

[www.whise.org.au](http://www.whise.org.au)

# WOMEN'S HEALTH IN THE SOUTH EAST ANNUAL REPORT



**2023**  
–  
**2024**



## Acknowledgment of Country

Women's Health in the South East acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waterways and skies where we work, live and play. We celebrate that this is the oldest continuous living culture in the world, and that sovereignty was never ceded. This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Acknowledgment of Country .....	1
Foreword .....	3
Acknowledging our partners/stakeholders .....	5
Our Vision .....	7
Our Purpose.....	7
Strategic Plan.....	8
Highlight: Women's Health Services Advocacy for 2024 Budget .....	12
Training for Respect – Prevention of gender-based violence in Victorian Registered Training Organisations..	14
Better Together Conference.....	15
Promoting Respect and Equity Together Regional Strategy .....	16
Highlight: Development of the "Lived Experience Framework for Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence Sector"	17
PVAW in Community - Critical Friends Network.....	18
PVAW in Community -16 Days of Activism Campaign .....	19
PVAW in Community – Bunjilwarra Healthy and Respectful Relationships.....	20
City of Casey Early Years Workshop - Educator Professional Development (Hampton Park).....	22
City of Kingston's Creating Safe and Respectful Communities: .....	22
Case Study – Menopause .....	23
Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Programs: .....	24
SRH Professional and Capacity Development .....	26
Gender Mental Health and Wellbeing .....	27
APAC Conference on Women’s Mental Health .....	27
Size inclusive practice forum .....	27
Gender and mental health literacy pilot .....	28
Connecting the Dots webinar .....	28
Social Planners' Forums and Network .....	29
Gender Pay Gap Webinar, Sessions and Resources.....	30
Case Study – Frankston City Council .....	31
Case Study – Feminist Friendship Community of Practice .....	34
Empowering Women in Diverse Communities.....	36
SOCIAL VALUE IMPACT: .....	38
WHISE Women 2023-2024 .....	39
Board Members 2023-24.....	39
Special mention: .....	40

## Foreword

As we present this Annual Report, let us be clear: investing in women's health and gender equality is not good for women—it's a fundamental human rights issue and a requirement for everybody.

The work of Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) – along with our sister Women's Health Services - over the past year stands as testament to this truth. Even as we confront the stark reality that our global and local systems continue to work against an equitable future.

2024 has been a year of both progress and persistent challenges. The additional investment from the 2022 Victorian Budget allowed us to expand our reach and deepen our impact. Yet, as we write this, we know that many organisations, at home and abroad doing similar work; to make the world a better place, to make it equitable, to ensure that all humans have access to their rights; are under threat.

A key part of our work, as we present this report, one that weaves its way through the pages, is to speak about and highlight the structures and systems that support equality and intersectional equity in our region and beyond and how they need to be invested in.

Despite these challenges, WHISE has pushed forward, refusing to accept the status quo:

- We have broadened our Mental Health and Wellbeing initiatives, recognising the interwoven nature of mental health and gender equality.
- Our work addressing Gender Inequity in Climate Change acknowledges that environmental crises disproportionately affect women and marginalised communities.
- We've intensified our efforts in Sexual and Reproductive Health, fighting against systemic barriers that deny women control over their own bodies.
- Our Prevention of Violence Against Women programs have expanded, challenging the deeply rooted attitudes that perpetuate harm and impacts everyone's health
- We've strengthened our Gender Equality Promotion, tackling issues like the gender pay gap head-on and creating new approaches to building and supporting that small yet vital workforce of gender equality and intersectional practitioners in our region.

Our Community Partnerships Team, comprised of individuals with lived experience, has been instrumental in reaching women facing multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination. Their work embodies our commitment to intersectionality—recognising that the challenges

faced by a woman with a disability, migrant and refugee women, first nations women are compounded by these overlapping identities.

The inaugural Better Together Conference brought over 180 participants from various sectors together, embodying our belief that collaboration is key to dismantling the systems that perpetuate inequality. Our advocacy efforts, including submissions to the state budget process, reflect our understanding that change must happen at both grassroots and policy levels.

*Let's be clear: the work of equality has for too long suffered from short-term thinking and inadequate resourcing. It's often seen as "women's work"—sidelined in discussions of economic productivity and community wellbeing. We reject this notion. Our work is central to building a thriving, equitable society for all.*

As we move forward, guided by our Strategic Plan 2023-2028, we call on all our partners, stakeholders, and community members to recognise the urgency of this moment. The global community, through forums like the UN Commission on the Status of Women, is acknowledging that gender equality is at a crossroads. We stand at this juncture, ready to push forward, to challenge, to innovate, and to lead.

To our dedicated staff, board members, volunteers, and partners—your tireless efforts are the driving force behind every achievement detailed in this report. To the women and communities we serve—your resilience and strength inspire us daily to fight harder, to reach further.

We present this report not just as a record of our work, but as a call to action. The path to gender equality is not a straight line, but a complex journey requiring sustained effort and unwavering commitment. Together, we will continue to build a more equitable, respectful, and inclusive society for all women in our wonderfully diverse Southern Metropolitan Region.

The work continues. The urgency remains. And we, at WHISE, stand ready to meet the challenges ahead.

Kerry Bradley  
Chair, WHISE Board

Kit McMahon  
CEO

## Acknowledging our partners/stakeholders

In addition to the work that WHISE leads, our team are proud to represent our organisation, our mission and the needs of women in our region in the various committees and advisory groups across our region. This is key to advancing our mission, delivering health promotion messages and supporting strong partnerships.

Bayside Integrated Community Safety Committee  
Bayside Peninsula Integrated Family Violence Partnership  
Beachside Wellbeing Network  
Cardinia Shire Council - Together We Can  
Cardinia Shire Youth Network  
Chisholm TAFE PVAW Working Group  
City of Casey Community Safety Meeting  
City of Casey Relief and Recovery Network  
City of Greater Dandenong Community Safety Advisory Committee  
City of Greater Dandenong Preventing Family Violence Committee  
City of Greater Dandenong Youth Network  
City of Port Phillip Multicultural Advisory Committee  
Community Health - Health Promotion Network and Advisory Group  
Frankston Youth Network  
Frankston Family Violence Steering Committee  
Gender Equality Training Sub Committee  
Glen Eira Community Safety Committee  
Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM)  
Greater Dandenong Youth Network  
Inner South Multicultural Issues Network  
International Students Sexual Health Network  
Kingston Family Violence Working Group  
Kingston Mental Health Working Group  
MAV Preventing Violence Against Women Network  
Mornington Peninsula Frankston Family Violence Primary Prevention Collaborative  
Mornington Peninsula Shire Health and Wellbeing Committee  
Mornington Peninsula Youth Services Network  
Multicultural Advisory Committee  
RMIT VE Industry Advisory Committee Assoc Degree Health Sciences  
Respect Victoria's Monitoring and Evaluation Advisory Group  
Respect Victoria's Prevention Alliance  
Safe and Equal's Primary Prevention Advisory Committee  
Safe and Equal 16 Days Partner Advisory Group  
Safe and Equal's Family Violence Comms and Media Network  
Southern East Suicide Prevention Network  
Southern Melbourne Family Violence Regional Integration Committee  
SPHERE - NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women in Primary Care  
WASEMA Family Violence Advisory Committee

Weight Inclusive Alliance Network  
Women's Health Services Network  
Women's Health Services Quality and Compliance Committee  
Women's Mental Health Alliance  
Yarra Ranges Mental Health Network

WHISE staff are members of the following Communities of Practice and Working Groups

- Women's Health Services Network Communications CoP
- Women's Health Services Network Community of Practice for Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Women's Health Services Network Community of Practice for Prevention of Violence against Women
- Women's Health Services Network Quality CoP
- Statewide Disability Inclusion Community of Practice
- Our Watch Men in Focus Community of Practice
- Sexual and Reproductive Health Social Media Working Group
- Women's Health Services Evaluation Working Group
- Framing Age Community of Practice

## Our Vision

A region where gender equality is everybody's experience, empowering women and girls to be safe, healthy and thriving.

## Our Purpose

We strive to advance gender equality, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of women and girls in our region. We achieve this through advocating for the removal of intersectional barriers, engaging in evidence-based collaboration with our partners and community. Collectively, we raise awareness, enhance capabilities, share information, and lead the way in driving transformational change.



# Strategic Plan

WHISE launched the new [Strategic Plan 2023-2028](#) at the 2023 AGM, following a thorough and thoughtful process. This plan is the culmination of extensive reflection within the organisation and with key partners, a careful examination of the aspirations members and partners hold for their local Women's Health Service, and in-depth discussions with the Board and staff about the future direction of WHISE.

## The New Plan – Key Highlights

The plan strengthens our past vision to see “A region where gender equality is everybody's experience, empowering women and girls to be safe, healthy and thriving” and this will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Everyone in our region experiences gender equality in their daily lives.
- Women and girls in our region have access to gender-informed and appropriate healthcare.
- Women and girls in our region have access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services and information.
- Women and girls in our region live free of gendered violence, and in a healthy sustainable environment.

