



Elizabeth Hoffman House
Aboriginal Women's Service Inc.

Strategic Plan

2011 - 2014

INTRODUCTION

Elizabeth Hoffman House (EHH) is a specialist Koori Women's service that is committed to developing an innovative and culturally responsive service for Kooril women and children who are experiencing family violence. EHH is the Victorian Peak Aboriginal organisation on Koori Women in the Family Violence sector and is governed by an annually elected Board of Directors.

EHH is an Koori community controlled organisation which has a membership base of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander / Koori Women, individuals drawn from across Victoria and southern NSW. EHH members strengthen the community aspirations to amplify the voice of the organisation in its work to improve the safety and wellbeing of Koori women and children.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES AND PRINCIPLE

EHH believes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have the right to self-determination and self-management as well as the right and responsibility of community control. Central to this belief is a commitment to principles and policies that encourage support and facilitate positive cultural integrity, community autonomy and development in practise. EHH believes that family violence and the abuse of women and children have no place in the Koori communities.

HISTORY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

While working at the Aborigines Advancement League, Elizabeth Morgan-Hoffman (Aunty Liz) identified the need to provide Aboriginal women and children with a safe place to escape family violence. She, Aunty Joyce Johnson, Aunty Eleanor Harding and many other Aboriginal women would take women and children escaping family violence into their own homes. Aunty Liz's vision was to provide Aboriginal women and their children with a safe place where they could escape family violence, and where they could get their lives back together while accessing the help and support they needed.

After visiting women's refuges and talking with community, Aunty Liz strongly believed that Aboriginal women and children needed their own refuge, where they could be with their own people. She, along with a number of other Aboriginal women subsequently co-founded *Elizabeth Hoffman House Aboriginal Women's Service* in the early 1970's, which became Australia's first Aboriginal women's refuge. Aunty June Atkinson worked in a voluntary capacity Refuge Matron during these initial years.

Aunty Liz along with other Aboriginal women battled for many years to convince governments to provide funding for rent and wages at the refuge. She made many trips to Canberra to lobby politicians and public servants, including the Auditor General, and in 1976 EHH finally received funding toward the operation of the refuge. In 1984 EHH became incorporated and independent of the Aborigines Advancement League. More than two decades later, in 2006, Elizabeth Morgan-Hoffman was acknowledged with a NAIDOC National Lifetime Achievement Award, for her co-founding of EHH and her commitment to stopping violence against Aboriginal women and children.

Today, EHH is a strong Koori community controlled organisation providing crisis accommodation for Aboriginal women and children through the refuge, as well as outreach services, which empowers Koori women to realise their rights, through counselling, education and re housing.

KEY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The following six key directions have been developed by the Elizabeth Hoffman House Aboriginal Women Services Incorporated Board of Directors and senior management as part of the EHH strategic planning process developed for the 2011 to 2014 period.

Key Direction 1 Develop EHH Leadership Team

Strengthen EHH leadership by fostering good governance and demonstrating effective management through 'leading by example', ensuring cultural security, mutual respect, integrity, fairness and equality is engendered into all structures, policies and practices.

- Goal 1:** Implement EHH new senior management team including recruitment and appointment of General Manager, Service Delivery Manager and Finance and Operations Manager.
- Goal 2:** Working with senior management, ensure appropriate management systems and processes are in place to support the effective operations of EHH.
- Goal 3:** Develop and document organisational wide delegation of authority.
- Goal 4:** Further develop EHH governance and management policies and procedures ensuring that appropriate on-going monitoring and compliance processes are in place.

Key Direction 2 Engaging with Members and Community

Broaden EHH Koori Women's membership base and strengthen community support as well as enhance community knowledge and understanding about the programs and services offered by EHH.

- Goal 1:** Empower our Women on the current suite of services offered by EHH as well as consult with EHH members and Koori community on identifying service gaps and unmet needs and the progress achieved against EHH strategic directions.
- Goal 2:** Undertake community education within the Koori community on a range of key issues relating to family violence including: healthy relationships; prevention and early intervention and the impact of family violence on community.
- Goal 3:** Develop and facilitate EHH membership and governance recruitment drive with a view to increasing support, skills and expertise throughout the organisation.

Key Direction 3 Organisational Development

Further develop and strengthen the EHH constitution and public profile to ensure that the organisation is best placed to grow and move forward into the future.

- Goal 1:** Undertake a formal review of the EHH constitution to identify current gaps and required improvements ensuring a culturally appropriate consultation with Members is conducted and the calling of a Special General Meeting so any changes are approved.
- Goal 2:** Undertake a formal review of the EHH name, branding and marketing strategy to ensure that organisational values and principles are appropriately reflected in the EHH public profile.

Key Direction 4 Best Practice and Accreditation

Expand and enhance EHH's capacity to advocate on behalf of Koori women and children, and promote the EHH model and practice to policy makers and the sector.

- Goal 1:** Demonstrate and document Aboriginal community controlled best practice within the family violence sector through the use of appropriate practice benchmarks and quality improvement strategies including a holistic approach to culturally appropriate care for Koori Women from the first point of contact.
- Goal 2:** Work towards becoming a lead influence in Victorian Aboriginal family violence public policy and consider strategies to strengthen EHH's status as a peak body representing Victorian Aboriginal women and children's family violence services.
- Goal 3:** Achieve accreditation with HASS (as required by DHS), ensuring that all requirements are met and that appropriate resourcing for future accreditation efforts are built into the organisation's budget and human resources capacity.

Key Direction 5 Direct Services

Increase the capacity, quality, and range of EHH services, ensuring services remain culturally appropriate and accessible by Aboriginal women and children experiencing family violence.

- Goal 1:** Further develop and build the EHH model of service delivery ensuring it encompasses a holistic and cultural approach to working with Aboriginal women and children across the full continuum of care: prevention, early intervention, crisis support and post crisis support within Victoria.
- Goal 2:** Undertake a detailed analysis on the ongoing provision of services across all the Melbourne Metropolitan regions including a review of their discrete crisis and transitional accommodation needs prior to the opening of the new State-wide high security refuge.
- Goal 3:** Undertake a detailed work plan for setting up of the new State-wide high security refuge including infrastructure and resourcing with the aim of being fully operational by early 2013.
- Goal 4:** Identify and develop the core EHH operations that are to be administered for the new State wide high security refuge for the longer term.

Key Direction 6 Marketing and Communication

Increase and improve the capacity of EHH promotional and marketing activities to the Aboriginal community as well as to the broader family violence and homelessness sectors.

- Goal 1:** Update current marketing and promotional resources (including EHH website, information pamphlets, posters etc.) and develop new promotional material and resources as necessary (i.e. EHH Newsletter, EHH Testimonial flyer etc.).
- Goal 2:** Ensure EHH's strategic participation in major events and conferences with a view to increasing awareness of Aboriginal family violence issues, promoting the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and advocating for and on behalf of Aboriginal women and children experiencing family violence.
- Goal 3:** Design and develop an EHH Marketing and Media Strategy, which will guide future directions for organisational strategic promotion.