. These include consideration of the location of services, transport so that services can be accessed more easily, more adequate and affordable medical services, an increased dedication to a holistic approach to service delivery, a stronger emphasis on primary care and early intervention, and attention to community development and enhancement to reduce the effects of social isolation.

The approach proposed by the Rowntree Foundation (The Groundwork movement: Its role in neighbourhood renewal, 2002) is endorsed:

• Rebuilding neighbourhoods is a long term process;
• Lengthy lead in times are needed to equip communities to engage in strategy development;
• Even where there has been community development and capacity building, vulnerable communities need support in the long term;
• These processes impose limits on the speed with which impacts on programme outcomes can be achieved
1. **Introduction**  
1.1. **West Belconnen Definition**

Although there is no formal definition of West Belconnen in demographic studies, it has become an area defined by common usage by residents, service organizations and Government agencies. For the purposes of the current research and service mapping, it is defined to include the 5 suburbs on the western edge of the region of Belconnen: namely, Higgins, Holt, Macgregor (including the new subdivision of Macgregor West), Charnwood and Dunlop, bounded by Drake Brockman Drive, Kingsford Smith Drive, Southern Cross Drive, Florey Drive, Tillyard Avenue and the NSW Border.

The area largely coincides with the primary enrolment areas for the four relevant public primary schools – Higgins, Holt, Macgregor and Charnwood-Dunlop. The Group Centre and surrounding precinct of Kippax is included as part of the suburb of Holt. In total, West Belconnen comprises approximately half of the area covered by the postcode 2615. Higgins was first developed in 1968. Dunlop was the last suburb to be developed, commencing in 1994. Development is still occurring in Dunlop and will soon commence in Macgregor West.

West Belconnen is approximately 9 kilometres from the Belconnen Town Centre, and approximately 19 kilometres from Civic.

The area outlined in red on the following map illustrates it.
Other close geographic localities, such as Fraser, Flynn, Latham and Scullin have some affinities with West Belconnen but are not generally included in the area. Patterns of transport - generally relating east for services - and community self-identification excluded all of these suburbs from the current project.

1.2. West Belconnen Inter Agency Liaison Group

The West Belconnen Inter Agency Liaison Group (“WBIALG”) has been facilitated by UnitingCare Kippax for approximately 4 years. Its aim is to enhance the delivery of community services and support to the people of West Belconnen by fostering co-operation of agencies and other organizations in their work. Currently approximately 25 organizations are involved in the WBIALG.

1.3. Background to the current project

Against the background of the previous work of the Liaison Group, a Community Forum was organised by Mary Porter MLA OAM and hosted by UnitingCare Kippax in March 2007 to consider a range of issues relating to the West Belconnen community. Representatives of community organizations, businesses, police and schools were present at the forum. One aspect of the forum was to begin the process of identifying community needs and key gaps in services.

A recommendation arising from the forum was to engage in a demographic study of key aspects of West Belconnen, the services that were provided and the perceived gaps and difficulties in relation to services. UnitingCare Kippax co-ordinated the demographic study and the mapping of community services as well as the service gaps. The project has been funded by and strongly and actively supported by Belconnen Community Services through its community development budget.

The project has included liaison meetings with organizations involved in the WBIALG, surveys of other organizations, agencies, businesses and individuals and interviews and discussions with clients accessing services. The original timeline of the project was based on previous years ACT Budget consultation dates, and anticipated completion in mid November. This has been truncated by the modified timeline for the 2008 Budget submissions.

While not purporting to be an exhaustive work relating to services in West Belconnen, this project is understood to be the most substantial dedicated piece of work relating to the services and needs of the area. 31 organisations completed the Community Survey. Further development of this work over the coming 12 months would significantly complement this foundational work.
2. **Key Demographic Information**

Demographic studies of the area provide some initial insight into the nature of the community of West Belconnen. It is not any one issue that creates the specific needs of the community, nor suggests the manner in which those needs should be addressed. Rather it is the cumulative nature of all of the issues that leads to the nature of community development, support and intervention. “Where an accumulation of problems makes a serious impact upon the wellbeing of residents of a disadvantaged area, locality-specific measures may be needed to supplement general social policy” (*Community Adversity and Resilience* Vinson T 2004).

West Belconnen regularly finds itself over-represented in low levels of income, low levels of education, levels of public housing, proportion of single parent families, proportion of the indigenous population, levels of unpaid child care, levels of unpaid assistance to people with disabilities and the ratio of household income to mortgage or rental payments. It is when these factors (and others) are combined with the geographic isolation, inadequate transport and levels of community, health and educational services, that the nature of the localised disadvantage can be most fully appreciated.

*All of the following information has been sourced from the 2006 Census Community Profile. The Census was held on the 8th of August 2006. Further information is available from the ABS Website* [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).

2.1. **Size**

West Belconnen is an expanding area with approximately 20,000 residents, or around 6.2% of the ACT population. Continued expansion is currently occurring at the southern end of Dunlop and is proposed for West Macgregor, which will adjoin the Dunlop expansion.

The area is has a higher percentage of females than either the Australian population or the ACT population. This gender inequality is specifically present in Holt and Higgins.

It has a significantly higher percentage of Indigenous people than the rest of the ACT population – specifically in Holt, Dunlop and Charnwood. 2.4% of the population of Holt have are Indigenous, compared with 1.2% of the ACT population.
2.1.1. Total Population

2.1.2. Male
2.1.3. Female

2.1.4. Indigenous
2.2. Age
The population West Belconnen is younger than either the Australian median or the ACT median. The youngest median is 29 – for Dunlop – followed by Charnwood at 31.