Building on the legacy of our work the strategy is based on a theory of change that will have WHISE deliver work across three pillars:

- Inclusion – to build practices internally and externally that are intersectional to enable ways of working that decolonise, are anti-racist, embrace a non-binary definition of gender, centre lived experience of marginalisation and enact climate justice
- Impact – to ensure that our work is valued and understood, that we are respected, trusted and influential across our region, that our partnerships and collaborations are transformative, that we build the evidence base through measurement that is impactful and systemic, that our workplace culture is innovative and adaptive and that we work to dismantle systems and strengthen intersectional practice
- Sustainability – so our staff are skills supported and resilient, that we have a consolidated and robust funding base with income pathways, we are environmentally sustainable, that our staff and board reflect the community we service and that we consistently embody our values through our operational practice.

Key to our success will be the values and operating principles which will be core to how we work and operate.

### Values:

- Curiosity
- Collaboration
- Authenticity
- Feminist Leadership

### Core Operating Principles:

- Intersectional feminism
- Compassion
- Lived experience

WHISE extends sincere and deep thanks to all involved and pays a specific and special thanks to Julie Kun, from Julie Kun Consulting who supported, guided and enabled our discussions over a nine-month period.

# Expanding Our Reach and Influence

WHISE has been actively involved in advocacy and research to expand its influence and promote women's health. Key initiatives over the 2023 – 2024 period include:

## Victorian State Budget Gender Analysis:

- **Project Overview:** Facilitated the development of a gender analysis of the Victorian State Budget in partnership with GENVIC. This independent analysis aims to lead the discourse on gender impacts in state budgeting.
- **Collaborative Effort:** Convened a working group to produce the analysis report, which was released shortly after the budget announcement.

## Gender and Skills Advocacy:

- **National and State-Level Discussions:** The CEO participated in discussions on applying a gender lens to VET Skills and Adult Education Policy. Engagements included joining the Public Skills Australia Diversity and Inclusion Network and other strategic advisory bodies.
- **Key Events and Contributions:** Organised and assisted in delivering the Greater South East Melbourne (GSEM) Jobs and Skills Summit, focusing on gender and skills advocacy.

## Partner Surveys and Indicator Framework:

- **Feedback and Insights:** Conducted 48 partner interviews to gather feedback on WHISE's work, which revealed partners' eagerness for more collaboration and highlighted areas for future support.
- **Framework Implementation:** Finalised and implemented an indicator framework for Women's Health Services, enhancing evidence collection and reporting capabilities.

## Affirmative Consent Webinar – Joint PVAW and SRH Activity:

- **Webinar Overview:** In October 2023, WHISE hosted a two-hour webinar on affirmative consent with Yumi Stynes and Dr. Melissa Kang, authors of “Welcome to Consent” and “Welcome to Sex.” The webinar included a panel of experts discussing affirmative consent and its implications for practitioners.
- **Panel Experts:** The panel included Vanessa Hamilton, Anne Atcheson, and other experts.
- **Partnership and Funding:** The webinar aligns with the Consent Matters project, an affirmative consent initiative funded by the DFFH and supported by various organisations.

WHISE has established numerous partnerships and engaged in activities that solidify its role as a leader in primary prevention. Highlights include:

## Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP):

**Engagement and Development:** WHISE commenced work to develop its first Reconciliation Action Plan. Staff reflected on the ways that we can work with First Nations people and our role in reconciliation and learning from Bunurong peoples. WHISE has initiated steps to engage with the Bunurong Land Council and other stakeholders to further reconciliation efforts.

## Community Partnerships Team Activities:

**Capacity Building and Support:** Conducted "Welcome Back" sessions for Burmese women, implemented the "My Body My Voice" survey on body image and disabilities, and delivered health education workshops to newly arrived women in partnership with Friends of Refugees.

## Gender and Disaster Training:

**Training Delivery:** Signed an MOU with Gender and Disaster Australia to deliver the "Lessons in Disaster" training package. Received requests to deliver training to partners, particularly those in peri-urban areas at risk of experiencing gendered impacts of disasters.

# Highlight: Women's Health Services Advocacy for 2024 Budget

Over the past three years, the Women's Health Services Network (WHSN) and individual Women's Health Services (WHS) CEOs and teams have initiated and maintained a strong, coordinated lobbying campaign to secure and sustain essential funding. The following are the key highlights of this extensive and impactful advocacy effort:

## 1. Funding Boost and Core Funding Increase:

- In 2021-2022, the WHSN successfully lobbied for a one-year funding boost of \$200,000.
- Continued lobbying efforts effectively doubled our core funding for the two-year period of 2022-2024.

In preparation for the 2024-25 Victorian State Budget, the Women's Health Services Network prepared a report outlining its network-wide collective impact, [Small change, big impact Women's Health Services Network collective impact report](#), to impress upon its funders:

- The unique role of the women's health sector in Victoria's health system.
- The role of health promotion and primary prevention within the health system in reducing demand on clinical and response services and keeping Victorians healthier and safer.
- The ways in which the sector's work drives a more equitable Victorian health system.
- How the sector leads best practice evidence-based partnerships and projects to deliver effective and economically efficient activities across every region of the state.
- The significant value investing in the sector's people, plans and systems brings to the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

The Network also put forward a business case demonstrating the collective impact and economic value of our work. The business case called for the continuation of the \$19.4 million funding uplift provided over the past two years and requested annual indexing to keep pace with projected growth in the population of Victorian women.

The budget included \$18.3 million over two years to continue the lapsing funding uplifts, along with a recommitment to our core funding. While this additional funding is appreciated, it falls short of the previous uplift, necessitating the scaling back of programs across the sector.

Read the [gender analysis of the 2024-25 Victorian State Budget](#) to find out more

## 2. Women's Health in the House Events:

- Hosted the inaugural Women's Health in the House event in September 2022, sponsored by the Minister for Health.

- Hosted a subsequent Women's Health in the House event in October 2023, also sponsored by the Minister for Health.

### **3. Brand Development and Online Presence:**

- Developed a brand and established the WHSN website to enhance visibility and outreach.

### **4. Government Engagement and Advocacy:**

- Invited by the Departments of Health and Families, Fairness and Housing (DH/DFFH) to provide input into the CUBE lapsing program report, submitted to Treasury via DH/DFFH in mid-2023.
- Presented to the full Labour Party Caucus in August 2023 with the support of the Women's Caucus.
- Engaged Dr. Angela Jackson to create our departmental budget using Treasury guidelines, submitted to DH/DFFH in October 2023 for submission to Treasury.
- Produced and launched a public-facing version of the budget bid, [the Return on Equity](#) Report, in November 2023.

### **5. Parliament House Events:**

- Ran a successful three-day event at Parliament House, Queens Hall, in March 2024, showcasing the work and impact of WHS.

### **6. Departmental and Organisational Adaptation:**

- Managed relationships through significant restructuring of the Department of Health and Human Services, as it was split into DH and DFFH in 2021-2022.
- Maintained effective relationships during the transition of the Office for Women from the Department of Premier and Cabinet to DFFH.
- Navigated changes and maintained advocacy efforts despite significant staff cuts in DH/DFFH following the May 2023 budget.

These efforts reflect the dedication and strategic coordination of the WHSN and WHS teams in advocating for sustained and increased funding to support vital women's health services across Victoria. The ongoing advocacy and engagement with key stakeholders, government departments, and the broader community are crucial to ensuring the continued impact and growth of our services.

# Training for Respect – Prevention of gender-based violence in Victorian Registered Training Organisations

A partnership between WHISE, WHE WHGNE and JSS The Men's Project formed to develop and put a submission into WorkSafe Victoria for their Workwell Respect Fund. The fund aims to support large scale projects that design and deliver evidence-based initiatives within high-risk industries to prevent work related gendered violence including sexual harassment.

The submission – called *Training for Respect – prevention of gender-based violence in Victorian Registered Training Organisations* – was designed to target and working with Victorian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) [education sector is identified as a risk sector by Worksafe] and develop solutions to ensure everything is done to create workplaces where everyone can thrive.

Recognising that workplace gendered violence is an OH&S issue this project develops and implements a sustainable primary prevention model, by also targeting the strategic and structural drivers of workplace gender violence – intersectional gender inequity.

Working in collaboration with the sector and centring lived experience, this project will build on evidence and leading practice ways of working and:

- Build capability through a three-part sector-specific program comprising:
  - Online modules establishing the foundations of the Act, obligations, risks, hazards and, steps to prevent workplace gendered violence
  - In-person program to embed and deepen knowledge to develop accountability and behaviour change in RTO workplaces
  - In-person program for leaders and managers to embed practice skills to identify mitigate and eliminate workplace gendered violence
- Produce an industry-wide campaign to promote agreed messages, including the value and impact on the industry, employees and students of eliminating workplace gendered violence

## Training for Respect Project:

- **Progress and Achievements:** The project successfully passed its probation mark and secured approval for completion. Key developments include drafting the prevalence survey rubric, recruitment strategy, E-Learning Modules, and the first module of face-to-face training.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Ongoing advocacy and meetings with key stakeholders across Vocational Education and Training (VET) have strengthened support for the project.

## Better Together Conference

In August 2023 WHISE hosted the inaugural Better Together Conference, bringing together a diverse group of over 180 participants from various sectors, including local councils, state government, peak organisations, tourism agencies, and community health. The conference served as a testament to the collective commitment of these individuals and organisations to working with and for women in the SMR.

