

ELIZABETH MORGAN HOUSE
ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SERVICE INC

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



Acknowledgement

Elizabeth Morgan House pay our respects to the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which we work. Sovereignty was never ceded.

We pay our respect to our Elders, both past, present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who fought tirelessly to create EMH, which has grown into a strong and successful Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation.

We strive to honour them in our work.



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Chair Report



Elizabeth Morgan House pays our respect to the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which we work as we continue the legacy of our founding Aunties in supporting the right of Aboriginal women to freedom from violence.

After 22 years of part ownership of our Clarke St property by Homes Victoria, we are satisfied that the property was returned to full ownership by Elizabeth Morgan House in April 2024. This represents a significant win for our organisation and is self-determination in action. Since 2016, our Board fiercely advocated for the release of the State Government stake in the property. Although the government offered various alternatives to full ownership, we did not compromise. The result is a win our financial health and means we can continue our plans for future growth. We thank our probono lawyers, Maddocks Lawyers, Federal MP Ged Kearney for her advocacy and our architects who have redesigned the site, Breathe.

The redesign of the Clarke St property will be relaunched as the EMH Women's Hub, a project in planning for many years. A safe place to learn, share and bring our strengths to the fore, is essential for our women. The Women's Hub will provide another way to demonstrate our Walking Beside Women model for our holistic, specialist services.



It has been amazing to see the expansion of our services to include the Aboriginal Healing Unit (AHU) at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. The significant inroads being made into our Theory of Change work and Outcomes Framework means we are conducting our first ever major program evaluation of the AHU, which will provide significant measure of our impact in this first of its kind in Australia program.

It has been a pleasure serving on the board with Monica Morgan, Daniela Davis, and Ashley Paxton and I would like to welcome new board members Gabrielle Johnson and Paula Russell for the new financial year.

I would like to also thank the CEO, Kalina Morgan-Whyman, supported by her Executive team and the staff of Elizabeth Morgan House for their tireless work for the Aboriginal community.

Narelle Slater, Chair

CEO Report

I would like to acknowledge and pay my respect to the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which Elizabeth Morgan House is located and operates. I pay my respect to Elders, both past, present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women - families and communities.

Sovereignty was never ceded.

We acknowledge our women as integral knowledge holders with unique wisdom derived from living cultural knowledge, individual and collective life experiences.

The past 12 months have been a period of significant achievements and growth for our organisation, also with this growth came enormous challenges. These milestones, the result of hard work, innovation, advocacy, and resilience, are a testament to the dedication of our Chair, Aunty Narelle Slater, board, members, staff, and stakeholders. They mark a huge step in continuing the legacy of our Aunty's and founders of Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Services Inc.

Over the years EMH has consistently campaigned and negotiated for the ownership of our Clarke Street property to be handed back, and thanks to the tireless advocacy and commitment to self-determination of our board the Director of Housing was removed from the title and the Victorian Property register updated for the full title of the property in our name.

Another long-term vision of establishing a Women's and Children's Hub with the project receiving a grant from State Government's Living Local Fund and the Paul Ramsay Foundation and self-invested funds to redevelop our beloved Clarke Street property. Construction has begun and is due for completion late 2024.

The Women's Hub purpose is to provide a safe space to recover for Aboriginal women who are supported by our services. It will operate under an integrated holistic therapeutic model which seeks to address recovery, early intervention and primary intervention.

EMH has increased our commitment to walk beside our women on their journey through expanding our programs into the justice system through the delivery of the Aboriginal Healing Unit within Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. This program delivers a cultural therapeutic model and aims to work with women by delivering supports through a culturally safe, trauma informed and holistic case management approach, using cultural strengthening as a protective factor.





EMH commenced a theory of change to support the development of an organisation wide Outcomes Framework to better enable us to capture the impact our services and programs we provide. The design of an outcomes framework firstly ensures data sovereignty and allows the use our data to reflect against outcomes underpinned by self-determination. We are currently testing the data collection and outcomes reflection tools before implementing the outcomes framework organisation wide during 2025.

Despite the achievements for our organisation over the last 12 months, violence against our women continues to worsen. The alarming rate in the rise of women who were victims of domestic homicide by a current or former intimate partner at the beginning of this year saw a national crisis on domestic, family and sexual violence being called.

More alarming for us is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately represented as victims of intimate partner homicide. Our women experienced a homicide victimization rate up to seven times the rate for all Australians.

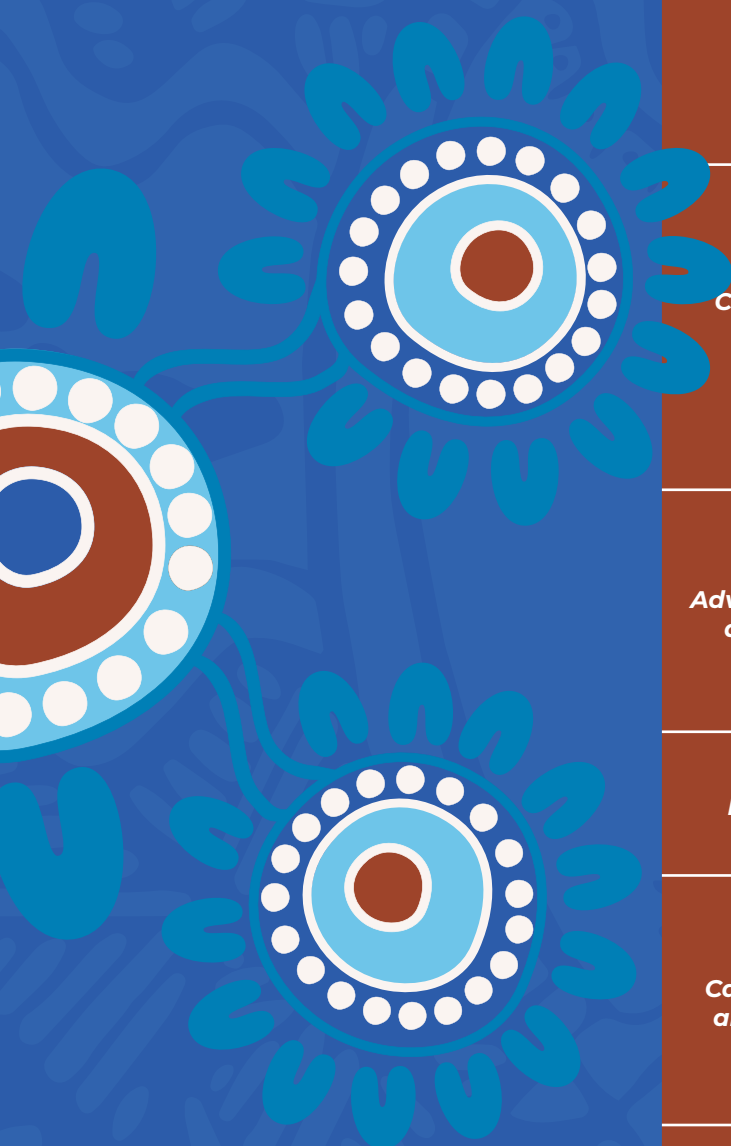
The data (whilst flawed) in the Senate Inquiry into Missing and Murdered First Nations Aboriginal Women handed down this year show extreme and disproportionate rate of violence against our women. The report examined the extent of the problem and recognized these deaths are often predictable and preventable but continue to happen. Further it failed to hold anyone to account or provide recommendations that are really going to address the problem. Where is the justice for our women, there is always little if any justice.