The percentage of people under 19 is higher than both the Australian and the ACT average, with the over representation most significant in those aged under 5. The largest population of school-aged children is in Dunlop. The largest population of children younger than school age is in Dunlop, followed by Holt.

2.2.1. Median Age

2.2.2. People aged 5 and under
2.3. Transport

Notwithstanding its geographic isolation and the commonly reported difficulties in accessing adequate public transport, over 400 households in West Belconnen do not have a motor vehicle. The suburbs recording the largest number of vehicle-less households are Holt and Charnwood. Both suburbs record levels at or above the national average of 9% of households (ACT average is 7%). This average is generally only matched in other areas of the ACT in or around Town Centres, where reliance on cars is significantly lessened.

2.3.1. No car in household
2.4. Income

Levels of income in West Belconnen have been consistently under ACT average for many years. Median household income in Charnwood is at 2/3 of the ACT figure. Median household income in Holt is at 72% of the ACT median. While the median income figures in West Belconnen are generally around the Australian median figure, the higher cost of living in the ACT compared with other parts of Australia can mask the difficulty of the situation of many households.

OECD figures set the relative poverty line in developed countries at 50% of the median disposable (net) income for all Australians for a single adult. Statistics relating to people living under this poverty line and close to the poverty line demonstrate the difficulty under which many households currently exist.

Over 130 single parent households in West Belconnen are living under the poverty line. An additional 50 West Belconnen households of 2 adults with children are living under poverty line. An additional 30 couples without children are living under the poverty line. Suburbs most affected by poverty are Charnwood, Holt and Dunlop.

2.4.1. Median Individual income

![Map showing median individual income by suburb in West Belconnen. The map legend indicates various income brackets, with Charnwood highlighted in red, indicating a lower median income compared to other suburbs.](image-url)

Map Layers
- act_SLA01_polygon
- act_roads_line_Type
- A.C.T. Suburbs Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Weekly Individual Income</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$600  -  $1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,001  -  $1,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,501  -  $2,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$2,001  -  $2,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,501  -  $3,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,001  -  $3,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than $3,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$1,722 (A.C.T. Median) NV $466 (Australian Median) Suburb boundaries
2.4.2. **Median household income**

![Median household income map]

**Map Layers**
- act_SL4X1_polygon
- act_roads_line_Type
- A.C.T. Suburb Data

**Median Weekly Household Income**

No data
- $1,000 - $1,045
- $1,051 - $1,100
- $1,101 - $1,156
- $1,151 - $1,206
- $1,201 - $1,240
- $1,251 - $1,300
- $1,301 - $1,356
- $1,351 - $1,400
- $1,401 - $1,450
- $1,451 - $1,500
- $1,501 - $1,550
- $1,551 - $1,600
- $1,601 - $1,645
- $1,651 - $1,700
- $1,701 - $1,745
- Greater than $1,745

- $1,500 (A.C.T. Median)
- $1,525 (Australian Median)

Suburb boundaries

2.4.3. **“Poverty”**: Single Parent family

![“Poverty” Single Parent family map]

**Map Layers**
- act_SL401_polygon
- act_roads_line_Type
- A.C.T. Suburb Data

**Gross Weekly Family Income**

- One Parent Family
  - $0 - $200

- No data
- 1 - 3
- 4 - 6
- 7 - 9
- 10 - 12
- 13 - 15
- 16 - 18
- 19 - 21
- 22 - 24
- 25 - 27
- 28 - 30
- 31 - 33
- 34 - 36
- 37 - 39
- 40 - 42
- 43 - 45
- Greater than 45

- 1,745 (A.C.T. Total)
- 150,419 (Australian Total)

Suburb boundaries
2.4.4. Low Income – just above poverty: Couple with Children

2.5. Housing
Housing stress is a highly prevalent factor in West Belconnen. With a population of 6.2% of the ACT population, West Belconnen has 7.6% of the ACT public housing. High concentrations of public housing exist in Charnwood and Holt.

Notwithstanding the lower median income, expenditure on housing through rental or mortgage are only slightly lower than ACT average, resulting in a higher percentage of household income being paid on housing costs. For example, while the median income levels of Holt are 72% of the ACT median, the median rent is 93% of the ACT median.

Similarly the percentage of household income spent on housing loan repayments across the ACT is 22.9%, while in Charnwood it is 27.5%, in Holt it is 26.8% and Higgins, 25%. When starting with a lower level of income, the financial stress on households becomes evident.
2.5.1. Public Housing

Map Layers
- act_SL001_polygon
- act_roads_line_Type
- A.C.T. Suburbs Data

Renting from ACT Housing Authority
- No data
- 25 - 40
- 41 - 55
- 56 - 70
- 71 - 95
- 96 - 120
- 121 - 160
- 161 - 200
- 201 - 250
- 251 - 300
- 301 - 350
- Greater than 350

A.C.T. Total
- 39,481 (Australian Total)

Suburb boundaries

2.5.2. Median Weekly Rent

Map Layers
- act_SL001_polygon
- act_roads_line_Type
- A.C.T. Suburbs Data

Median Weekly Rent
- No data
- $200 - $205
- $206 - $210
- $211 - $215
- $216 - $220
- $221 - $225
- $226 - $230
- $231 - $235
- $236 - $240
- $241 - $245
- $246 - $250
- $251 - $255
- $260 - $260
- $261 - $265
- $266 - $270
- $271 - $275
- $276 - $280
- $280 (A.C.T. Median)
- $300 (Australian Median)

Suburb boundaries
2.5.3. Median Monthly Mortgage

![Map of West Belconnen showing median monthly housing loan repayment by suburb]  

2.6. Education

Education levels of residents of West Belconnen are significantly lower than levels across the remainder of the ACT. West Belconnen is particularly over represented in the number of people whose highest level of schooling is Year 10. The suburbs with the greatest number of year 10 schooling only are Dunlop and Holt. Access to ongoing education for adults in West Belconnen is a significant issue. Access to internet – specifically broadband – is difficult in West Belconnen for both technical provision reasons and affordability in households on low incomes.