The primary objectives of the conference were to provide a platform for sharing valuable insights, exchanging knowledge, and collaborating on strategies to address critical issues affecting women, such as preventing violence, improving sexual and reproductive health, supporting mental health and wellbeing, and fostering greater equality.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference took on added significance as it provided an opportunity for the sector to reconnect, create new connections, and strengthen existing networks. For many, the opportunity to form new professional relationships and opportunities to collaborate was an important part of the conference.

The breakout sessions delved into critical themes such as self-determination, cultural safety, collaboration, and gender bias in health, providing participants with valuable insights and practical strategies to implement in their respective fields.

The Better Together Conference not only served as a platform for sharing projects and initiatives but also as a space for sharing learnings and initiating new collaborative endeavours. Participants committed to continuing to connect, collaborate, learn, reflect, and evaluate their work, ensuring that the momentum generated by the conference would be carried forward in their ongoing efforts to support women in the SMR.

In conclusion, the Better Together Conference exemplified WHISE's mission to support women in the SMR by fostering a collaborative environment, encouraging knowledge sharing, and strengthening partnerships. The overwhelmingly positive response from participants underscores the importance of such initiatives in driving positive change and advancing the cause of women's health and well-being in the region.



# Promoting Respect and Equity Together Regional Strategy

The Promoting Respect and Equity Together (PRET) Regional Strategy consists of over thirty organisations who learn and collaborate to prevent gender-based violence across the SMR. The strategy is based on the principles of intersectional feminism, centring lived experience, Aboriginal self-determination, engaging men and boys and accountability for the use of violence. We aim to listen, learn, continually improve, to be values and strengths based in our language and approach.

## Achievements

Over the year 2023-2024 the Prevention of Violence Against Women portfolio achieved a considerable amount, particularly due to WHISE's increased capacity to engage a Health Promotion Officer as well as a PVAW Lead.

The PRET partnership continued to grow and learn together through bi-monthly network meetings which showcased the primary prevention of gender-based violence work across the region. The partners invited new organisations to join, including South-East Monash Legal Service (SMLS), the Dhelk Dja Southern Metropolitan Action Group chair, Peninsula Community Legal Centre (PCLC), Uniting Family Services, Anglicare Victoria and Community First Responders.

## Learning Forums

Together the PRET partners worked to successfully deliver a number of learning forums including:

- **Gender Equality & Respectful Relationships in the Early years'** webinar in April 2024. There was a clear increase of confidence to apply the Respectful Relationships model in early learning settings, with more than half of respondents selecting confident to very confident (52%). There was a clear increase in confidence to apply knowledge of primary prevention of violence against women in their work with an overall 23% increase in confident and very confident ratings.
- **Focus on Perpetration webinar** - April 2024  
The webinar successfully improved understanding of what perpetration of gender-based violence means, why we need to frame prevention of violence against women statistics around perpetration and not just victims, and how to engage with this new body of knowledge.
- **Embedding Lived Experience Forum** – the PRET partners delivered a Lived Experience Forum in July 2023 with lived experience advocate Nina Storey, Engagement Lead at VMIAC Chantelle Higgs, Acting CEO SHARC Nicole Thompson, and Lived Experience Educator Morgan Cataldo, hosted by Lula Dembele to learn about how practitioners from the mental health, alcohol and other drugs and youth sectors had successfully embedded lived experience in their own work.

# Highlight: Development of the "Lived Experience Framework for Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence Sector"

In 2023-2024, the Prevention of Gendered Violence staff at WHISE undertook a significant initiative aimed at embedding lived experience into the primary prevention of gendered violence. This project, the "Lived Experience Framework for Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence Sector," emerged following the success of the "Aligning the Personal with the Professional Conference" in October 2022. Recognising the critical value of lived experience, WHISE embarked on this project to elevate the voices and insights of those with firsthand experiences into strategic and operational practices within the sector.

The initiative began with an online forum on July 26, 2023, which was attended by 68 participants from across Victoria, Australia, and even internationally. The forum featured a panel of esteemed leaders and experts in the field of lived experience, including Lula Dembele from the Illawarra Women's Health Centre, Chantelle Higgs from the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council, Nicole Thompson from the Self Help Addiction Resource Centre, and Morgan Cataldo from Berry Street Victoria. These experts shared their models and methodologies for integrating lived experience into their work, showcasing the successes and addressing the challenges they faced.

The evaluation of the event was overwhelmingly positive, with a significant increase in attendees' confidence in embedding lived experience into their work. Specifically, 21% of attendees reported feeling confident or very confident post-event, and there was an overall 29% increase in confidence levels.

Participants involved in the Promoting Respect and Equity Together Partnership committed themselves to developing a Lived Experience Framework for the primary prevention of gender-based violence, building on and adapting already existing frameworks for response, mental health, Alcohol and other Drugs (AoD) and research sectors.

The insights and feedback gathered from this forum laid a robust foundation for the next stages of the project. A framework was developed to guide the primary prevention sector in effectively centring lived experience in their efforts to combat gendered violence. The partnership had a Think Tank in April 2024 to review and identify gaps in the draft framework and then launched the Lived Experience Framework for Primary Prevention of Gender-based Violence on 20 June 2024. This framework aims to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are not only heard but are integral to the strategic and operational decision-making processes within the sector.

## PVAW in Community - Critical Friends Network

The Critical Friends Network (CFN) was revitalised in 2023, by reconnecting with existing Critical friends and several new members being added to the network. The CFN ensures that those working in our schools, under the Respectful Relationships initiative, have the support and encouragement they need.

With over 1500 schools participating across Victoria, the Respectful Relationships initiative is a whole-school approach to the prevention of family and gender-based violence and aims to create a culture of respect and equality now, to change the story of family violence for future generations.

As a vital part of the initiative in the SMR, Critical Friends are a group of diverse professionals who have been recruited and trained by WHISE and the Department of Education and Training (DET). Their shared commitment to promoting respectful relationships, preventing family violence, and promoting gender equality in schools makes them essential.

Before connecting new Critical Friends with schools, the protocol requires building their capacity in family violence 101 and intersectional gender equality. This Critical Friends gender equity and family violence training was held online in April 2024 with 19 people.

The participants worked in government and public sectors, health and wellbeing, and education and early learning. Their professional roles were diverse, encompassing several fields, including:

- Health and wellbeing roles– e.g., Health Psychologist, and Health Promotion Officers.
- Education and training roles – e.g., Educator, and Training and Education Worker.
- Youth and community services roles– e.g., Children and Youth Coordinator, and Youth Projects and Partnerships Officer.
- Respect and relationships roles – e.g., Respectful Relationships Liaison Officer.
- Leadership roles – e.g., School Principal.

The participants reported high levels of pre-training knowledge in family violence and intersectional gender equality however, there was notable improvement in their self-reported confidence to talk about the link between family violence and gender equality in schools and significant changes in participants' confidence in considering young peoples' diverse identities and experiences when supporting schools using a whole-school approach.

# PVAW in Community -16 Days of Activism Campaign

Working together on this annual campaign, the PVAW and Communications teams sought to take a collective approach with partners to raise awareness and strengthen efforts to prevent gender-based violence.

**#16Days4Kids Focus:** Building on discussions with the PRET partnership, the 2023 campaign focused on messages of respect for and from children and young people in the region. In partnership with key stakeholders and with the support of Respect Victoria, WHISE:

- **Illustration Project:** Commissioned local illustrator Nea Valdivia to design colouring sheets for children and young people, promoting conversations about respect in schools, kindergartens, homes, and friendship groups.
- **Toolkit Distribution:** Provided a toolkit with information and resources to assist organisations, councils, and individuals in preventing family violence and gender-based violence. The toolkit included tested lesson plans and resources for use with children and young people.
- **Social Media Campaign:** Encouraged participants to share completed colouring sheets on social media to promote the campaign's message.

The toolkit was distributed across 10 local councils, including libraries and early learning centres. It was also picked up by an international development team in Vanuatu for their own 16 Days activities.

The PVAW Team also delivered Bystander Training to the community through partnerships with Frankston City Council and Mornington Peninsula Council.

# PVAW in Community – Bunjilwarra Healthy and Respectful Relationships

WHISE was honoured to be given the opportunity to partner with Bunjilwarra, WHISE to deliver a 6-week program for young men which commenced in March 2024 and a separate 5-week program for young women which commenced in May around the prevention of family violence, masculinities/rigid gender stereotypes, and healthy relationships. In collaboration with Bunjilwarra and Dardi Munwurro staff, a culturally appropriate program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to prevent gender-based violence and challenge rigid gender stereotypes was developed.

The Bunjilwarra Koori Youth Alcohol and Drug Healing Service is a purpose-built statewide 12-bed alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation and healing service for Aboriginal young people aged 16 to 25. This program aims to support young people transitioning through drug and alcohol recovery in a culturally safe and supportive environment.

Program objectives included:

- Increasing understanding of family violence and its socio-ecological context.
- Highlighting the impact of societal norms and structures on institutional practices and inequalities.
- Exploring the intersection of culture, colonialism, and rigid gender stereotypes.
- Empowering young people to build safe, respectful, and equal relationships.