We still have a lot of work to do in addressing violence against our women in society.

Lastly I would like to recognise the tireless work and unwavering commitment of EMH staff who show up every day for our women. They continue to hold ourselves accountable in providing quality services for our women in supporting them to remain safe and self-determining in the choices they make in their journey's.

Kalina Morgan Whyman, CEO

Highlights against our Strategic Plan



Leadership and Advocacy in the sector	
<i>Outcomes and evidence</i>	Theory of change and outcomes framework developed and tested
<i>Community and stakeholder engagement</i>	Positioning ourselves for more effective partnerships to influence at a local, state and national level with our specialist, grassroots expertise and impact Director of Programs and Services, Kellyanne won an Elise Hall of Fame award for her significant contributions to the sector and to the work of Elizabeth Morgan House
<i>Advocacy, research and education</i>	Provided specialist knowledge to the sector through secondary consults and sector education Inaugural member of the National Domestic and Family Violence Service Peaks and Representative Networks
<i>Infrastructure</i>	Progressed the long-term vision of establishing a Women's Hub, including sensory garden design, therapeutic safe space
<i>Capacity building and governance</i>	Extending our support to women in the justice system by diversifying our programs and services
<i>Quality service delivery</i>	Recognised for our quality service delivery at our triannual accreditation audit
<i>Income and growth</i>	

Engaged and empowered workforce

Innovative education and engagement

Viable and sustainable growth

Staff satisfaction survey suggested that:

Staff at EMH are:

- Highly motivated, really connecting with the positive impact their work has
- Supportive colleagues
- Appreciative of the support for work-life balance

Good things about working here:

- Strong leadership and commitment to vision
- Clear direction and connection to bigger picture goals
- Training and development opportunities

Developed a Staff wellbeing program

Launched a new intranet for staff

Opening of Women's Centre, which has increased stakeholder engagement

Increased our outreach to community, for example through Djirra Day Out and Ngwala's Women's Gathering

Increased web clicks by 74.8% as a result of the 'Get Involved in EMH' campaign

Submissions delivered to government on Safe Place and Economic Empowerment

Successfully negotiated with Department of Housing (Homes Victoria) the hand back of our Clarke Street property for full ownership, which will assist with future property strategies

Secured the equity of our Clarke St property

Increase in middle management to invest in growth and created a robust org structure, onboarded fixed term personnel to deliver key impacts and reviewing org structures

Significant investment made in workforce development and training

MARAM training delivered to the family violence sector

Facilitated Northern Refuge Alliance and Aboriginal Refuge Alliance for Victoria and the Culturally responsive sector with Safe and Equal and Djirra

Stability in core family violence service delivery teams

- Sector education and support through secondary consults, specialist service support
- Increased court support hours

Opening of Women's Centre, allowing for hiring of training spaces for additional income

- Diversified our income streams with philanthropic grants and partnerships Increased our revenue by 49% and increased diversified income through justice by 32%
- Increased cash reserves by 23% for future growth
- Increased our financial health through property ownership, contracts for services and programs and grant opportunities

Programs and Services Report



I would like to begin by acknowledging the Wurundjeri peoples, the traditional custodians of the land on which Elizabeth Morgan House operates, and extend my respects to all Koori Nations across Victoria.

I also honour the Elders whose strength and wisdom guide us daily, along with everyone in the extensive network of friends and colleagues associated with Elizabeth Morgan House, and all those who have taken the time to read this report. Additionally, I pay my respects to the women we have lost over the past year.

Our annual report allows us to reflect on both our accomplishments and the challenges we faced this year. We have continued to forge new connections and strengthen existing partnerships, which have enabled us to provide enhanced support to women and children across all our services and programs. Our direct service delivery staff have actively engaged in networks, forums, communities of practice, and events to ensure that the voices of Aboriginal women, children, and families are heard.

The strength we derive comes from the experiences of the women we serve. We honour their journeys and are grateful for their trust in allowing us to be part of their lives.

Finally, I want to recognise our staff for their invaluable guidance and leadership. This report is brief, but I want to give a heartfelt shout-out to all our staff for the incredible work you do every day. It is truly a privilege to be part of this team. I speak for the entire Executive Team and Managers when I say that your contributions to supporting these women and families in their journeys are deeply respected.

Please see below for more information on programs and services

Thank you once again, everyone.

Kellyanne Andy, Director of Programs and Services



Programs and services:

Intake and Assessment

Our Intake and Assessment service takes calls from across Australia from women needing support, and from across the sector for advice and assistance (secondary consults). This year, we have seen an increase in the complex needs of the women being referred to us, as well as increased referrals coming from other metro Melbourne (13.2% of enquiries) and regional Victoria (13.4% of enquiries). Our team fields requests for support where family violence is not the main presenting issue, usually housing needs due to increased cost of living pressures and a lack of safe and affordable housing. We continue to provide material aid such as food and fuel vouchers and link our women with family support packages.