In addition, recent studies demonstrate that there is a high level of correlation between low-income households, early school leaving and criminal convictions. (*Dropping off the Edge, Vinson T, 2007*)
2.6.1. Highest level of education = year 10

2.6.2. Highest level of education = year 12
2.7. Household pressures

Cumulative effects of disadvantage and household pressure result in social exclusion, isolation and increase the risk of a lack of health, contribution to society and enjoyment of a decent life. Concentrated pockets of such pressures result in a deleterious effect on the community at large.

West Belconnen possesses many such factors which when combined result in significant localised disadvantage, and require attention that is peculiar to the area. The factors are often not of themselves a “disadvantage”, but create pressures on individuals and households.

West Belconnen has a particularly high percentage of households that have one parent, with children. Against the national average of 11%, Charnwood has 18% of its households comprising single parent with children, and Macgregor 15%.

Additionally a large number of households are providing unpaid care for children or for people with a disability. Over 5100 households in West Belconnen are providing unpaid childcare, while over 1600 households provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability. Suburbs providing greatest number of these households are Dunlop – the most geographically isolated – and Holt – a suburb with high levels of economic disadvantage.

2.7.1. Single parent households

![Map showing One Parent Family Households in Belurb (Percentage)]
2.7.2. **Unpaid assistance to person with disability**

![Map of unpaid assistance to person with disability](image1)

2.7.3. **Unpaid child care**

![Map of unpaid child care](image2)
3. **Services Information**

The following is a collation of the Community Survey (see Appendix 2) and other community liaison. It outlines the services currently provided as Community Services, Health Services and Educational Services. In each of these three categories, the services are grouped in terms of those provided in West Belconnen by organizations based in West Belconnen, those brought into West Belconnen by organizations based outside West Belconnen and those provided outside West Belconnen but accessed by people living in West Belconnen. In relation to this last category, clearly an exhaustive list is not possible. However those listed are intended to be those which pay specific attention in some way to the needs and issues of West Belconnen residents.

The services are listed by organization providing the service, the name or summary of the service and its key purpose or informational note.