The program, in partnership with Bunjilwarra and Dardi Munwurro was an exciting opportunity to put intersectionality into practice in alignment with Our Watch's Changing the Picture's drivers of violence. This included integrating the content about the "ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities". It involved discussing the "ongoing impacts of colonisation for non-Indigenous people and society" and the "intersection between these multiple drivers..." The fact that many of these young people were victim-survivors as well as potentially using violence increased the complexity of the discussions. The facilitators, a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous, brought together primary prevention, narrative theory and culture together to open up discussion with these young people about their experience and use of violence.

The positive outcomes from the program were that young people could start to understand some of their experiences in the context of Australia as a colonised country in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to face ongoing discrimination and oppression. We hope to have planted seeds about healthy relationships, the use of violence and how to choose other ways of behaving. There were some robust discussions about 'what protection' looks like, when the young men are being told to protect their friends and families they asked: "how do we protect our families and not use violence?" Another comment was "I've never talked so much about my history and culture before."

An unexpected outcome was that one of the facilitators took discussions back to their men's groups and posed some of the young men's questions to the group, which started a deep

discussion about advice they would give these young men and resulted in some insights into their own behaviour. This facilitator reported that ‘families of those men who had some insight into their behaviour are safer now because of this discussion’.

***“Young people could start to understand some of their experiences in the context of Australia as a colonised country in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to face ongoing discrimination and oppression.”***

***Dani, PVAW Lead***

# City of Casey Early Years Workshop - Educator Professional Development (Hampton Park)

The City of Casey engaged WHISE to provide expertise in gender equity and the prevention of violence against women in early years education. This project aims to build the capacity of early years staff in Hampton Park to recognise, respond, and refer instances of family violence in their diverse local area.

**Workshop Topics:** Delivered to 15 educators from five sessional kindergartens, covering:

- Family Violence and Intersectional Gender Equity in the Early Years.
- The project cycle for respectful relationships in the early years.
- Audit Tools, Monitoring, and Evaluation.

**Workshop Objectives:** Increase understanding of family violence drivers, build confidence in responding to disclosures, and enhance capacity to create gender-equitable environments.

## City of Kingston's Creating Safe and Respectful Communities:

In February 2024, WHISE delivered a session aimed to build understanding of family violence, its prevalence and drivers, and how to respond to disclosures and create safe communities to 18 community centre and neighbourhood house employees in the City of Kingston at Cheltenham Community Centre.

Attendees reported increased understanding and confidence, with key learnings on the prevalence of family violence, identifying and responding to it, and creating safe environments for women and children.

## Case Study – Menopause

In September 2022, WHISE delivered a webinar titled "Hot topic: A free public webinar on menopause and how to manage," in partnership with the Victorian Women's Health Network, the Women's Spirit Project, the Victorian Women's Trust and the Epworth Hospital. The event received over 250 registrations and over 150 people attended the webinar live, exceeding our expectations and demonstrating significant community interest and need in this topic. WHISE subsequently reached out to partners and stakeholders, as well as people with lived experience of peri- and menopause who attended the webinar, inviting them to register their interest in a working group on peri- and menopause.

The inaugural menopause working group meeting was held in November 2022, and resulted in the ideation and development of two key projects for delivery: a case study examining the impact of policies introduced by employers to support people experiencing peri- and menopause in the workplace, and community-based information sessions designed to increase participants' knowledge of peri- and menopause and their confidence to navigate the healthcare system for symptom management. The [case study](#) was published in October 2023 and features qualitative data from interviews with Modibodi and Future Super. The information sessions, of which we initially intended to deliver four, were scheduled from June to October 2023, and in total 19 sessions were held with over 340 participants.

WHISE has subsequently also delivered a webinar on "Your Mind on Menopause", examining the impact of peri- and menopause on mental health and wellbeing and supported the professional development of our menopause working group members through presentations from key knowledge experts such as Wendy Tuohy from *The Age*, Professor Amanda Vincent from Monash University, Dr Andrea Binks from Wollongong Hospital, Dr Karin Stanzel from Monash University and Dr Alex Hawkey, Western Sydney University.

An article published by Wendy Tuohy contains some of the key topics and areas discussed in the above meetings - [Menopause and perimenopause: women advocating for more open discussion of this major life change as a way to end the stigma at work \(smh.com.au\)](#)

Further, we delivered a [submission](#) to the Senate Inquiry on issues related to perimenopause and menopause, and appeared before the Committee for the Inquiry. WHISE was also successful in securing funding through the women's support group grant from the Department of Health, to deliver a community-based program for people with lived experience. Our program, Mastering Menopause, is underway with 13 local participants joining us for participatory health promotion information sessions, facilitated discussions and enrichment activities designed to increase participants' self-efficacy and self-confidence. This program will run until June 2025, with a second group of participants due to begin in July 2025.



## Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Programs:

WHISE has worked with partners and stakeholders through the regional network, *Good Health Down South*, to enhance access to high-quality, safe, and respectful sexual and reproductive health services that are free from stigma, racism and discrimination as well as evidence-based health promotion information. In addition to delivering community-based programs, we have improved the skills, knowledge and confidence of our regional health workforce to deliver best practice sexual and reproductive health testing, treatment and care for women, girls and gender diverse people.

### Consent Matters Project

Together with Sexual Health Victoria, WHISE delivered a pilot program to increase knowledge and understanding of affirmative consent legislation and principles among youth and community service professionals, to enhance their knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver primary prevention information, support and resources for young people to understand and engage in respectful, equitable and consensual, sex and relationships.

The program comprised the co-design, iterative piloting and evaluation of a comprehensive training program, featuring online modules and a full-day workshop with youth and community workers in metropolitan and rural Victoria, supported by Women's Health Loddon Mallee, the Multicultural Health Support Service and Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, municipal youth services in the City of Greater Dandenong and Cardinia Shire, the Zoe Belle Gender Collective and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria.

**Delivering three pilot workshops, with over 100 practitioners in total, provided professionals with the skills to respond to disclosures and refer victim-survivors to appropriate support services.**

Through the delivery of Consent Matters, Sexual Health Victoria and WHISE improved outcomes for young people who are disengaged from mainstream education and thus, may not have access to the Respectful Relationships program. The pilot program was successful in increasing professional understanding of sex-positive and trauma-informed approaches to education and support, health relationships and teaching strategies for affirmative consent.

## Webinar – Egg Freezing as Assisted Reproductive Technology

Egg freezing received increased attention on social media and in the news as a fertility preservation tool for women and people assigned female at birth. To support consumers to thoroughly understand the financial costs, the efficacy or success rate, and the physical and emotional demands of egg freezing and encourage informed decision-making, WHISE worked with the Victorian Assisted Reproductive Treatment Authority (VARTA) to host a webinar in September 2023.

185 people registered to hear from Dr Karin Hammarberg, Associate Professor Michelle Peate, and Joanna Anagnostou. With a clearer understanding of the potential benefits and limitations of egg freezing, one participant noted that it's important to be “mindful not to be influenced by information provided by social media and women do need to be well informed and educated before making a decision to egg freeze.”

## Affirmative Consent Webinar – Joint PVAW SRH Activity

In October 2023, WHISE hosted a two-hour webinar on affirmative consent with Yumi Stynes and Dr Melissa Kang, authors of “Welcome to Consent” and “Welcome to Sex”. Almost 400 people registered for the webinar and 195 attended the live event, featuring Vanessa Hamilton, founder of Talking the Talk Healthy Sexuality Education and Anne Atcheson from Sexual Health Victoria, on the affirmative consent pilot, “Consent Matters” Program.

The webinar was jointly hosted by the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Sexual and Reproductive Health portfolios; and sought to increase practitioners’ knowledge of the connections between gender equity, primary prevention of violence, and sexual and reproductive health outcomes, as well as the current context of changes to consent legislation.

The event was hugely successful, with one participant reporting:

***“I provide sexuality and consent education, but this webinar reinforced the obligation we have as health professions and teachers to discuss this information. This helped to instil greater confidence to have these conversations (in age-appropriate ways), even if there is backlash.”***

# SRH Professional and Capacity Development

## Early Medical Abortion Training

WHISE, in partnership with Gippsland Primary Health Network, Peninsula Health, Women's Health Victoria, Gippsland Women's Health, and Women's Health East delivered a capacity-building session for doctors, nurses, midwives, pharmacists, and other healthcare professionals, aimed at enhancing early medical abortion service provision. Currently, less than 10% of GPs in Australia are registered to prescribe medical abortion, with even fewer providing these services in primary care environments.

Held in May 2024, this forum was successful in enhancing participants' understanding of early medical abortion, detailing the necessary steps for establishing service provision and highlighting professional networks that support implementation at various organisations. The session featured insights from Dr. Lucy Donovan of Peninsula Health and Monash Health Community, and Emily Duyen Dang, a stakeholder engagement coordinator from 1800 My Options and Women's Health Victoria.

## Becoming an Implanon Provider in Mornington

With generous support from Mornington Peninsula Shire council, WHISE and Sexual Health Victoria delivered a subsidised capacity-building session for doctors, nurses and midwives in October 2023 to provide practitioners with accredited training for Implanon NXT. The session, held in Hastings, supported clinicians based in Mornington Peninsula to provide long-acting reversible contraception to patients, with clear increases in knowledge and confidence evident from the evaluation. One participant shared: "With initial supervision, I feel that this would improve woman centred care."