Our Intake Services are funded by the Department of Social Services (Commonwealth Government).

Outreach Support

Our Outreach program covers the Northern and Western Metropolitan regions of Melbourne. The program is a specialist, comprehensive case management service for women experiencing family violence. This includes addressing tenancy issues, family law matters, and efforts to regain child custody, providing material aid, legal assistance for intervention orders (IVOs) and support and advocacy via our Court Support program, and connecting clients with community resources.





This year, significant efforts have been directed towards supporting family units, including:

- Assisting with paediatric appointments and assessments for conditions such as ASD or ADHD.
- Helping mothers access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and obtain care plans.
- Making relevant referrals for additional support services.

Our Outreach program is funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Victorian State Government).



Therapeutic Counselling program

Through counselling we explore ways in which the women can feel empowered by making even the smallest decisions for themselves. Our approach is client centered and guided by the women's needs.

Women are referred to our service (including self referred) with the primary aim of receiving emotional wellbeing support. The key issues we identify most in women who access our service are:

- Family violence
- Grief, loss and trauma
- Homelessness
- Relationship issues/conflict

Women frequently report anxiety, dysregulation and concerns around maintaining a stable, nourishing environment for themselves/ their family/ children.

The team also support the Aboriginal Healing Unit at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre with individual counselling as well as Therapeutic Art Groups.

Our Therapeutic Counselling Service is funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Victorian State Government).



Crisis Accommodation (Refuge)

We continue to navigate the decrease in safe, secure, and affordable accommodation for women fleeing family violence. A limited number of women can access our refuge, a high security crisis accommodation service that can house 4 families at one time.

Our turnover of residents solely depends on the availability of other housing. This could be a long-term, transitional housing or a private rental property. Our women are either waiting long periods of time to be offered a property or don't get given a chance when going for private rentals as some do not have private rental history or simply do not earn enough.

Our High Security Crisis Accommodation (Refuge) is funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Victorian State Government).



ReLink and ReConnect Program

Prison remains an outdated and discriminatory form of punishment that disproportionately impacts our women. Locking up both adults and children now costs Victoria more than \$1.5 billion each year. The health impacts of incarceration are many. The AIHW report The health of people in Australia's prisons 2022, showed that nearly one-third (31 per cent) of prison entrants had an education level of Year 9 or below. In the 30 days before entering prison, more than four in 10 (43 per cent) were homeless, nearly half (46 per cent) were unemployed and only one in 20 (5.1 per cent) were studying.

The team work collaboratively to achieve outcomes for our women in pre and post release planning, housing and parole.

Our Relink and Reconnect program is funded by the Department of Justice (Victorian State Government) and run in partnership with Drummond St Services.



Aboriginal Healing Unit

In an expansion of our services in the justice system, Elizabeth Morgan House was appointed to develop and lead the Aboriginal Healing Unit (AHU) at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC). This groundbreaking initiative marks the first program of its kind in an Australian prison, drawing on Aboriginal knowledge and values to offer holistic support to women during their time in custody.

The AHU is specifically designed to provide therapeutic care and cultural support for Aboriginal women and gender-diverse Aboriginal individuals at DPFC.

Functioning as a therapeutic community, the unit addresses multiple aspects of individual and community well-being, ensuring participants receive holistic care to support their healing journey and successful reintegration post-release.

Since the service began in October 2023, it has delivered holistic supports including:

- **Housing Support** - Assistance with finding and securing appropriate housing, both in custody and upon release, ensuring stability for individuals transitioning back into the community.
- **Relationship Conflict Management** - Addressing interpersonal conflicts among residents in both open and single units to promote mutual respect among participants.
- **Self-Regulation and Mental Health** - Tools and support for self-regulation to help manage emotions, reduce stress, and address mental health challenges, including access to counselling and therapy services.
- **Community Engagement Post-Release** - Encouraging participants to engage with their communities after release, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.
- **Family Connections** - Supporting regular phone calls to family members and arranging in-person visits to maintain important family relationships. Facilitating access to family photos to maintain emotional connections while in custody.

The AHU delivered 114 programs for the year and 34 women attended counselling sessions. EMH are undergoing a major evaluation for the program against our outcomes framework as we continue to refine and develop the program. Our Aboriginal Healing Unit is funded by the Department of Justice (Victorian State Government).

EMH Women's Hub

Following planning and consultation, Breathe Architects were engaged to redevelop our Clarke st site. Our Clarke street address was generously donated to us by a local business owner and has served EMH as both a crisis accommodation and an office space. We know our community has so many memories at this location and the refit needed to create a sense of safety and community to continue to be a valuable asset for our community.

Over this year, we have been refining the plans for the site and preparing for permits and other issues that arise with a major construction project. Construction began in June 2024.

The Women's Hub aims to be therapeutic community space, with versatile and flexible areas, with new glazing, floor finishes and furniture, and the addition of an all-abilities entrance.

A calming sensory and communal garden will also be installed, featuring native plant species and bush tucker, as well as new pathways, decking, seating and gathering spaces. This will provide a soft, welcoming entry to the Hub, and will help connect visitors to Country.

The renovated spaces will mean EMH can offer new and enhanced services, including:

- Generalist case management, financial wellbeing sessions and programs to support people to attain a living wage before leaving the Hub
- Arts and crafts programs, cooking classes and community meals, facilitated personal history lessons and assistance with letter writing and communication with families
- Facilitated yarns led by Elders and respected community members, yarning circles and external practitioner-run classes
- Supporting people to connect with the NDIS, facilitating neuro-psych assessments for acquired brain injuries
- Various training programs and opportunities, and
- Specific times for LGBTIQ+BS people to come together as a group.

The renovation is due for completion at the end of 2024.