3.1. **Community Services**

3.1.1. *In West Belconnen by West Belconnen organizations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Service Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charnwood Primary School (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Music programs for children up to 5 years old and Gymnastics</td>
<td>These programs are run out of this school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charnwood Scouts Hall</td>
<td>Girl Guides and Scouts</td>
<td>Guiding and Scout groups are run from this Hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Citizens Youth Club (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Reclip</td>
<td>Activities for at risk youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity Computers (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Charity Computers (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Provides reconditioned computers to low income earners cheaply.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Life Centre (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Hand Up</td>
<td>Provide low cost clothing and second hand goods for purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low cost food program</td>
<td>Low cost food available for people in need to purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Counselling/ Relationship Counselling</td>
<td>Assistance with relationship matters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids with Courage Youth programs</td>
<td>Youth groups held several times a week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various community support services</td>
<td>Provides a variety of community activities including an occasional care service for babies through to preschoolers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Barnabas (Charnwood)</td>
<td>Barney’s Second Hand Shop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides second hand goods and clothes for purchase.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St James Anglican Church (Holt)</td>
<td>Holt School Breakfast Club</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide breakfast for children 2 mornings per week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids Club</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Drop</td>
<td>Place for children to get together and hang out in a safe environment for years 5 to 7. One afternoon per week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caritas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday Fellowship</td>
<td>A group for elderly people providing support. Plus a meal and worship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Thomas Aquinas School (Charnwood)</td>
<td>PHYSIE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modern dance classes that are aimed at children aged 3 and upward. Classes are relatively low cost.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St John the Apostle Parish (Kippax/Holt)</td>
<td>Refugee Resettlement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help humanitarian entrants to settle here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Justice Committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Women’s League</td>
<td>Aims to promote the spiritual, cultural and social interest of its members</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 45’s group</td>
<td>Monthly mass and luncheon for those over 45.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Groups</td>
<td>Once a month gathering of families with the aim of developing a supportive social network for families.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mums and Bubs group</td>
<td>Informal mothers group which meet for morning tea while the children play.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xtreme</td>
<td>Youth group for teenagers in years 7 to 10. Meets every second Wednesday evening.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UnitingCare Kippax (Holt)</th>
<th>Bridging the Gap</th>
<th>Runs training programs for Volunteers to include their skills base.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Computer access</td>
<td>Free computer and internet access for members of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families First</td>
<td></td>
<td>An integrated series of 5 programs and courses for Domestic Violence and Child Abuse prevention awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Happenings</td>
<td></td>
<td>A Low cost craft program which held once a week during school holidays for primary school aged children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen Konnections</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides Material Aid for people in need of food assistance. Cooking classes are run for people with disabilities or on low incomes. Also provide assistance in the planning of budgets for families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Resilience-based mentoring for young people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturing the Carer</td>
<td>Runs programs and events designed to help and nurture carers and their families. The program aims to assist its clients in a holistic manner.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgroups: including multicultural, Babies, Blokes and other playgroups</td>
<td>One on one support for parents of younger children who need extra supports eg. May be otherwise socially isolated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock, Rhythm and Rock Program</td>
<td>Program uses storytelling and rhythms to give carers and children quality bonding time together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational and support groups</td>
<td>A range of relational and support groups based on a community development model to reduce social exclusion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Groups</td>
<td>A range of walking groups on various days and times for relational support and physical exercise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Belconnen Leagues Club (Holt)</td>
<td>Sport for all ages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1.2. *Brought into West Belconnen by organizations based outside West Belconnen*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglicare (Civic)</td>
<td>CYCLOPS: Assistance for Young Carers particularly for those aged 10 – 18 years. Supports young carers to have as normal a day to day lifestyle as possible while providing additional programs for them such as holiday programs, case management and advocacy as required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Program CEAS</td>
<td>Finding short/medium term accommodation for people. Transition to long term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets</td>
<td>Sustaining Tenancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belconnen Community Services (Belconnen)</td>
<td>Anger management Group for Men: Support Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belconnen Family Day Care</td>
<td>Provides quality childcare in people’s homes. This provides childcare in a family environment. This also provides an employment opportunity for stay at home mothers to earn an income while still looking after their own children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEST Club (based at West Leagues Club)</td>
<td>Respite activities and outings for older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birds and the Bees</td>
<td>Educational group for parents of children aged 7 years and older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Linkages</td>
<td>To assist Housing ACT tenants and Community Housing tenants feel more connected to their community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23
<p>| <strong>Community Transport and Trips programs</strong> | Transport services to assist does in need including the fragile, aged, disabled and their carers. |
| <strong>Family Fun Days</strong> | School Holiday activities Holt &amp; Charnwood |
| <strong>Family Support</strong> | Support for families |
| <strong>Good Beginnings</strong> | One on one support for parents of younger children who need extra supports eg. May be otherwise socially isolated. |
| <strong>Home Base</strong> | Early Intervention Program for families at risk of homelessness |
| <strong>My Family First ACT</strong> | Sharing and educational program for parents with a child in statutory care |
| <strong>Parents, Children the Law and coping</strong> | Support group for parents and carers who have or had children in trouble with the law |
| <strong>Playgroup in the Park (Dunlop)</strong> |  |
| <strong>Stressed out Sisters &amp; BLISS (Kippax Health Centre)</strong> | Craft Groups and Child care |
| <strong>Centacare</strong> | New arrivals Humanitarian service Help refugees to settle here. |
| <strong>Companion House (O’Connor)</strong> | Assisting Survivors of Torture and Trauma Some Community development activities, based on need &amp; access issues. |
| <strong>Kincare</strong> | Practical Carers assistance |
| <strong>PANDSI</strong> | Parent discussion / support groups, particularly for mothers with PND Exercise, talk/support/ affinity group &amp; childcare available for parents during group time. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St Vincent de Paul’s</th>
<th>Emergency Relief – food, clothing?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharing Places Inc. (Pearce)</td>
<td>Sharing Places Community access/Social participation Day service for Adults who have intellectual/multiple disabilities associated with high and complex needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.1.3. Services offered outside West Belconnen and accessed by people from West Belconnen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belconnen Community Services (Belconnen)</th>
<th>English Conversation Group</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mum’s Walking Group (Gungahlin)</td>
<td>Support for Aged people living at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companion House (O’Connor)</td>
<td>Sensitising the broader community to the needs of people affected by torture &amp; trauma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gungahlin Early Child and family Centre</td>
<td>Community support for Indigenous families from Holt</td>
<td>Specifically targeted support for indigenous families relating to parenting, transitions in the schooling system and increasing access to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Australia (Belconnen)</td>
<td>Job matching</td>
<td>Help people get training, work experience and jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering ACT (Belconnen)</td>
<td>SPICE</td>
<td>Helping people to get work experience as volunteers. Work experience programs for teenagers in the later years of high school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.2. Health

#### 3.2.1. In West Belconnen by West Belconnen organizations

##### 3.2.1.1. General Practitioners
Access to health services has been an increasing source of difficulty for many years. At the time of preparing this report, there were 11 General Practitioners operating in West Belconnen, the majority of whom are in part-time practice. One of the doctors in full-time practice is retiring in November 2007, and there are no current arrangements for a replacement.

The practices are located in Kippax, Holt (two), Charnwood (at the Fraser end of Charnwood and Higgins. There are no medical facilities in either Macgregor or Dunlop.

Only two practices – both part-time – have their books open for new patients. The majority have lengthy waiting lists, and one large practice is not currently taking new people on to the waiting list at all.

The national average of bulk billing for non-referred GP attendances is 75.1% The electorate of Fraser (of which West Belconnen forms part) is at 49.0% - the second lowest in Australia. However in West Belconnen, the access to bulk billing is severely limited.

No practice offers regular access to bulk billing. 4 General practitioners offer it “at the doctor’s discretion”. 1 practice of 4 General Practitioners offer it for people who were patients prior to 2000 and who are on Health Care cards. Even in those circumstances the hours of bulk billed consultations is severely limited. One GP offers bulk billing for children under 16 and for Aged pensioners only.

**Planned Services:**
The Charnwood Community Health Committee is a non-partisan community-based group dedicated to improving the access to affordable doctors and health services for people in Charnwood and
surrounding suburbs. It is currently in the stages of planning and developing an innovative medical co-operative service to be based at Charnwood providing bulk-billing doctors and allied health services. There is no currently set date by which this venture will be operating.