# Gender Mental Health and Wellbeing

A key focus for the gender and mental health and wellbeing team is to establish some structures to help address neglect of gendered transformative approaches to mental health that has resulted in a disproportionate burden of mental health conditions and experiences among women.

## APAC Conference on Women's Mental Health

WHISE was very happy to be invited to present at [the Inaugural APWMH Conference 2023](#), held in Melbourne.

The need for a sex and gendered approach in improving mental wellbeing is crucial. Recognising and understanding the complex intersections of gender, discrimination, and biology can inform effective prevention strategies and interventions to promote mental wellness for everyone.

WHISE presented information specific to menopause & gendered violence and their links to mental wellbeing and contributed to important discussions and initiatives focused on improving mental health outcomes and addressing the unique challenges faced by women due to these societal and biological factors.

A key focus for the gender and mental health and wellbeing team is to establish some structures to help address neglect of gendered transformative approaches to mental health that has resulted in a disproportionate burden of mental health conditions and experiences among women.

## Biological sex, gender and mental health for frontline workers

A goal of this portfolio was to apply a gender lens to mental health and wellbeing across sectors beyond mental health. This culminated in a learning forum delivered on July 18, 2023, in partnership with the HER Centre Australia.

This forum, attended by 46 frontline professionals, aimed to translate and broker existing evidence on the sex and gendered determinants of mental wellbeing. Out of 64 registrants, 33 attended, with 34 completing a pre-training survey and 21 completing a post-training survey. The evaluation report revealed a significant increase in confidence among participants to apply their knowledge of gendered approaches to mental health.

Additionally, two-thirds of respondents endorsed the second-highest rating for confidence in applying knowledge of biological sex and gender determinants of women's mental health - an impressive outcome, as increasing confidence post-learning forums can be challenging.

## Size inclusive practice forum

An action to promote awareness of size-inclusive practice and bodily autonomy for positive mental and physical wellbeing was carried out through a workshop delivered in December 2023.

The workshop focused on the bidirectional relationship between biological sex, gender, body image, and mental wellbeing and the [recording](#) has been viewed over 400 times.

Many participants felt confident in applying a gender lens at work and very confident in applying knowledge of a gendered approach to improving mental health. Three months later, 60% of respondents reported applying their learnings to their roles, including developing inclusive nutrition programs and promoting non-judgmental support for individuals with weight-related issues. Feedback highlighted increased awareness of language use and an enhanced ability to discuss sensitive topics effectively, with 60% of participants noting that the webinar impacted their work or personal life.

### Gender and mental health literacy pilot

The core business of the year one action plan was to explore opportunities for integrating mental health literacy into existing wellbeing and mental health promotion efforts with an intersectional gendered lens. We first delivered a pilot workshop on October 5, 2023, to nine hand-selected participants. This pilot focused on how to incorporate biological sex and gender into mental health literacy. The evaluation report revealed that before the workshop, about two-thirds of participants had an average understanding of the relationship between gender and mental health literacy. However, following the workshop, all participants reported a high or very high level of understanding. Additionally, understanding of gender differences in mental health help-seeking behaviours significantly increased, with almost all participants rating their understanding as high or very high, except for one person who rated it as moderate.

### Connecting the Dots webinar

The Gender and Mental Wellbeing portfolio collaborated with the Promoting Respect and Equity Together (PRET) Partnership to deliver a learning forum to increase awareness of family violence, trauma, mental health challenges, mental ill-health, and suicidality, targeting healthcare providers and educators. Participants noted improvement in understanding how gender-based violence prevention initiatives benefit mental health and wellbeing and felt more confident in applying a gendered approach to improve mental health and wellbeing.

## Social Planners' Forums and Network

Following the feedback from the gender and mental health literacy pilot, it was clear that if we wanted to do work at the systems level, we needed to pitch the work accordingly. We worked with the Department of Health to coordinate a social planners forum, which explored what gender transformative mental health promotion could look like.

We first ran two forums on gender and mental wellbeing for health planners, which led to significant progress in participants' confidence in identifying opportunities for gender-transformative mental health activities within a local government context. Additionally, confidence in utilising existing legislation, frameworks, and case studies for gender-transformative mental health promotion improved markedly.

The Social Planners' Gender and Mental Wellbeing Network was formed following extensive consultations and network meetings. This network provides opportunities for sharing work, successes, challenges, reflections and collective action to promote mental wellbeing and to enable WHISE to provide support to social planners as they seek to embed a gender and mental wellbeing lens overall health priority areas of their municipal health and wellbeing plans.

The objectives of the network are:

- To support the translation of theory to gender transformative practice. This network will look to the emerging evidence base, share ideas, and look for collective learning, on how to translate theory into effective and appropriate strength-based action at the practitioner level.
- To share and capture case studies on the planning, implementation or evaluation of programs designed to shape initiatives that co-benefit mental well-being and gender equality.
- To seek to engage and influence community infrastructure to support an intersectional lens overall health priority area, for improved mental wellbeing, including population health catchment and any community health promotion stakeholder in the region.

# Gender Pay Gap Webinar, Sessions and Resources

The introduction of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the establishment of Victoria's first Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector has meant that the public sector, councils and universities (known as defined entities), now have a legal obligation to promote gender equality in their policies, programs and services and take action to achieving workplace gender equality. One component of this is to report against their gender pay gap.

Since the Act's implementation, defined entities have been on a learning journey to understand and complete their first workplace gender audit, covering data from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Organisations are still seeking to understand the factors influencing their gender pay gaps and determining how to address them.

WHISE has built the capacity of employers and stakeholders in the SMR to understand the gender pay gap. This initiative has included several key activities and approaches:

**1. In-depth evaluation and workshops:** WHISE conducted thorough evaluations of the gender pay gaps at Bayside City Council and Court Services Victoria, providing detailed reports. Action planning workshops were held with executive leadership teams to discuss factors contributing to or mitigating their pay gaps. High-level strategies and leaderships' roles in closing these gaps were also discussed.

**2. Guiding resource:** WHISE developed a comprehensive guide titled, [Evaluating the Gender Pay Gap in Your Organisation: A Guiding Resource](#), to support defined entities in assessing their own gender pay gaps and identifying areas for improvement. The guide explains the gender pay gap is, how to evaluate it, and what influences it, offering questions to prompt deeper investigation into workplace gender equality.

**3. Webinar delivery:** In December 2023, WHISE hosted a free webinar featuring a guest speaker from the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector to present on what the gender pay gap is, how it is measured, and what factors primarily influence it. Representatives from Bayside and Frankston City Councils shared their experiences and learnings, and the above-mentioned resource was launched. The webinar, attended by 32 people, enhanced understanding and confidence in addressing the gender pay gap in the workplace. A full [evaluation](#) of the webinar is available.

**4. Presentations:** WHISE has presented on the gender pay gap to partner organisations, including TAFE Directors Association (Australia).

These efforts have collectively contributed to raising awareness, understanding, and action towards closing the gender pay gap in the SMR.

# Case Study – Frankston City Council

## **WHISE and Frankston City Council: A Strategic Partnership for Gender Equality**

The collaboration between Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) and Frankston City Council (FCC) exemplifies the power of strategic partnerships in driving sustainable community change. This long-standing alliance has evolved over the years, consistently adapting to address emerging needs and leverage new opportunities in the pursuit of gender equality.

Building on the successful leadership program from the previous year, which engaged over 100 council leaders in understanding gender equality and workplace sexual harassment, WHISE and FCC have deepened their commitment to capacity building. The "Empower Leaders in Gender Equality" initiative laid a strong foundation, integrating measurable goals into leaders' performance plans and paving the way for more advanced training modules.

### **Comprehensive Training Program**

The partnership's strategic approach is evident in its comprehensive and multi-faceted training program. By offering both in-person sessions and self-paced online modules, WHISE and FCC ensure that the learning is accessible and adaptable to various schedules and learning preferences. The curriculum is carefully designed to build upon existing knowledge, particularly in areas related to the prevention of family violence and the implementation of the Gender Equality Act 2020.

### **In-Person Training Sessions**

WHISE delivered several targeted in-person training sessions, each addressing crucial aspects of gender equality:

1. **Managing Backlash and Resistance:** Multiple sessions were conducted to increase understanding of forms of resistance and backlash, exploring their origins and practicing leadership responses.
2. **Unconscious Bias:** This session employed active participatory facilitation approaches to unpack the concept of unconscious bias, its manifestations, and its impact on decision-making.
3. **Responding to Disclosures in the Workplace:** This comprehensive session covered sexual assault, sexual harassment, and family violence, providing context-specific information for the Frankston LGA.

### **Online Learning Modules**



To complement the in-person training, WHISE developed a series of self-paced online training modules integrated into FCC's existing Learning Management System. These modules covered eight key topics:

1. Gender equity and gender equality fundamentals
2. Gender Equality Act (2020) fundamentals
3. Unconscious bias
4. Managing backlash and resistance
5. Gender Equality in the Workplace
6. Responding to disclosures in the workplace
7. Menopause
8. Gender equity and Councillors fundamentals

This comprehensive online offering ensures that all staff members have access to essential information and tools for promoting gender equality, regardless of their ability to attend in-person sessions.