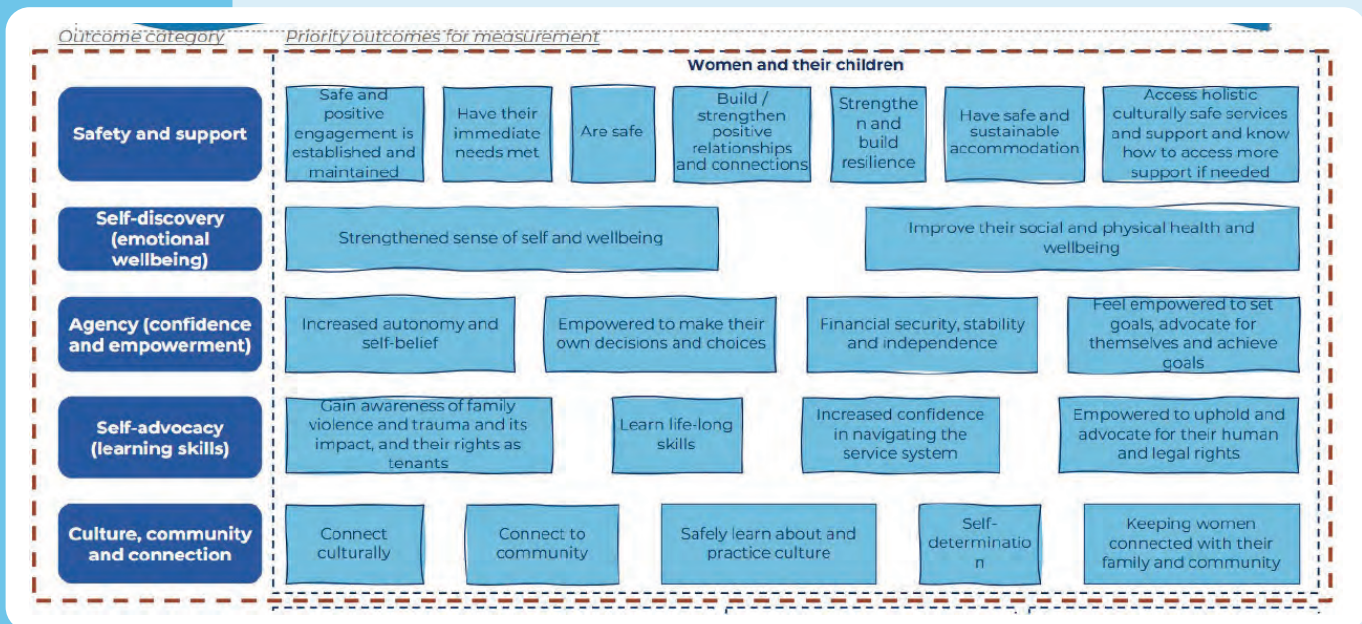
Our Outcomes Framework

The goal of our Outcomes Framework is to develop a clear means to collect reliable data and demonstrate the impact of our work. It aligns with Key Direction Area One of our Strategic Plan – Leadership and Advocacy and is the process that will ensure the key driver of Data Collection is achieved. This process represents significant change for the organisation and this year we progressed further into developing the program logics that will underpin this project.

Our theory of change outlines that the ultimate impact of our work is:

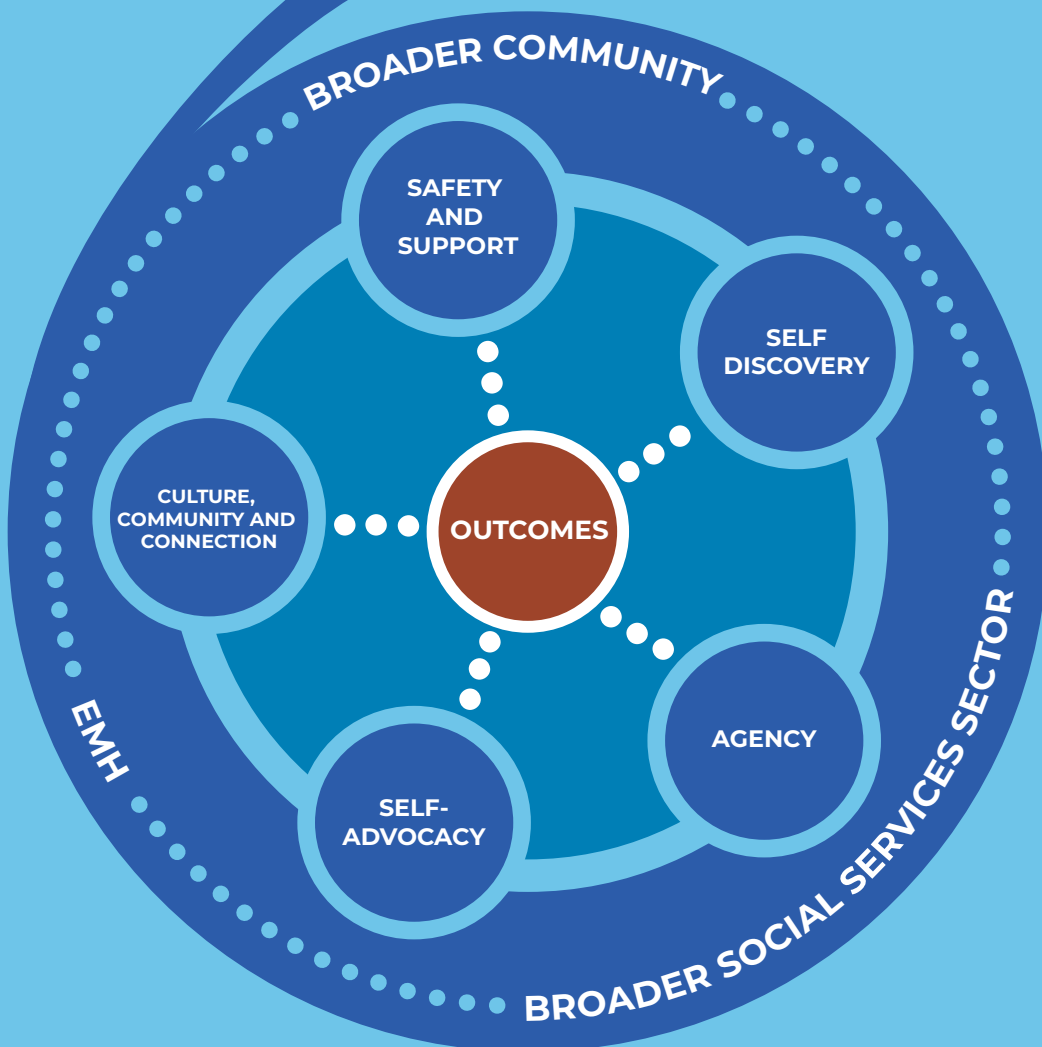
- The human rights that Aboriginal women and their children hold are recognised and are upheld so that they can live a life free from violence and discrimination.
- Aboriginal women and their children are supported in their Journey, and are empowered to live self-determining lives and thrive.