3.2.1.2. Dental Services

There are four dentists operating in West Belconnen: one in Charnwood, and three (two part-time) in the Kippax Health Centre Holt. There are no dental services available in Higgins, Macgregor or Dunlop. All dental services have lengthy waiting periods.

3.2.1.3. Pharmacy Services

There are three pharmacies operating in West Belconnen – one each in Charnwood, Higgins and Kippax (Holt). There are no pharmaceutical services available in Macgregor or Dunlop. The pharmacy at Charnwood operates with slightly extended hours. A pharmacy in Florey opens until 9pm. The closest late night pharmacy is in O’Connor.

3.2.1.4. Other medical services

There are only four other forms of medical services currently operating in West Belconnen by West Belconnen-based organizations:
- A Maternal and Child Health (MACH) nursing services operates out of the Kippax Health Centre (Holt) and out of the Charnwood-Dunlop School buildings.
- A private physiotherapist practices operates at Kippax (Holt).
- An aged care hostel and nursing home (Kalparrin) operates at Kippax (Holt).

Planned services:
“Flexible for Life” (at Charnwood Christian Life Centre):
Age appropriate and specific exercise for all ages, including those with limiting physical conditions

There are no specialist medical services operating in West Belconnen.

3.2.2. Brought into West Belconnen by organizations based outside West Belconnen

- ACT Health – Mental Health (Civic/Belconnen)
  - Crisis team & centre based services, social workers, Psychologists. Peri- natal Mental Health
- ACT Health Cervical Screen Program
  - Free Community Talks and information sessions
- Alcoholics Anonymous
  - Support. Based at Kippax Uniting Community Centre
• On Purpose Counselling and Coaching
  o Coaching Counselling Supporting individuals and couples
• YMCA /Kippax UnitingCare (YMCA is Macquarie based)
  o Exercise classes 6 classes run weekly at Kippax Uniting Community Centre. These classes are aimed at older people including classes for the physically less mobile.

3.2.3. **Offered outside West Belconnen and accessed by people from West Belconnen**

3.2.3.1. **General practitioners**

There is a range of medical practitioners operating throughout Belconnen. It is beyond the scope of the current study to list these practices, nor is it possible to determine whether people in West Belconnen access the practices. However experience of clients and community organizations indicates that issues of closed books, waiting periods and bulk billing remain a significant hurdle.

3.2.3.2. **Dental services**

The Belconnen Child and Youth Dental Clinic operates out of the Belconnen Health Centre.

There is a range of dental services operating throughout Belconnen. It is beyond the scope of the current study to list these practices, nor is it possible to determine whether people in West Belconnen access the practices.

3.2.3.3. **Pharmaceutical services**

There is a range of pharmaceutical services operating throughout Belconnen, though no late night pharmacies. Pharmacies operate in Evatt, Florey, Hawker, Kaleen and Macquarie. It is not possible to determine to what extent people from West Belconnen access the services.

3.2.3.4. **Other services**

The closest Hospital is Calvary Hospital, located at Bruce. It offers a wide range of services – both public and private. This includes an emergency department, an after hours medical services (CALMS), palliative care and a private Mental Health Unit. However, not all
medical services are available at Calvary Hospital, including paediatric emergency.

Public transport to the three main areas of specialist services – Calvary Hospital, Canberra Hospital and John James Medical services – is complex and time consuming. Based on ACTION Buses’ advised routes and current timetables, and the scenario of an 11am medical appointment, the following travel times have been determined:

- Public transport from West Belconnen to the closest of these (Calvary) takes approximately 1 ¼ hours in each direction.
- Public transport from West Belconnen the Canberra Hospital takes a minimum of 1 ½ hours in each direction.
- Public transport from West Belconnen to specialist services at John James and related services takes approximately two hours in each direction.

The majority of other relatively nearby medical services provided for the use of residents of West Belconnen are based at or around the Belconnen Town Centre.

These include
- ACT Health (Belconnen Health Centre)
  - Physiotherapy, Dental, Dietician and Social worker for people with acute and chronic physical health issues
  - Children, Youth and Women’s Health Program
  - ACT Mental Health
- ACT Spectacles Subsidy Scheme – ACT Dept DHCS
- ALATEEN – Belconnen Churches Centre
- Bilby Club – Belconnen Community Services
- Bridges Community Access Program – supporting people with disabilities, the frail aged, and their carers - Belconnen Community Services
- Bungee – promoting resilience in children and young people living or studying in North Canberra: Belconnen Community Services
- Disability ACT Respite and Supported Accommodation– Nature Conservation House
- Kirra Centre (Aged Day Care) – Belconnen Health Centre
- Positive Strokes Group - Belconnen Community Services
- U-Turn: Early intervention program for children aged 5 to 12 who have mild to moderate mental health issues.

