

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

12 December 2024

Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Jerry Nockles as its new Executive Director, effective 13 January 2025, following an extensive search process that attracted a high-quality field of candidates.

He replaces Executive Director, Monique Earsman.

Dr Nockles brings a wealth of experience to the role, having spearheaded policy and advocacy efforts at World Vision Australia and UNICEF Australia. He has also held senior academic positions at Stanford University and George Washington University.

With a PhD in political science and international relations from the Australian National University (ANU), and more than 20 years' experience in the Royal Australian Navy, Dr Nockles has a reputation as a skilled and visionary leader capable of navigating complex and dynamic environments, building high-performing teams, and delivering exceptional results.

CSSA Chair Peter Monaghan said Dr Nockles' appointment was a powerful statement about the organisation's commitment to authentic, experience-driven leadership in social services on a national scale.

"Dr Nockles' blend of lived experience and professional expertise in social impact organisations makes him an exceptional choice to lead our organisation going forward," Mr Monaghan said.

"His appointment marks an exciting new era for CSSA as we continue to be a pivotal voice for our network, helping develop and shape national social justice policies."

Mr Monaghan took the opportunity to recognise the significant contribution of outgoing Executive Director Monique Earsman, who had been in the role since July 2021.

"Monique successfully steered our organisation through a period of restructuring, rebuilt our capacity, and realigned our focus to better serve our members. We are immensely grateful for her dedication and wish her the very best in her new role."

Mr Monaghan also acknowledged the commitment of Ron Johnson who was the interim Executive Director over the last six months, "Ron has done a stellar job for the membership acting in the role at short notice while maintaining his own government relations and policy function." Dr Nockles said he was deeply honoured to join CSSA and continue its vital work in assisting vulnerable Australians across 40 organisations in metropolitan, regional and remote Australia.

"Having been brought up by a single mother in government housing in rural NSW, I know what it means to live in a loving household gripped by poverty," he said.

"In my experience, hope comes from support, safety, and education. These elements are the key building blocks in ensuring individual dignity for all, and I am committed to strengthening them in our shared quest for a fair go for all Australians."

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About Jerry Nockles

Dr Jerry Nockles' story is one of resilience, determination, and unwavering commitment to serving others. His journey began in public housing on the outskirts of Bathurst, NSW, where he faced significant challenges early in life.

Abandoned by his father, Jerry's mother single-handedly raised five children in poverty. Despite financial struggles, his family maintained strong values and a remarkable work ethic, supported by their close-knit community and Catholic faith.

Tragically orphaned at 16, Jerry's path to education was fraught with obstacles. Unable to finish high school and overcoming numerous hurdles, he attended night school while working to support himself, helping establish a life-long commitment to social justice.

Work experience

- Independent Higher Education Australia (IHEA) – Deputy CEO
- Australian National University – Visiting Fellow
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia – Director of Government and Public Relations
- WorldVision Australia – Director of Government Relations
- UNICEF – Head of Government Relations
- Australian Parliament – Chief of Staff to the Assistant Cabinet Secretary, Assistant Minister for Finance and Assistant Minister for Productivity
- Stanford University – The Hoover Institution - Visiting Scholar
- George Washington University – Institute for Security and Conflict Studies – Visiting Scholar
- Royal Australian Navy – Communications and Intelligence Specialist

Qualifications

- Australian National University – Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in International Relations and Political Science
- Australian National University – Master of Middle East and Central Asian Studies
- UNSW Canberra – Graduate Certificate in Business Administration and Management
- St Stanislaus College, Bathurst

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Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) advocates for the Church's social service ministry. It is the national peak body for Catholic social service providers. The CSSA's network operates across all Australian States and Territories and has a combined total of over 700 sites.