This diagram illustrates the outcomes we expect from our programs and services and what we will measure using both quantitative and qualitative methods.



This approach sets us up to deliver on the targets outlined in strategies such as the National Plan to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women and children in an evidence-based way. As we continue to experience increased violence against our women, this project sets the foundation for demonstrating the impact of our work.

IMPACT



OUR IMPACT SNAPSHOT

Family violence has risen 25.4% in the past 5 years amongst our women

(Victorian Crime Statistics, 2024)

2 in 3 Aboriginal people aged 15 and over who had experienced physical harm in the last 12 months reported the perpetrator was an intimate partner or family member.

(Rapid Review of prevention approaches, 2024)

OUTCOMES

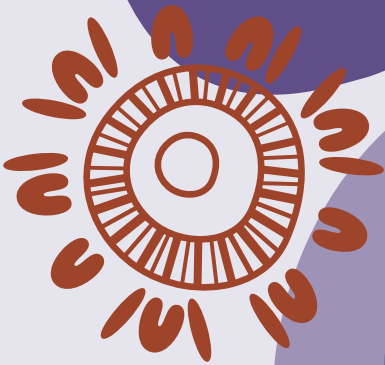
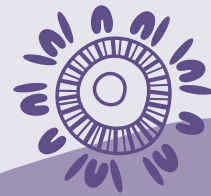
21% increase
in court support hours

228 women
supported in our
outreach services

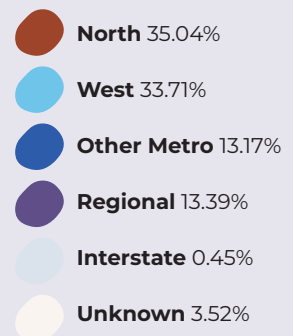
502 Intake Enquiries
during the reporting period;

Intake funded 169 nights
of crisis accommodation for 33 clients
over the reporting period. This was a
total of 5.12 nights per person.

Secondary consult calls
increased from 59% in 2023
to 64.8% this year



WHERE INTAKE
ENQUIRIES HAVE
COME FROM:





We asked: How do we ensure everyone is valued and respected?

"1. Provide culturally appropriate support systems

2. Provide platforms for truth telling with agencies like Police, Family court and education systems

3. Recognise diversity of perspectives among Aboriginal people. In my dv wasn't "within the Aboriginal community". I was an Aboriginal woman abused by a non Aboriginal husband. The power imbalance was amplified." – K. 46, Gija

Over this year, we have seen an increase in our women advocating for themselves and gaining greater awareness of available services, such as healthcare. Our women are becoming more informed about the importance of accessing legal services.

This year, 94 women were provided court support over 2,021 hours, with pre court work, day of court support and/or post court work. Our outreach program case managed 228 women over 9,708 hours of support.

Our Intake team send a sector wide weekly 'capacity email' to inform our networks and the wider sector of not only EMH capacity for case management, but also correct referral pathways for all EMH programs. This has been positively received, with the referral types expanding and secondary consults increasing.

EMH has collaborated across the sector, including with services such as 1800 Respect, Djirra Legal, Djirra Case Management, Safe Steps to discuss further collaboration and strengthen relationships. This has included developing new pathways with organisations such as Ngwala Family Violence and Housing & Homelessness programs.

As a result of this ongoing networking, a number of EMH staff members (including Intake) are registered users of the Motel Mapping Database. This database holds information around crisis accommodation pathways, including: if single men are housed at the accommodation; if the accommodation provider accepts invoicing; if photo identification is required; and if there are any safety alerts or cautions as a result of client / service experiences. This is important because, 28.9% of all Intake Enquiries had housing as the main presenting issue.

"We are in the process of redeveloping our Women's Group to better address areas of benefit for our clients. Additionally, we are placing a stronger emphasis on supporting the entire family unit, ensuring that women and their children feel safe and supported by our services."

– Kalimna, Manager of Family Violence Services



The housing crisis continues to impact our women and our work

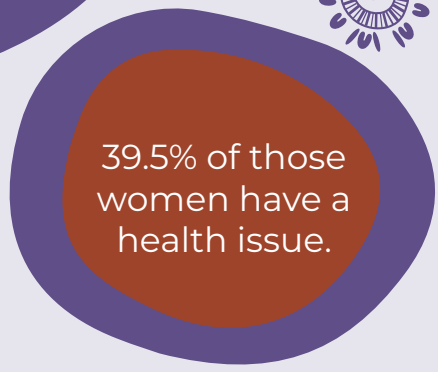
OUTCOMES



5 out of the 9 women in refuge **have been offered housing**



54.7% of women in our Relink and ReConnect program have **no home to go to after release.**



39.5% of those women have a health issue.

The current housing crisis means women are being kept in prison past their release dates, released into homelessness, or into dangerous housing situations. This is not acceptable.

Our case managers work tirelessly to find safe, connected and autonomous housing options for our women. This includes working with housing providers, following up on maintenance issues and communicating in a timely manner and working collaboratively to ensure that our clients are getting the best outcome.

At our refuge, the outcomes for our women included:

- 1 woman who stayed with us for 7 months was offered a private rental as she was working and had a history of private rentals.
- 1 woman who stayed with us for 8 months with 3 children was offered a long-term property through Aboriginal housing.
- 1 woman who sits in our outreach with 3 children was offered a long-term property through Office of Housing after she was in a THM through Vincent Care for 12 months.
- 1 woman with 3 children was offered a long-term property in a new building through women's housing
- 1 woman with 2 children who has been residing with us for 2 months has been offered a THM through women's housing

Clients are better able to sustain their tenancies through the support and involvement of EMH, including funding sourced through Family Support Package to cover rental arrears. This support contributes to more favorable legal and court outcomes, facilitated by referrals to external organizations. Additionally, positive results are achieved through engagement with family violence (Family Violence) counseling and active participation in women's groups organized by EMH.