Others based in other parts of the Belconnen region include
- Amity Aged Care– Aranda
- Anger Management Therapy – Hyson Green Daycentre, Bruce
- Brian Hennessy Rehabilitation Centre – Bruce
• Post Traumatic Stress Disorder for War Veterans – Hyson Green, Bruce
• Retina Australia ACT – Evatt
• Canberra Complementary Health practice – Hawker
• Breast Cancer Support Group - Kaleen
• Cancer Council ACT Inc. – Kaleen
• Artlinks Canberra – Macquarie
• Ginninderra Gardens Aged Care – Page
• Ridgecrest Retirement Village Aged Care – Page
• Villaggio Sant Antonio Hostel Aged Care - Page
• Family Therapy and Counselling Clinic – Scullin
• Alzheimer’s Australia ACT support and respite services– Scullin
• YMCA: Pryme Movers exercise and mobility program, in over 20 locations

3.3. Education

3.3.1. In West Belconnen by West Belconnen organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Department of Education</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Pre-school – Year 6 education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dunlop-Charnwood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higgins (to close</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>end of 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holt (to close</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>end of 2008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macgregor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and After School Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charnwood-Dunlop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higgins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Holt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macgregor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Education</td>
<td>St Thomas Aquinas School</td>
<td>Kindergarten – Year 6 education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kippax Library (Kippax/Holt)</td>
<td>Normal Library based services</td>
<td>Lending of books, CD’s, DVD’s and other educational materials. Also has an internet service available for the general public to use. Most services are low or no cost to users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homework Group held at the Kippax Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Schools as Community</strong></td>
<td><strong>Counsellors employed by the Education Department</strong></td>
<td><strong>Primary support for children in school settings and teachers and families. Also in high schools. Confidential counselling for adolescents.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 worker for Holt/Higgins)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 worker for Macgregor/Dunlop-Charnwood)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UnitingCare Kippax (Holt)</strong></td>
<td><strong>CARE Now!</strong></td>
<td><strong>This parent education program is designed to increase awareness among parent/carers the issue of what is child neglect and abuse.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planned services:**
New Pre-School to Year 10 School on the site of the former Ginninderra District High School, to open progressively from Feb 2009

### 3.3.2.  *Brought into West Belconnen by organizations based outside West Belconnen*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belconnen Community Services (Belconnen)</th>
<th><strong>U-Turn:</strong> Runs educational and recreational programs for people in the 12 to 25 age group. It runs outreach groups in schools. It also provides emergency relief and case management for clients</th>
<th><strong>Aims to support and empower its clients.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **North Belconnen Community Council**   | **Akira Long Day Care**  
**Cooinda Long Day Care** | **Long Day Care centres based in Charnwood. No current vacancies** |

31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smith Family (Civic based with office in Kippax)</th>
<th>Financially assist young people to complete their education.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Therapy ACT</td>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment, support, advocacy, counselling for families and children who are developmentally delayed. Also assist adolescents and adult.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.3. **Offered outside West Belconnen and accessed by people from West Belconnen**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Dept of Education</th>
<th>Other local primary schools</th>
<th>Eg Latham, Florey, Southern Cross, Fraser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belconnen High</td>
<td>Belconnen High (Hawker)</td>
<td>Year 7-10 education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hawker)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra High</td>
<td>Canberra High (Cook)</td>
<td>Year 7-10 education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Cook)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copland College</td>
<td>Copland College (Melba)</td>
<td>Year 11-12 education plus evening educational courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melba)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawker College</td>
<td>Hawker College (Hawker)</td>
<td>Year 11-12 education plus evening educational courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Hawker)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Ginninderra College</td>
<td>Lake Ginninderra College (Belconnen)</td>
<td>Year 11-12 education plus evening educational courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College (Belconnen)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Education</td>
<td>St John the Apostle</td>
<td>Kindergarten – Year 6 education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Florey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Francis Xavier</td>
<td>Year 7-12 education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Florey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canberra Institute</td>
<td>Bruce, Fyshwick, Phillip, Reid, Tuggeranong campuses</td>
<td>TAFE educational courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universities</th>
<th>Australian National University Acton</th>
<th>Tertiary education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic University Watson</td>
<td>Tertiary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Canberra Bruce</td>
<td>Tertiary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglicare (Civic)</td>
<td>Cyclops</td>
<td>Education support in schools for young carers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth education program</td>
<td>Alternative education (15 – 19 year olds)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIDZONE (Mitchell)</td>
<td>Bobbi Cook (behavioural gives presentations on child related issues)</td>
<td>Educate families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northside High school support service (Belconnen)</td>
<td>Run out of Uturn Building</td>
<td>Youth education support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy ACT</td>
<td>Speech Therapy and Physiotherapy</td>
<td>Children through to Adults including programs for children who have Autism and ASD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA (Macquarie)</td>
<td>Belconnen Long Day Care</td>
<td>To provide a caring, enjoyable, safe and healthy environment for the children and staff. To provide a program that meets the individual needs and interests of each child, to develop their full potential in all areas of development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Birthday Parties</td>
<td>The YMCA offers specialty Children’s parties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before and After school care program</td>
<td>Runs from 7.30 to 9.30 am and 3.00pm to 6pm during the school week. Breakfast included in before care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED GYM</td>
<td>Educational Gymnastics is a fun, non-competitive movement education classes for children aged 12 months to 8 years of age. This program provides children with the opportunity to experience and develop their confidence and motor skills with a wide range of physical activities, as well as interaction with other children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA (Macquarie)</td>
<td>Playschool Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YMCA Playschool Program is designed to provide children with opportunities for social, cognitive, physical and emotional development as well promoting independence. It is designed for children aged 3 to 5 years old.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA (Macquarie)</td>
<td>Healthy Kids</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The program is a fun, interactive, educative physical activity based program for children. The aim is to give children knowledge regarding healthy lifestyle chooses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


4. **Identified Gaps**

The following areas of gaps and needs were identified across a range of Community forums, liaison with clients, and the community survey. Those listed in this section are the needs regularly expressed and given a weighting of significance by the respondents. The full list of perceived gaps and comments for each area is included as Appendix 3.