### **Tools for Change Sessions**

In an innovative move, the partnership facilitated five 'Tools for Change' sessions in collaboration with The Men's Project, Jesuit Social Services. These sessions were specifically designed for City Works and Parks Teams, demonstrating the partnership's commitment to engaging diverse groups within the council.

### **Tangible Outputs and Impact**

The partnership between WHISE and FCC has produced several tangible outputs:

1. **Training Materials:** Comprehensive materials for both in-person and online training, including presentations, handouts, and interactive exercises.
2. **Online Learning Modules:** Eight self-paced modules integrated into FCC's Learning Management System, providing ongoing access to critical information.
3. **Performance Plan Goals:** Measurable goals related to gender equality integrated into leaders' performance plans, ensuring ongoing commitment and accountability.
4. **Feedback and Evaluation Data:** Collected from all training sessions, providing insights into the effectiveness of the programs and areas for future focus.

The impact of these initiatives is evident in participant feedback. For instance, after the Managing Backlash and Resistance sessions, participants reported increased understanding of types of resistance and greater confidence in applying their learning. One participant noted their key learning was "the subtle ways of resistance that I hadn't realised were resistance".

The strategic nature of the WHISE-FCC partnership is further underscored by its alignment with broader policy frameworks, such as the MARAM Framework and the Gender Equality Act 2020. This ensures that local efforts are contributing to and benefiting from larger-scale initiatives, creating a more cohesive and impactful approach to gender equality.

Through this multifaceted, strategic partnership, WHISE and Frankston City Council are not just implementing programs; they are fostering a cultural shift within the organisation. By addressing both individual and systemic factors, from unconscious bias to organisational policies, they are laying the groundwork for lasting change. This approach recognises that true gender equality requires more than just awareness—it demands sustained effort, practical tools, and a willingness to challenge and evolve deeply ingrained societal norms.

As the partnership continues to evolve, its impact extends beyond the walls of the council, influencing the broader Frankston community. By empowering council leaders and staff with knowledge, skills, and strategies to promote gender equality, WHISE and FCC are creating a ripple effect that has the potential to transform the entire local government area, making Frankston a model for gender equality initiatives in local governance.

# Case Study – Feminist Friendship Community of Practice

The Feminist Friendships Gender Equality Community of Practice (FF CoP) was established to respond to a clear need: providing a space for Gender Equality practitioners in the SMR to gather, reflect, learn and support each other. Inspired by the concept of ‘feminist friendships’ as a methodology for practice, the FF CoP promoted courage and vulnerability, critical reflection, learning, and developing friendships with like-minded practitioners.

The FF CoP offered professional development, peer mentoring and one on one coaching: with twelve participants representing a diversity of organisations. Using the idea of ‘feminist friendship’ as a cornerstone, the FF CoP worked with *“the practices, at the pace, in the natural contexts, and with an ethic of friendship”* (Tillman-Healy, 2003), and as such required, and had, a strong commitment from all members and facilitators to show up, bringing whole self to the group, and develop strong relationships.

The aim of the FF CoP was to build trust and create space for courageous conversations about the challenges and realities of gender equality work. The group evolved, and the program was shaped by, member s’ needs and interests expressed through the initial in-person meeting. For practicality and effectiveness, the FF CoP was facilitated through a combination of three full-day in-person meetings and seven online meetings.

The 3 x in-person six-hour workshops covered a range of topics including:

- Professional and Personal Goal Setting
- Co-design of the CoP program
- Activities for connection and rapport building
- Intersectionality
- Self-Awareness through Community of Selves\* model
- Reflection and learning evaluation

The 7 x online two-hour workshops covered a range of topics including:

- Self and collective care
- Engaging men and boys
- Peer Consulting Process
- Managing backlash and resistance
- Embedding Lived experience into GE Programs
- Values based messaging for GE and PVAW

Dyad/triad peer mentoring was a key feature of the CoP program, with pairings and groups of three to connect between the formal in-person and online group meetings. A common theme in feedback from participants was the value of peer mentoring as a supportive and reflective space. Many participants found these sessions to be impactful for discussing challenges, sharing victories, and connecting on a deeper level.

A one-on-one individual coaching session with one of the FF CoP facilitators was offered to members as part of the personal and professional development focus of this CoP. Members who had these sessions shared that they were impactful for both their personal and professional development, and provided crucial support, clarity, and guidance that were often transformative. Participants shared key learnings from their involvement in the FF CoP. One of the most remarkable themes from their discussions was the sense of community and support. Many participants emphasised the importance of being part of a “supportive and caring community,” which provided a sense of belonging and emotional sustenance.

Another key takeaway by participants, and in meeting needs of the group, was the importance of self-care and self-reflection in sustaining long-term engagement in gender equity work.

Participants recognised that “engaging more around self-care and self-reflection” was crucial for understanding what drives them and how they can support themselves to continue their work sustainably.

The introduction to participants of intersectionality and its implications in practice was also a key learning point. Understanding “how different aspects of a person’s identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation”, as spoken by one participant, helped the group grasp the complexity of gender equity work and the necessity of considering multiple social characteristics in their efforts.

[Community of Selves](#) model was demonstrated to participants, encouraging awareness and role of all parts of oneself. The emphasis on self-awareness and self-care was highlighted in their comment, “Community of selves self-compassion piece, loving all parts of yourself.” Personal vulnerability and openness were also surprising elements.

Participants were astonished by their own ability to be open and vulnerable within the group, which contrasted with their experiences in other settings.

***“I was surprised at how open and vulnerable I was able to be with the group. Not something I feel comfortable to demonstrate in the workplace and even in my personal life.”***

The recognition of one’s own power and privilege was a challenging but important learning. The creation of a safe, kind, and authentic space was highly valued.

Overall, evaluation of the FF CoP found it had significantly impacted participants’ ability to achieve their personal and professional goals. Participants praised the CoP for being a “feminist space” that provided “safety, kindness, care, joy, and authenticity,” which they found lacking in formal or corporate settings. This environment was seen as a model that could revolutionise professional practices across various sectors.

# Empowering Women in Diverse Communities

In the past year, the Community Partnership Team (CPT) has made significant strides in improving the lives of women from multicultural and migrant backgrounds. Through targeted programs, strategic partnerships, and a deep understanding of the unique challenges faced by these communities, this team has worked tirelessly to bridge gaps in health, well-being, and equity.

CPT is comprised of four dedicated women with extensive experience in community engagement. Their mission is to address health disparities within multicultural and migrant populations through culturally appropriate and faith-based programs. This past year, CPT successfully partnered with various organisations and communities to deliver projects that focus on:

- **Sexual and Reproductive Health:** CPT developed culturally sensitive programs covering essential topics such as anatomy, menstruation, contraception, menopause, and family planning. These initiatives ensure that women from diverse backgrounds have access to accurate and relevant information that aligns with their cultural and religious beliefs.
- **Prevention of Violence Against Women:** Recognising the importance of fostering respectful relationships and safe families, CPT created programs aimed at preventing violence against women. These initiatives emphasised the significance of understanding and challenging harmful gender norms, which are often deeply rooted in cultural practices.
- **Mental Well-being and Financial Literacy:** CPT also addressed mental health and financial literacy, areas critical to the overall well-being and empowerment of women.

WHISE Initiatives:

## 1. Active Bystander Training:

In collaboration with AfriAusCare iLEAC, WHISE delivered a 30-minute Active Bystander Training session. This program aimed to empower children and young people to recognize and respond to gender stereotyping and sexism. By using real-life scenarios, the training increased the participants' confidence to challenge gender inequality and support their peers. Forty-five children and young people attended, with most reporting a boost in their ability to safely stand up against discrimination.

## 2. Afghan Women Mental Health Session:

WHISE facilitated a mental health information session at the Southern Migrant Resource Centre. The session was attended by 30 Afghan women, all of whom had experienced war-related trauma and were navigating life in Australia. The program highlighted the link between mental health and behaviours like impulsive shopping, often used as a coping mechanism. By addressing these issues in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, the session provided these women with valuable tools to manage their mental

health and shared insights into the gendered impacts of caregiving, trauma, and family violence.

### 3. Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds Project:

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is a fundamental human right and a critical component of overall well-being. In collaboration with Friends of Refugees (FOR), WHISE developed the "Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds" (HBM) project to address the unique SRH needs of Rohingya refugee women. This program aimed to empower these women by enhancing their confidence and knowledge regarding SRH in a culturally safe and accessible environment. Over five weekly sessions held at the FOR Community Hub, topics such as puberty, menstruation, menopause, and consent, along with more complex issues like contraception and miscarriage were covered. With participation ranging from 10 to 25 women per session, primarily Rohingya refugees, the program created a supportive space where women could learn, share, and access the health services they need. By fostering a community of informed women, the project contributed to improving health literacy and promoting gender equality within the community.

### 4. Economic Empowerment Workshop:

In partnership with Women's Health in the North (WHIN), WHISE conducted a workshop on the economic empowerment of women. This workshop, presented at Chisholm Institute's International Women's Day event, explored the importance of equity and intersectionality in economic mobility. It emphasised the cascading positive effects that economic empowerment of migrant and refugee women can have on their communities.