Kim* entered EMH Refuge August 2023 with her 3 young children aged 4, 3 and 11 months old.

Kim was very reserved and kept to herself for the first couple of weeks upon entering.

Both the Kim and her case manager worked together to complete a case plan and safety plan.

Kim started communicating with her case manager daily and was very independent, driving herself and her children to appointments and outings. Kim and her case manager built on their relationship, with Kim really opening up and accepting support.

While staying at EMH refuge, Kim was able to achieve all her case plan goals which included the following:

Attend Financial Counselling Services

- Have previous fines revoked
- Obtain Family Support Package Package for new furniture and whitegoods for new property
- Obtain Birth Certificates for children
- Receive Funding for children to purchase PlayStation and Ipad's
- Obtain Confirmation Of Aboriginality
- Receive Escaping Violence Payment

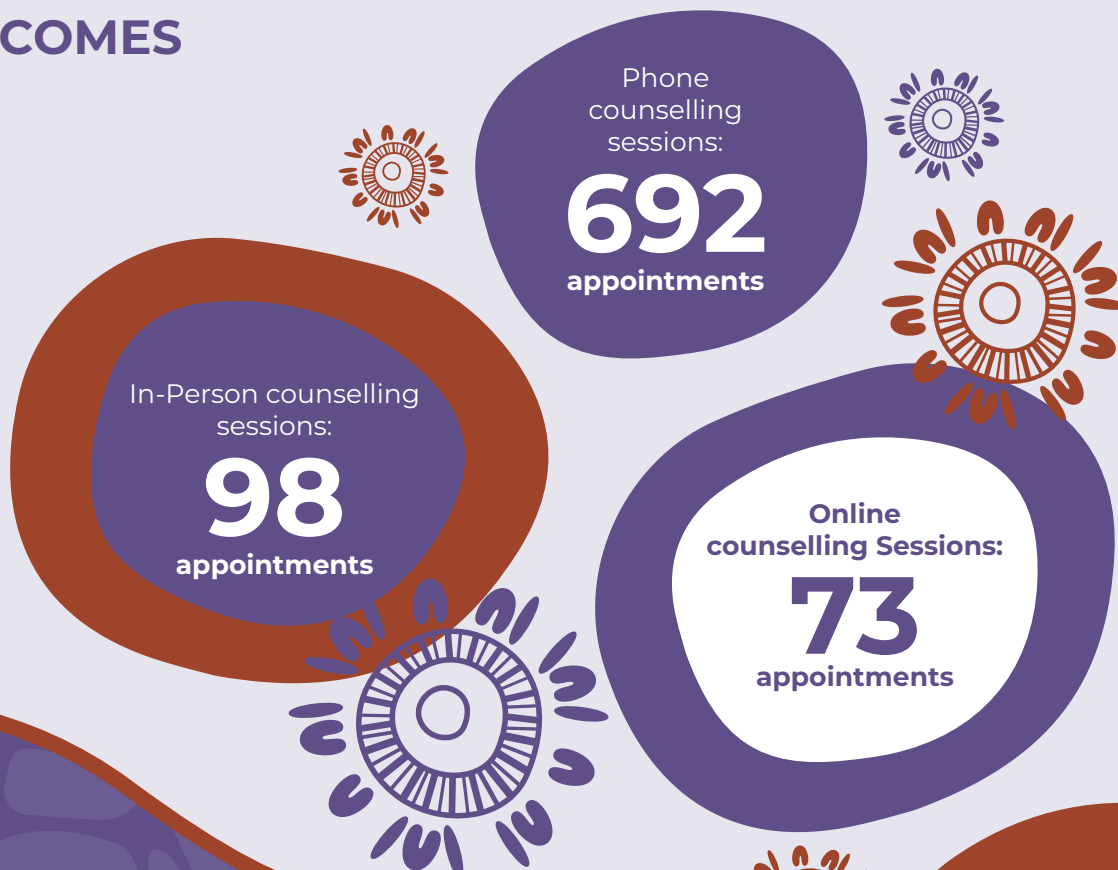
Kim was offered 2 permanent properties a month apart, 1, 3-bedroom apartment through Women's Housing and another 3 bedroom property through Aboriginal Housing.

She accepted the Aboriginal Housing offer and is now living with her 3 children in a safe, secure brand-new permanent property.

Kim can now start a new life with her beautiful children, happy and free from violence.


Our women can be supported to change the narrative about themselves

OUTCOMES



AHU





“One woman in particular has come so far in this and it has been amazing to see her go from an angry, tense and doubtful person to now looking forward to advocating for other women when she is released. Her change in herself, has played a big part in her Parole being approved, and allowing EMH to meet with her and her Parole worker regularly and have honest, transparent conversations certainly was not always smooth but to her credit she took advice and reflected on it.”

– Angela, Relink and Reconnect team leader



Violence against our women can be an isolating experience. Our programs work to support our women’s innate strengths. Our Relink and Reconnect program has:

- Provided clients with appointments with prescribing Alcohol and Other Drugs doctors for treatment in the community. We also ensure, for example that BUPE injections are provided a day or two before release.
- Less women leaving prison with the wrong or no medication and appointments made for them to appropriate care in the community.
- Found some women disengage after their crisis accommodation has ended as they no longer have a base. We have been successful in gaining Corrections Victoria Housing properties. And are advocating for more housing.

In our therapeutic counselling program, we observe, that more than 80% of women who have been referred engage in more than 2 sessions. There is a small percentage of people who get referred and never get engaged, which indicates that they are not ready.

Depending on their goal, clients usually engage for around 6 weeks up to 12 months (with less frequent sessions over time). We see a lot of value and positive change for women who engage medium to long term.

Most women prefer their session over their phone for reasons such as distance to our head office, time efficiency, comfort level and anonymity. The relationship between the counsellor and the woman is crucial. We prioritise the relationship building process to establish a safe environment for clients to open up and share. We have observed that it can take longer to build a rapport over the phone which is why we started to encourage zoom or face-to face sessions. Women generally have been reporting better self-awareness as well as insight into the impacts of their Family Violence experience. Women demonstrate that they can use their knowledge to positively impact their relationships (e.g. with their children, family, friends etc.).