4.1. **General gaps**

Social isolation caused by location “on the edges” of urban development, and inadequate transport services is without exception listed as a fundamental issue. Transportation to services around the Belconnen Town Centre or beyond is difficult, and poorly serviced in non-peak times. Despite the fact that the primary local ‘hubs’ are at the northern and southern end of West Belconnen (i.e. Charnwood and Kippax), transportation north-south within West Belconnen is poor, with most services being provided to take people eastwards towards the Belconnen Town Centre.

Both service organizations and clients mention the high sense of locality identity – people in West Belconnen live by and large in West Belconnen. This ‘village’ mentality fosters a stronger possibility of community development than in many areas of the ACT, where communities are more fluid in their community identity. At the same time, it suggests the necessity of an approach to service delivery and community development that is different from other areas, and more site based.

Dunlop is particularly isolated, and stands unique among ACT suburbs. Demographic predictions are that it will become the 5th largest suburb in the ACT (being Kambah, Ngunnawal, Gordon and Kaleen). However, Dunlop has no shopping centre, no school or other educational facilities, no community hall or gathering space, no playing fields, no medical services and minimal outdoor community gathering spaces. No additional facilities are currently planned to redress this isolation.

Specific attention to the issue of social exclusion and isolation is regularly requested.
4.2. Gaps in Community Services

Clients and service organizations regularly spoke of the necessity for an integrated approach to working with people’s needs. The de-humanising aspect of moving from one service organization to another for different aspects of a person’s life is expressed as a significant factor in people not accessing services. This is increased with inadequate transportation in the area.

Emergency housing and refuge accommodation is expressed as an issue of particularly high concern.

4.3. Gaps in Health Services

The lack of adequate access to General practitioners – especially those who bulk bill – is the highest expressed need by clients and service organizations.

Access to services relating to mental health, including support, primary care and respite care are also of high concern. Access to free or low cost counselling services in West Belconnen is spoken of as an urgent need.

Clients and organizations speak regularly of the need for an integrated or holistic care approach, and a significant expansion in early intervention and primary care services, rather than concentrating on acute or reactive care.

4.4. Gaps in Educational Services

Educational levels in West Belconnen are low by ACT standards as is retention rate to Year 12. Efforts by individuals to redress this matter for themselves are hampered by the lack of adult educational facilities within the area and the failure of them being offered at times that can be co-ordinated with family commitments. Trades-based training (eg at CIT) is particularly difficult because of locational isolation.

The new district P-10 school in Holt will hopefully redress some of the issues caused at present by the lack of a High School in the area. However, the current plan for populating the school year by year will
mean that it will be at least 2013 before public educational facilities are offered in the area for P-10 students. This has caused fracturing of support networks and added additional financial and time pressures to families already under significant difficulties.

There is a significant need for the development of community pride and spirit in local education prior to the opening of the new school and for several years after its full opening.

There is currently a significant gap in the area of youth services, including a physical space for young people to use (such as a drop in space) and youth based health services.
Appendix 1:
Organizations involved in West Belconnen Inter-Agency Liaison Group or Community Forums

Organisations marked * completed the Community Survey

ACT Dept of Disability Housing and Community Services *
ACT Health *
ACT Mental Health Services *
ALP Mt Roger Sub Branch
Alzheimers Australia *
Barnados *
Belconnen Community Council
Belconnen Community Services - several branches *
Belconnen Family Day Care *
Belconnen Salvation Army Church
Belconnen Police Station
Breast Screen Australia *
Canberra Christian Life Centre *
Carers ACT *
Charity Computers
Charnwood Primary School *
Companion House *
CYCLOPS *
Fabric *
FaCSIA ACT Office
Hand up *
Junction Youth Services
Legal Aid ACT *
Lifeline Canberra *
MACH nursing service *
Marymead *
Neighbourhood Watch
Parent Line
Queen Elizabeth 2 Sleep School *
St James Anglican parish *
St John the Apostle Parish – Refugee program *
Schools as Community: Holt/ Higgins *
Schools as Community: Macgregor/ Charnwood-Dunlop *
Sharing Places *
SPICE – Volunteering ACT *
UnitingCare Kippax *
U-Turn Youth Services *
West Belconnen Health Cooperative
YMCA *
Youth Law Centre
YWCA *
Youth Coalition *
Volunteering ACT *
Appendix 2: Community Survey Form

1. What are the
   a) Community Services
   b) Health Services and
   c) Educational services
   offered in West Belconnen by an organization based in West Belconnen?

2. What are the
   a) Community Services
   b) Health Services and
   c) Educational services
   brought into West Belconnen by an organization based outside West Belconnen?

3. What are the
   a) Community Services
   b) Health Services and
   c) Educational services
   offered outside West Belconnen and accessed by people from West Belconnen?

4. What are the gaps or needs you are aware of in relation to
   a) Community Services
   b) Health Services and
   c) Educational services
   for people in West Belconnen?
Appendix 3
Full list of Gaps and Needs as expressed in Community Survey form and Community Forums

