

# **The Six Centre Alliance – an Australian-NZ model for professional collaboration between agencies**

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& Spoken Language

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# Abstract

- ▶ This presentation examines a unique collaborative professional partnership of early intervention agencies. It explores the foundation of an alliance between six similar centres across Australia and New Zealand since its inception in 2003 and how it developed into an on-going vehicle for professional sharing and collaboration.

# The scope of this presentation

1. **The 6CA rationale** – an alliance of auditory-based non-government centres across Australia and New Zealand
2. **Representation of each agency** – how each Centre is represented within the 6CA
3. **How the Alliance manages its business** – teleconferences, face to face
4. **Memorandum Of Understanding** – the formal linkage
5. **Key drivers** – how 6CA centres collaborate so individual agencies don't waste resources re-inventing the wheel
6. **Key Benefits** – professional sharing at both program and management levels
7. **Challenges** – building multi level collaboration; shared data sets; lobbying on behalf of deaf children learning to speak
8. **The 6CA Profile** – comparing organisational data on each individual agency

# SIX CENTRE ALLIANCE

Six oral language early intervention centres from across Australia and New Zealand with one mission - teaching hearing impaired children to speak.

The Alliance fosters auditory based oral language early intervention for young deaf children through cooperative practices. We advance the right of deaf children to the same education and life opportunities as their hearing peers.

## The Six Centres:

- Offer auditory based services for hearing impaired children aged 0-6 and their families;
- Focus on early intervention;
- Are parent founded or have significant involvement of parents;
- Represent Australian states and New Zealand;
- Are independent;
- Are not for profit.

The 6 Centres openly share information and provide peer support.

WA  
Telathon Speech  
& Hearing Centre

SA  
Cora Barclay  
Centre

NSW  
The Shepherd  
Centre

VIC  
Taralye

QLD  
Hear and Say  
Centre

NZ  
The Hearing  
House

*6 Centres, 1 Mission*  
*Teaching hearing impaired children to speak*

# 1. Rationale – Aust/NZ alliance of auditory-based non-govt centres

- ▶ Provide auditory-based oral language services for HI children 0 – 6 and their families
- ▶ Have a service focus on early intervention
- ▶ Are parent-founded or have significant involvement of parents
- ▶ Provide sole geographical representation from each Australian state and New Zealand
- ▶ Are independent
- ▶ Not for profit.

## 2. Agency Representation within the 6CA

- ▶ CEO/General Manager
- ▶ Program Director
- ▶ Fundraiser
- ▶ In 2007 – Audiologists
- ▶ In 2008 – Psychologists?

### 3. Managing Alliance business – teleconferences, face to face

- ▶ Annual Colloquium rotates through member agencies – Vic, NSW, NZ, Qld etc
- ▶ Regular teleconferences - ~6 per year
- ▶ Written Updates – as per teleconferences
- ▶ E-mail contact
- ▶ Staff visits, incidental contact

## 4. Formal Linkage - Memorandum of Understanding

- ▶ Signatories for each centre were the CEO and Chair of the Board of Management.
- ▶ underlying principle of opt in/opt out
- ▶ territorial sovereignty
- ▶ co operative practices between like services

# Accordingly the parties agreed:

- ▶ to recognise and respect the role of Alliance centres in each state in Australia and in New Zealand,
- ▶ to openly share individual centre and collaborative information on a voluntary basis within the Alliance while safeguarding its confidentiality in respect to parties outside the Alliance,
- ▶ to respect and safeguard the intellectual property of individual alliance members,
- ▶ to provide peer support to the member organizations, and
- ▶ to only provide services including training or undertake fundraising activities in another state/NZ with the concurrence of the relevant Alliance member.

# 5. Key drivers – one wheel is enough!

**The major areas of focus for the Alliance are:**

- ▶ The financial viability of all member centres
- ▶ Innovative service delivery and technology
- ▶ Fundraising
- ▶ Service Models and standards
- ▶ Evidence based practice
- ▶ Research, and
- ▶ Professional training and development.

## 6. Key Benefits – professional sharing

- ▶ Research Data – student outcomes
- ▶ Assessment Tools and protocols
- ▶ Strategic Planning
- ▶ Policies and procedures
- ▶ PD and training
- ▶ Cross agency peer support
- ▶ Interagency transfers

# 7. Challenges

The 6CA partners set the following agenda in the MOU

- ▶ Work to improve the financial viability of each centre
- ▶ Advocate for the introduction of universal newborn hearing screening throughout Aust/NZ
- ▶ Facilitate the comparison of performance and the establishment of benchmarks and standards
- ▶ Develop and implement compatible systems for capturing and recording relevant information
- ▶ Conduct research
- ▶ Contribute to a co-ordinated program of professional development, training and peer support between Alliance centres.

# Founding Members

- ▶ 1 The Shepherd Centre (NSW)
- ▶ 2 Taralye (VIC)
- ▶ 3 Cora Barclay (S.A.)
- ▶ 4 Hear & Say Centre (Qld)
- ▶ 5 Telethon Speech and Hearing Centre (WA)
- ▶ 6 Hearing House (New Zealand).

# Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Six Centre Alliance is:

- ▶ *to advocate on behalf of deaf children and their families, provide mutual support and ensure a high standard of auditory-based oral early intervention programs and services.*

Table 1: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Member Agency:	A	B	C	D	E	F
El Program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School Age	No	No	Yes (CI only)	No	Yes	Yes
Program Year	48 weeks	40 weeks	Program: 46 weeks Admin: 48 weeks	40 weeks	SS-40 weeks EI-flexible but min 40	40 weeks
Services Year	50 weeks	50 weeks	50 weeks (except preschools)	50 weeks	50 weeks	50 weeks
Other Programs	Preschool	# El Outreach Program # Playgroup # Auditory Verbal School Support # Little Star Program # Parent Education	# Playgroup # Preschool # CI program # Correspondence # School support # Research # Prof. education (AVT training)	Playgroup Kindergarten Mother Goose Literacy/Book Club Signposts	On-site Integrated Kindergarten; school support to Yr 12; students' peer group (WHISPA)	Programs for Children with delayed sp/language
Other Services	audiology	# Paediatric Audiology # Newborn Screening (reducing)	# Audiology # Family support # Playgroup # Mentoring	Audiology clinic ENT clinic	Audiology Sales of sound field systems	GP/ENT Ear Clinic Newborn Screening Earbus Outreach

Table 2: STAFFING AND PERSONNEL

Member Agency:	A	B	C	D	E	F
N0 of STAFF	13	53	45	14	35	43
TOTAL FTE	8.5	32.5	29.9	10.6	29	23.9
EI FTE	3.5	14.5	9.8	1.4	9.8	10.6
Audiology FTE	0.2	0	4.3	4.3	2.0	3.1
ADMIN FTE	2	7.2	4.3	2.1	5.6	5.8
SCHOOL AGE FTE	0.3	7.9	0	2.8	0 (merged with EI)	0
Fundraising FTE	1		1.8	1.0	3.6	3.1
OTHER FTE	Preschool 1.5	2.9	Research/assessment coordinator: 1.0 Information/Librarian: 0.7 Early learning Program: 2.3 Kindergarten: 5.7	7	Research: 0.6 Ass't Coordinator: 1.0 Professional dvt coordinator: 1.0 Family counsellors: 1.2 Preschool: 4.2	0.4
CERT. AVTs	3	0	1	50%	3	5
New staff in 2006	1	4	5	6	7	5 (18 ytd 2006/07)
Turnover	10%	8%	11%	10.6	20%	12.9%
Volunteers	5	2	45	14	40+	20 regular 100+ as required
Staff leave	Therapists & Admin =4 wks teachers =12	12 weeks teachers 6 weeks specialists 4 wks administration	12 weeks 6 weeks 4 weeks	some therapists 12 some therapist 4 4 wks admin	Program staff: 6 weeks Admin staff: 4 weeks	4 weeks all BUT many negotiated additional wks

Table 3: HEARING IMPAIRED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Member Agency:	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
El Program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
School Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes (CI only)	No	
Program Year	40 weeks	40wks SS 40-48 EI	40 weeks	48 weeks	Program: 46 wks Admin: 48 wks	40 weeks	
Enrolment							
0-3	40	11	15	12 EI	63	44	185
3-6	55	31	19	25 EI	76	70	276
6-12	0	77	23	4 EI	6	53	163
12-19	0	24	7	33 Monitoring Program	1	30	95
<b>TOTAL</b>	95	143	64	41 EI 33 Monitoring	146	197	719
CI bilat	4	0	0	6	10	18	
CI unilat	15	28 15 EI/13SS	10	60	24	100	

Table 4: FINANCES AND BUDGETS

Member Agency:	A	B	C	D	E	F
<b>2006/07 BUDGET</b>	\$700,000	2.8 million	\$2.275 million	\$2.425 million	\$969,000	\$2.4 million
<b>2005/06 BUDGET</b>	\$680,000	2.6 million	\$2.006 million	\$2.291 million	849,000	\$1.965 million
<b>GROWTH</b>	3%	7%	21.5%	6%	14%	22%
<b>Fee income</b>	\$26,000 4%	50,000 2%	\$100,000 4%	\$227,000 10%	191,000 20%	\$600,000 25%
<b>State Govt</b>	0	\$700,700 25%	\$400,000 17.5%	\$1,041,000 45%	\$145,520 15%	\$1,125,000 47%
<b>State Govt Depts</b>	0	- Educ & Training - DOCS - Ageing Disability & Home Care	Education Disability Services	Dept of Human Services	Education Disability	Health Education Disability Services
<b>Federal Govt</b>	\$188,000 27%	Nil (some obtained through state govt)	\$0	\$0	\$230,000 24%	\$340,000 14%
<b>Fund Raising</b>	\$426,000 60%	1.6 million 57%	\$1,500,000 66%	\$905,000 40%	\$399,000 41%	\$335,000 14%
<b>Other income</b>	\$60,000 9%	110,000	\$275,000 12.5%	\$118,000 5%	\$3,000 -	Nil
<b>Fees EI</b>	None	\$20/year (non-compulsory)	\$720 pa EI hear/aid \$740 pa EI outreach \$1,092 pa EI CI \$260 pa MAPping only	Nil	Nil	\$295 per child

# Presenter Details

Mr Paul Higginbotham

CEO

Telethon Speech & Hearing

Perth, Western Australia

Tel: (+61) 8-9387-9888 (work)

e-mail: [paulh@tsh.org.au](mailto:paulh@tsh.org.au)