Women who have escaped immediate danger tend to engage in ongoing counselling support and, through this, often begin to consider a future they can have agency over. There is a lot of grief to work through and women need access to a safe community, but we notice that slowly women begin to make decisions from a place that suits them

We provide education and information resources for our women through digital and print channels, like our website. We have developed factsheets, including the popular factsheet on the growing issue of misidentification. We improved the 'Get Involved' section of our website particularly, which resulted in a 74.8% increase in views on that page and clicks to contact us.

Types of sessions attended by women as part of the Aboriginal Healing Unit:

Connection to Body (number of activities attended)	Connecting to Culture (number of activities attended)	Connection to Country (number of activities attended)	Therapeutic counselling group activities (number of activities attended)
91	16	34	88

'I enjoyed attending the sessions at AHU. I got to talk about a lot of things usually wouldn't and normally I don't do that. I don't know what I would have done, without the supports of AHU. I was able to transition from one medication to another. It was hard but AHU talked with medical and explained things to me.'

The program has been a wonderful way to connect to culture for the women in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, some that I wouldn't normally connect with or talk to.'

- M., AHU Participant



Counselling received a referral for a 21-year-old woman through intake. Sam*. She was still residing with her partner, the person using violence, and only had a small window in which it was safe to contact her.

Sam and the counsellor had a successful first conversation and Sam decided to come into the office for sessions.

Sam disclosed ambivalence regarding her relationship and felt judged previously when speaking about her relationship and not wanting to leave immediately.

The counselling allowed Sam to identify different parts of herself - those parts that wanted to leave as well as the parts that want her to stay, and got to know them better. Sam learned to understand the underlying needs and confirmed a better understanding of her internal conflict after a few sessions.

Within a couple of months, Sam was able to use that gained understanding to make a decision about her relationship, which she has been contemplating with for a long time. She left the relationship and is now residing in a refuge.

Sam continues to work with the counsellor on parts of her life that are impacted by the end of the relationship as well as her self-esteem/ connection with herself.

'Not that Indigenous women in big cities have it any easier. At Elizabeth Morgan House, a family violence service for Aboriginal women in Melbourne, case managers say women with suspected brain injuries struggle to access treatment largely because there are no public concussion rehabilitation programs in Victoria.

Instead, their symptoms affect their ability to work, care for family and leave violent relationships, while some use drugs or alcohol to cope with their pain and trauma, which can be a pathway into prison.

"Often our women have suffered years of abuse and a brain injury could have been acquired at any time, or more than once in the life of that relationship," says Kellyanne Andy, the service delivery manager at Elizabeth Morgan House.

"Many Aboriginal women are also misidentified [by police] as drunk or drug-affected when slurring their words instead of suffering the after-effects of assault due to racist stereotypes."

Gleeson, Hayley 'Shaken brains, shattered lives, ABC News, 6 Aug 2023

Connection gives us strength

OUTCOMES

As a grassroots organisation, connecting to each other and continuing the legacy of our Aunties, sometimes in new ways, is essential to resisting the systems that harm us.

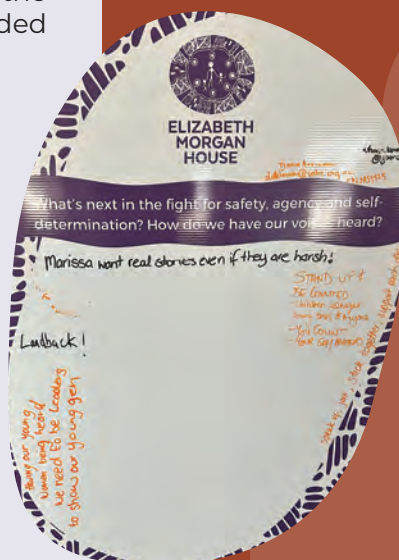
Bringing the community together helps us build the collective strength we need to combat the impacts of colonisation. Mainstream services can miss an opportunity to impact change at an individual, community and system level for our women without specialist knowledge. Some of the results of coming together for community events we have seen this year include:

- A child was nervous of the animals but ended up with the python around his shoulders with encouragement from mum and staff
- Children engaged with the activities and showed their carers, pulling them into the play, strengthening attachment
- One woman cut a lot of hair off at the HoMie VIP Day, declaring she needed a change

Beginning the construction of the EMH Women's Hub this year is a key component of our community building approach.

What's next in our fight for agency? How do we ensure our voices are heard?

- Land back!
- Stand up and be counted
- Speak up, yarn, stick together, support each other
- We need to be leaders to show our youngen
- Want real stories even if they are harsh



'What makes me hopeful in the work I do, is being able to see positive changes in the lives of the women and children we work with. I am inspired by the resilience and strength displayed by our women and feel honoured they trust myself and EMH to walk along-side them to overcome the many adversities they face.

Fostering hope within the challenging context of family violence is undoubtedly difficult, but my commitment to a holistic approach is key to supporting the women on their healing journey. Taking a holistic perspective recognises that healing is a multifaceted process, addressing not only the immediate challenges of violence but also the broader aspects of well-being, cultural connectedness, social and emotional support.'

- Kalimna's response to the Safe and Equal call out for what makes you hopeful for the 16 Days of Activism campaign



Comments on our comment board set up at event stalls

Day of families feedback:

- *Playdough was my favourite.*
- *My favourite part of today was writing on the whiteboard, bush kitchen, playing with Kirsty, playing with the dolls and doing some work.*
- *I got to hold 2 snakes!*



FINANCIAL REPORT

Director of Corporate Services

I am pleased to present this snapshot of the EMH FY2024 Financial Statements.

Our continued growth and expansion is reflected in our Statement of Income, with total income over six million dollars for the first time – a 49% increase year-on-year from FY2023. This is primarily driven by the contract for the Aboriginal Healing Unit through the Department of Justice, contributing revenue of \$1.6million into the organisation. This is a two-year contract so expect to see continued funding through FY2025.

Justice-specific revenue contributed \$1.9 million (32%) of our total revenue in FY2024, incorporating both the Healing Unit and our partnership with Drummond St Services in the Relink & Reconnect Program. This Justice arm is becoming ever more significant in the overall suite of services offered by Elizabeth Morgan House, linking to our Strategic Plan Key Direction 4: Viable and Sustainable Organisation Growth – specifically, growing diverse funding streams.