#### Impact:

Through these initiatives, WHISE has demonstrated a strong commitment to addressing the complex challenges faced by women in diverse communities. This work has not only improved the immediate well-being of participants but has also contributed to broader social change by promoting equity, health, and safety across communities.

***By investing in culturally appropriate, targeted programs, we can continue to empower women, creating a ripple effect that benefits entire communities. The efforts from this team exemplify the power of community-driven approaches to social justice and the critical role women play in leading these efforts.***

***"The groups and sessions often bring laughter and a sense of relief that the women are not alone in what they might face, that most issues are finally being spoken about and women's health and its access is being improved.***

***I love my work because I love seeing women learn and want to share that information that educates and builds confidence.***

***I love seeing women feel stronger, safer, celebrated, and more accepted just as they are."***

***Maks, Community Partnerships Team***

## SOCIAL VALUE IMPACT:

**Project:** 16 Days of Activism

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$23,060

The net benefit per participant is \$5,765

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 15.83

**Project:** Gender and Mental Health Literacy Pilot Workshop

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$39,814

The net benefit per participant is \$4,977

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 5.23

**Project:** The Gender Pay Gap Webinar

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$44,665

The net benefit per participant is \$5,583

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 10.78

**Project:** Creating Safe and Respectful Communities – City of Kingston

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$95,182

The net benefit per participant is \$5,949

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 30.02

**Project:** Gender Equality Training with Frankston City Council's Parks and City Works Employees – Tools for Change

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$212,987

The net benefit per participant is \$5,916

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 25.90

**Project:** Consent Matters

**Net Social Benefit to Community** \$597,097

The net benefit per participant is \$5,797

**Benefit Cost Ratio** 17.25

## WHISE Women 2023-2024

Kit McMahon – CEO

Denise Paxinos – Manager, Business and Operations

Caroline Brosnan – Manager, Business and Operations

Zoe Francis – Acting Manager, Women’s Health and Wellbeing

Laura-Jane Ardley – Manager Women’s Health and Wellbeing

Charlotte Barber – Acting Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead

Danielle McCaffrey – Prevention of Gender-based Violence Lead

Yihan Li – Health Promotion Officer, Prevention of Violence Against Women

Laura Riccardi – Sexual and Reproductive Health Lead

Tinonee Pym – Health Promotion Officer, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Zoe Dorrity - Health Promotion Officer, Sexual and Reproductive Health

Krissy Nicholson – Manager, Gender Equity and Capability

Heidi Waterson – Intersectional Gender Equity Lead

Malkanthi (Maks) Walton – Women’s Health and Engagement Officer

Natalie Opasinis - Women’s Health and Engagement Officer

Manasi (Macy) Choudhury - Women’s Health and Engagement Officer

Fiona Vuong - Women’s Health and Engagement Officer

Dr Rachel Bush – Evidence and Policy Lead

Tara Kortel – Senior Research and Policy Officer

Dalia Bluzer – Bookkeeper

Somaye Sharifi – Administration Support Officer

Doseda Hetherington – Communications Lead

Jo French – Senior Marketing and Events Officer

Mairin Angel – Senior Digital Communications Officer

Lovish Sekaran – Governance, Compliance and Policy Support Officer

## Board Members 2023-24

Kerry Bradley (Chairperson)



Camilla Radia-George (Vice Chair)

Afryie Richardson (Treasurer)

Robinette Emonson

Katherine Dennis

Susie Siggins

Kate Whyman

Cr Sarah Race

Claire McMahon

Thu Nguyen

## Special mention:

WDV for accessibility project – 2 or 3 lines of thanks

# **Women's Health in the South East Inc**

**ABN 90 641 895 966**

## **Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

# Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

## Contents

For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	Page
<b>Financial Statements</b>	
Auditor's Independence Declaration	1
Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income	2
Statement of Financial Position	3
Statement of Changes in Members' Funds	4
Statement of Cash Flows	5
Notes to the Financial Statements	6
Board of Management's Declaration	21
Independent Audit Report	22

**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION**

I am a member of the firm of Chartered Accountants, HLB Mann Judd, who are the auditors of Women's Health in the South East.

Women's Health in the South East

*HLB Mann Judd*

**HLB Mann Judd**  
**Chartered Accountants**

*Nick Walker*

**Nick Walker**  
**Partner**

M

[hlb.com.au](http://hlb.com.au)

**HLB Mann Judd (VIC) Partnership ABN 20 696 861 713**

Level 9, 550 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 | GPO Box 2850, Melbourne VIC 3001

T: +61 (0) 3 9606 3888 F: +61 (0) 3 9606 3800 E: [mailbox@hlbvic.com.au](mailto:mailbox@hlbvic.com.au)

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

HLB Mann Judd (VIC) Partnership is a member of HLB International, the global advisory and accounting network

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

		2024	2023
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	4	786,783	432,155
Finance income	5	28,566	5,065
Other income	4	1,504,693	1,473,147
Non program and services employee benefits expense		(593,638)	(512,315)
Program and services employee benefits expense		(1,510,428)	(1,046,962)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(95,259)	(86,338)
Administration expense		(63,765)	(47,166)
Board related expenses		(7,748)	(22,419)
Occupancy expense		(21,676)	(11,815)
Professional fees expense		(107,074)	(32,547)
Programs and services expense		(245,815)	(93,214)
Finance and banking costs		(621)	(496)
Motor vehicle expense		(11,031)	(6,718)
Other employee expenses		(3,865)	(18,176)
Finance expenses	5	(5,468)	(6,346)
<b>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</b>		<b>(346,346)</b>	<b>25,855</b>
<b>Total comprehensive result for the year</b>		<b>(346,346)</b>	<b>25,855</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	755,886	303,720
Trade and other receivables	7	47,589	71,338
Other financial assets	8	-	500,000
Other assets	9	32,843	28,314
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>836,318</u>	<u>903,372</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	10	18,122	33,913
Right-of-use assets	11	101,641	63,562
Other assets		25,254	19,254
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>145,017</u>	<u>116,729</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>981,335</u>	<u>1,020,101</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	12	204,628	145,549
Contract liabilities	13	215,960	32,450
Lease liabilities	11	45,071	75,673
Employee benefits	14	142,150	121,240
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>607,809</u>	<u>374,912</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	11	58,172	670
Employee benefits	14	33,873	16,693
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>92,045</u>	<u>17,363</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>699,854</u>	<u>392,275</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>281,481</u>	<u>627,826</u>
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>			
Reserves	15	9,510	9,510
Accumulated surplus		271,971	618,316
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		<u>281,481</u>	<u>627,826</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Statement of Changes in Members' Funds For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 2024

	Accumulated Surplus	Reserves	Total
Note	\$	\$	\$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2023</b>	<b>618,316</b>	<b>9,510</b>	<b>627,826</b>
Deficit for the year	(346,346)	-	(346,346)
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	<b>271,970</b>	<b>9,510</b>	<b>281,480</b>

#### 2023

	Accumulated Surplus	Reserves	Total
Note	\$	\$	\$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2022</b>	586,971	15,000	601,971
Surplus for the year	25,855	-	25,855
Transfers from reserves to accumulated surplus	5,490	(5,490)	-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>	<b>618,316</b>	<b>9,510</b>	<b>627,826</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.





# Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

The financial report covers Women's Health in the South East Inc as an individual entity. Women's Health in the South East Inc is a not-for-profit Association, registered and domiciled in Australia.

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2024 was the provision of promotion, advocacy, support and education services for women's health in the Southern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

The functional and presentation currency of Women's Health in the South East Inc is Australian dollars.

The financial report was authorised for issue by the Board on 16 October 2024.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

### 1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

Significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and are consistent with prior reporting periods unless otherwise stated.

### 2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

#### (a) Revenue and other income

##### Revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the company is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the company: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account estimates of variable consideration and the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised.

Variable consideration within the transaction price, if any, reflects concessions provided to the customer such as discounts, rebates and refunds, any potential bonuses receivable from the customer and any other contingent events. Such estimates are determined using either the 'expected value' or 'most likely amount' method. The measurement of variable consideration is subject to a constraining principle whereby revenue will only be recognised to the extent that it is highly probable that a significant reversal in the amount of cumulative revenue recognised will not occur. The measurement constraint continues until the uncertainty associated with the variable consideration is subsequently resolved. Amounts received that are subject to the constraining principle are recognised as a refund liability.

# Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

### 2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

#### (a) Revenue and other income

##### Specific revenue and income streams

The revenue recognition policies for the principal revenue streams of the Association are:

##### Program income

Program income is recognised on delivery of agreed program performance obligations.

##### Grants

Grant revenue is recognised in profit or loss when the Association satisfies the performance obligations stated within the funding agreements.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the Association is eligible to retain the contribution, the grant will be recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until those conditions are satisfied.

##### Interest

Interest revenue is recognised as interest accrues using the effective interest method. This is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and allocating the interest income over the relevant period using the effective interest rate, which is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset to the net carrying amount of the financial asset.

##### Other revenue

Other revenue is recognised when it is received or when the right to receive payment is established.