Community Services
- High levels of Housing/Rental pressure present in the West Belconnen area. These include issues such as high rental prices for housing, rent being in arrests to the housing department.
- Issues of isolation (both physically and socially) not being addressed properly.
- Transport for people of all ages – particularly a problem for those who are sick and isolated, poor parents with young children. Bus drivers are no longer allowed to help parents with young children/prams to get on or off the buses.
- Very poor off peak bus service for the West Belconnen area. Also very little intersuburb transport available. Transport is geared to going to the Town Centre. Have to go out of local area to access services.
- There is a lack of public transport that is reliable and consistent.
- Community services that are available in the area may be difficult to access. Often because of poor transport to the area where the service is located.
- The development of infrastructure has not kept pace with the increasing populations of the suburbs in this area. Particularly areas such as Dunlop.
- Lack of early intervention programs available to deal with social/health problems. Approach is often a reactive one to problems.
- A more holistic approach to clients needs is required.
- Boundaries and limitation of service delivery “Pocket funding”
- Never enough of all services, more people – both paid and volunteers needed to help run services that are available. High turnover of staff in the services area.
- Often people with multiple issues such as Homeless people with mental issues may not be getting all of the different types of support they need because they may not easily access some types of services eg. May have no way to get to services located outside of the area in which they live.
- Transport exchanges are not placed near the services that people need to use. This is particularly hard for parents with young children and the elderly.
- Services may not have the necessary expertise level to deal with extreme problems. Many services also facing problems with obtaining suitable staff due to skills shortage.
- High turn over of staff in some services makes for problems in delivering care to clients. Eg High turn over of case managers
maybe very upsetting for some clients particularly for does who have mental health issues. Poor availability of low cost counselling for people with a wide variety of problems.

- More counselling needs to be available for people dealing with mental health issues.
- Poor availability of low cost counselling for people with a wide variety of problems. More counselling needs to be available for people dealing with mental health issues.
- There needs to be more services out in West Belconnen that can deal with issues such as sexual health and drug and alcohol issues that are facing the areas young people/adults.
- YWCA would also like to see a Child and Family centre in the West Belconnen area that does preventative, early intervention work with young children (0-5 years group)
- Lifeline stated that there are insufficient emergency housing services and there needs to be more responsible gambling education in the community.
- Belconnen Family Daycare stated that there needs to be more assistance with transport for children who attend preschool or Early Intervention Unit while the parents work.
- A lack of support services for men in the West Belconnen area.
- Information on available services can be difficult to access by those that need them.
- People who most need to access services often don’t use these services because they may not know that they are available to them. Services may need to be better advertised to the general public in the West Belconnen area.
- From the end of term 4 2007 Belconnen Community Services will no longer be managing the After School Care program at Higgins Primary School.
- Lack of activities for children and young people during the school holidays. Some of the activities that are available are costly and may be financially out of reach for some parents on low to middle incomes or families with more than one child.
- Lack of playing fields in good condition for use by people who wish to undertake exercise in the outdoors.
- Lack of drop in services for people – particularly young people to use.
- Lack of cohesion between services that do operate in the area. Needs to be more/better communication between different service providers working in the West Belconnen/Belconnen area.
- Poor levels of maintenance and safety in ACT housing houses/flats
- The rental squeeze in the Canberra area is making it very difficult for low to middle earners to access private rental properties in good states of repair.
- Problems faced by the elderly poor when trying to rent a flat due to shortage of suitable housing stock and high prices being
asked by private landlords make it very difficult for the elderly on low fixed incomes to break into the rental market.

- Lack of emergency accommodation available on the North side of Canberra, particularly short to medium term accommodation.
- Delays with Centrelink acting on problems may have people needing to material aid/financial assistance from Community services.
- Carers are having a harder time in accessing carer payments from Centrelink.
- Lack of refuges in the West Belconnen area for Women and Children trying to escape from situations involving domestic violence.
- No Police Station in the West Belconnen area, which can mean there are time delays in crimes being dealt with.

**Health Services**

- Basically there are just not enough workers in the health programs listed in the survey. The programs on offer are good but there is a need for more of these types of services.
- There is a gap in the area of youth health services in the Belconnen/West Belconnen area. Particularly sexual health.
- There is a lack of Medical and Dental services in the West Belconnen area. Not all of the available services will bulk bill for all clients and some of the practices have closed their books to new patients.
- Most Doctors in the West Belconnen area have closed their books to new patients.
- One of the local Doctors will be retiring within the next few months thereby decreasing available Doctor numbers.
- Not all of the Clinics bulk bill patients.
- Primary health not covered in Mental Health package.
- Lack of support services to help people in domestic violence situations.
- Lack of in house respite care.
- Long waiting lists for siblings of children with disabilities to get into activities focusing on their emotional and developmental needs.
- Only clients that are in urgent/very high need of care get the level of care that they require.
- Need to be more support services located in West Belconnen for children with behavioural and developmental problems.
- Needs to be more Emergency services such as Ambulance, Police services in the area.
- More in house respite services are needed for carers in the West Belconnen area due to the lack of transport for clients and their carers.
• Very few preventative health care services particularly in the mental health care area.
• If additional aged care self care units are built in the Belconnen region, this will put additional pressure on existing services. Belconnen already has a high number of ageing residents, and we would need to be able to expand our services to meet the demand.

Educational Services
• There is a lack or alternative educational options available in the West Belconnen area.
• Lack of educational support for young people in the West Belconnen area. Need to more “Homework Clubs” for students to access.
• There is a need for more educational services such as the University of the 3rd Age for older adults in the West Belconnen area.
• The lack of a High School in the West Belconnen area at present means that teenagers are having to travel out of their suburbs by either public or private transport to get to school. These additional transport costs add to financial pressures for some families. Also some teenagers have lost their support networks of friends with some having to go to different schools to one another.
• Lack of educational options such as a CIT for people to use if they which to undertake trades based training.
• Little if any Before School care available for children at the local schools.
• There needs to be help available for the school communities (children, teachers etc.) that have to deal with feelings of loss and grief surrounding the closing of their schools (Holt and Higgins at the end of 2008). Help will be needed to build a spirit of community at the new Regional School