As always, employment expenses are our main expenditure item. With increased funding comes the requirement to onboard new personnel in both front-line and back-end support services to achieve required outcomes and deliverables attached to said funding, and we see this reflected in a 22% increase in Employee Expenses year-on-year. Despite continued recruitment challenges within the community services sector, our established teams have been generally consistent in their personnel, allowing us to focus on developing the new teams and roles linked to new funding streams.

Within our Finance and Corporate Services, we have maintained our focus on Continuous Improvement, in particular utilising established software to maximum potential – improving the value-add to the organisation without increasing expenditure. We have also onboarded an external management accounting service to increase capacity within existing roles, again focusing on continued improvement in available reporting for both Management and Board.

A large focus of our team has been the ongoing planning for the refurbishment of our Northcote site. As of 30 June 2024, the site has been completely closed and construction has commenced. Completion of this project is expected in December 2024. This project will be a significant expenditure in the FY2025 financial year, with EMH investing a budgeted \$800,000 of our retained earnings into the project, on top of \$500,000 of grant funding received. This spend on capital works is possible due to years of responsible fiscal management within the organisation and associated savings made from efficient and effective use of funds. The Northcote site will be re-launched as our Women's Hub in 2025, after EMH regained complete control of the ownership of the site following successful negotiations with the Director of Housing to release us from the Conditional Grant Agreement made in 1989 which limited our use of the property to accommodation only.

The EMH Board have continued to provide oversight on our financial activities through the Finance Sub-Committee. Special mention must be made of Ashley Paxton who has continued her dedicated services to EMH in the Treasurer role. Without volunteers who step into these governance roles, we would not be able to function and continue to provide essential services to Community.

Anne Draffen, CFO

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

INCOME	FY2024	FY2023
Revenue from Government contracts & grants	5,751,863	3,728,682
Revenue from Non-Government contracts & grants	372,470	298,185
Service Income	26,462	26,864
Donations	63,008	76,295
Other Income	33,266	63,285
TOTAL INCOME	6,247,070	4,193,311
EXPENSES		
Employee Expenses	3,558,795	2,914,779
Depreciation & Amortisation Expense	379,947	144,868
Other Expenses	1,226,634	1,010,591
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,165,376	4,070,238
SURPLUS for the year	1,081,694	123,073

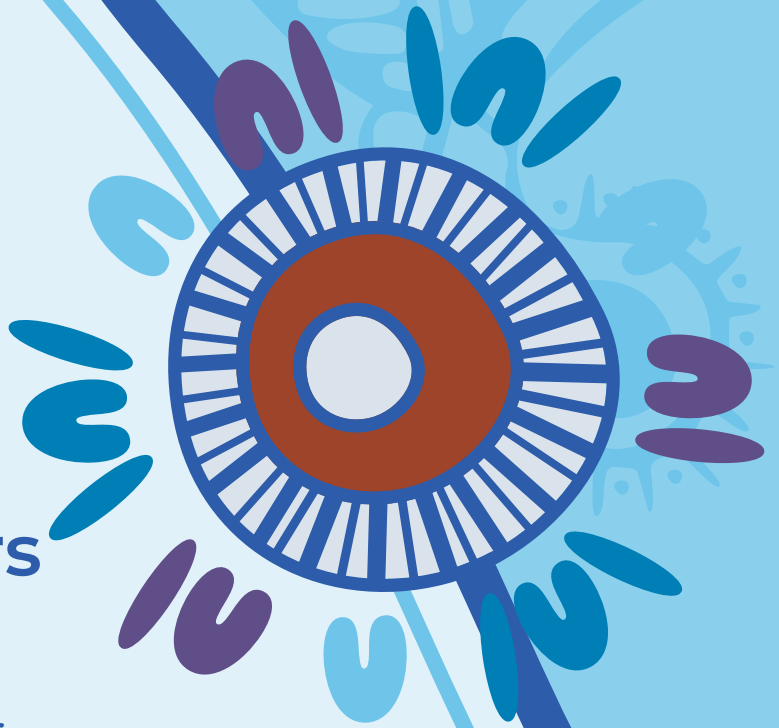
This is a snapshot of our financial statements

The full audited financial statements for the FY2023 Financial Year are available on the ACNC website

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

CURRENT ASSETS	FY2024	FY2023
Cash & Cash Equivalents	6,554,116	5,329,032
Trade & Other Receivables	43,168	564,579
Other Financial Assets	10	10
Other Assets	435,694	136,197
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	7,032,988	6,029,818
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, Plant & Equipment	1,290,284	1,046,773
Right-of-use Assets	1,841,820	2,061,895
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	3,132,104	3,108,668
TOTAL ASSETS	10,165,092	9,138,486
CURRENT LIABILITES		
Trade & Other Payables	463,968	363,123
Lease Liabilities	183,072	183,398
Employee Benefits	279,617	214,163
Other financial liabilities	1,464,058	1,516,330
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,390,715	2,277,014
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Lease liabilities	1,857,729	2,026,518
Employee benefits	-	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,857,729	2,026,518
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,248,444	4,303,532
NET ASSETS	5,916,648	4,834,954
EQUITY		
Retained Surplus	5,916,648	4,834,954
TOTAL EQUITY	5,916,648	4,834,954

Thank you to our supporters



**We thank all our donors this year,
including our top donors:**

- Amicus
- Maddocks Law Firm
- Sophia's Spring
- JHU Job Seek Pty Ltd
- C. Makin
- Pilgrim Uniting Church
- MinterEllison
- Brunswick Hockey Club
- Reko Rennie (via the Rising Festival)
- T. Walsh
- M. Courtney
- M. Stewart
- K. Dietrich
- C. Watson
- G. McGannon
- L. Paterson
- N. Sproule
- C. Moran
- CWA of Victoria – Alphington Branch

Funding for our crisis support services is supported by the Victoria Government.

Grants have been received for our capital works projects and other programs from:

- The Paul Ramsay Foundation
- The Living Local Grant (State Government)
- Stronger Communities Fund (Federal Government)
- NACCHO
- Giant Leap Philanthropic Fund





EMH

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