##### Statement of financial position balances relating to revenue recognition

##### Contract assets and liabilities

Where the amounts billed to customers are based on the achievement of various milestones established in the contract, the amounts recognised as revenue in a given period do not necessarily coincide with the amounts billed to or certified by the customer.

When a performance obligation is satisfied by transferring a promised good or service to the customer before the customer pays consideration or the before payment is due, the Association presents the contract as a contract asset, unless the Association's rights to that amount of consideration are unconditional, in which case the Association recognises a receivable.

When an amount of consideration is received from a customer prior to the entity transferring a good or service to the customer, the Association presents the contract as a contract liability.

##### Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

# Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

### 2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

#### (b) Income tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

#### (c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

#### (d) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for significantly less than fair value have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

##### Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

##### Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	10%
Motor Vehicles	20%
Office Equipment	20%
Right-of-Use - Buildings	20%
Right-of-Use - Motor Vehicles	20%
Right-of-Use - Office Equipment	20%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies**

##### **(e) Financial instruments**

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Association becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

##### **Financial assets**

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

##### *Classification*

On initial recognition, the Association classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at:

- amortised cost

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition unless the Association changes its business model for managing financial assets.

##### *Amortised cost*

The Association's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

##### *Impairment of financial assets*

Impairment of financial assets is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis for the following assets:

- financial assets measured at amortised cost

When determining whether the credit risk of a financial assets has increased significant since initial recognition and when estimating ECL, the Association considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on the Association's historical experience and informed credit assessment and including forward looking information.

The Association uses the presumption that an asset which is more than 30 days past due has seen a significant increase in credit risk.

The Association uses the presumption that a financial asset is in default when:

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies**

##### **(e) Financial instruments**

###### **Financial assets**

- the other party is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Association in full, without recourse to the Association to actions such as realising security (if any is held); or
- the financial assets is more than 90 days past due.

Credit losses are measured as the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the Association in accordance with the contract and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

###### *Trade receivables*

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Association has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

Where the Association renegotiates the terms of trade receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

###### *Other financial assets measured at amortised cost*

Impairment of other financial assets measured at amortised cost are determined using the expected credit loss model in AASB 9. On initial recognition of the asset, an estimate of the expected credit losses for the next 12 months is recognised. Where the asset has experienced significant increase in credit risk then the lifetime losses are estimated and recognised.

###### **Financial liabilities**

The Association measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Association comprise trade and other payables and lease liabilities.

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies**

##### **(f) Impairment of non-financial assets**

At the end of each reporting period the Association determines whether there is evidence of an impairment indicator for non-financial assets.

Where an indicator exists and regardless for indefinite life intangible assets and intangible assets not yet available for use, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated.

Where assets do not operate independently of other assets, the recoverable amount of the relevant cash-generating unit (CGU) is estimated.

The recoverable amount of an asset or CGU is the higher of the fair value less costs of disposal and the value in use. Value in use is the present value of the future cash flows expected to be derived from an asset or cash-generating unit.

Where the recoverable amount is less than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss.

Reversal indicators are considered in subsequent periods for all assets which have suffered an impairment loss.

##### **(g) Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

##### **(h) Employee benefits**

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits, those benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Cashflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bond rates incorporating bonds rated AAA or AA by credit agencies, with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

##### **Defined contribution schemes**

Obligations for contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are recognised as an employee benefit expense in profit or loss in the periods in which services are provided by employees.

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **2 Summary of Material Accounting Policies**

##### **(i) Leases**

At inception of a contract, the Association assesses whether a lease exists.

##### **Lessee accounting**

The non-lease components included in the lease agreement have been separated and are recognised as an expense as incurred.

##### **(i) Right-of-use asset**

At the lease commencement, the Association recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Association believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

##### **(ii) Lease liability**

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Association's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Association's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

##### *Exceptions to lease accounting*

The Association has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The Association recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **3 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments**

The Board make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

##### **Key estimates - estimation of useful lives of assets**

The Association determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

##### **Key estimates - employee benefits**

As described in the accounting policies, employee benefits liabilities are measured at management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. These estimates are made taking into account a range of possible outcomes and will vary as further information is obtained.

##### **Key judgments - revenue**

The association applies material judgement when reviewing the terms and conditions of funding agreements and contracts to determine whether they contain sufficiently specific and enforceable performance obligations. If the criteria is met, these are treated as a contract with a customer. If the criteria is not met, amounts are recognised upon receipt. They also apply material judgement to determine when a performance obligation has been satisfied and the price that is to be allocated to each performance obligation. A performance obligation is either satisfied over a point in time or over time.



## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 4 Other Revenue and Income

##### Revenue from continuing operations

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Program income (revenue from contracts with customers)		
Education and Training	150,970	121,153
16 Days of Activism	5,000	4,000
PVAW Regional Strategy	296,000	307,002
Sexual and Reproductive Health	28,360	-
Other government funding	306,453	-
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>786,783</b>	<b>432,155</b>
Government grants and other contributions		
Department of Health funding	1,419,407	1,390,378
Other government funding	18,000	82,195
donations and other income	59,629	574
net gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment	7,657	-
Total other income	1,504,693	1,473,147
Total Revenue and Other Income	<b>2,291,476</b>	<b>1,905,302</b>

##### Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue from contracts with customers has been disaggregated into timing of recognition and geographic location and the following table shows this breakdown:

##### Timing of recognition

- At a point in time	483,783	432,155
- Over time	48,000	-
<b>Revenue from contracts with customers</b>	<b>531,783</b>	<b>432,155</b>
<b>Geographic location</b>		
- Victoria, Australia	531,783	432,155

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 5 Finance Income and Expenses

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Interest income		
- Assets measured at amortised cost	<u>28,566</u>	<u>5,065</u>
Interest expense on lease liability	<u>5,468</u>	<u>6,346</u>

#### 6 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	635,321	187,624
Short-term deposits	<u>120,565</u>	<u>116,096</u>
	<u>755,886</u>	<u>303,720</u>

#### 7 Trade and Other Receivables

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade receivables	11,810	71,307
Portable long service leave	34,531	-
Other receivables	<u>1,248</u>	<u>31</u>
<b>Total current trade and other receivables</b>	<u>47,589</u>	<u>71,338</u>

#### 8 Other Financial Assets

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Term deposit at amortised cost	<u>-</u>	<u>500,000</u>

#### 9 Other Non-Financial Assets

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Prepayments	<u>32,843</u>	<u>28,314</u>

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 10 Property, Plant and Equipment

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Furniture, fixtures and fittings		
At cost	5,274	3,129
Accumulated depreciation	(883)	(592)
Total furniture, fixtures and fittings	<u>4,391</u>	<u>2,537</u>
Motor vehicles		
At cost	-	9,122
Accumulated depreciation	-	(1,674)
Total motor vehicles	<u>-</u>	<u>7,448</u>
Office equipment		
At cost	84,962	80,412
Accumulated depreciation	(71,231)	(56,484)
Total office equipment	<u>13,731</u>	<u>23,928</u>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>	<u><u>18,122</u></u>	<u><u>33,913</u></u>

#### (a) Movements in carrying amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	Motor Vehicles	Office Equipment	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2024</b>				
Balance at the beginning of year	2,537	7,448	23,928	33,913
Additions	2,145	-	5,378	7,523
Disposals	-	(6,881)	-	(6,881)
Depreciation expense	(291)	(567)	(15,575)	(16,433)
<b>Revaluation decrease</b>				
<b>Balance at the end of the year</b>	<u><u>4,391</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>13,731</u></u>	<u><u>18,122</u></u>

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

### 11 Leases

#### Association as a lessee

The Association has leases over a range of assets including land and buildings, vehicles, machinery and IT equipment.

#### Terms and conditions of leases

**Buildings:** The Association leases a building for its corporate office, the lease is for 5 years and includes a renewal option to allow the Association to renew for another 5 years. The lease option has not been included in the recognition and measurement of the lease liability or the corresponding right-of-use asset.

**Office equipment:** The Association leases a telephone system with a lease term of 5 years, the lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

**Vehicles:** The Association leases a motor vehicle with a lease term of 4 years, the lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

#### Right-of-use assets

	Buildings	Motor Vehicles	Office Equipment	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2024</b>				
Balance at beginning of year	60,540	-	3,022	63,562
Additions	67,904	49,001	-	116,905
Depreciation charge	(66,199)	(10,209)	(2,418)	(78,826)
<b>Balance at end of year</b>	<b>62,245</b>	<b>38,792</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>101,641</b>

#### Lease liabilities

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

	< 1 year	1 - 5 years	> 5 years	Total undiscounted lease liabilities	Lease liabilities included in this Statement Of Financial Position
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>2024</b>					
Lease liabilities	50,914	61,400	-	112,314	103,243
<b>2023</b>					
Lease liabilities	77,771	676	-	78,447	76,343

#### Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income relating to interest expense on lease liabilities and short-term leases or leases of low value assets are shown below:

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 11 Leases

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	5,468	6,346

#### 12 Trade and Other Payables

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	54,804	15,032
GST payable	40,850	23,565
Accrued employee benefits	25,985	60,952
Other accrued expenses	82,989	46,000
	<u>204,628</u>	<u>145,549</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

#### 13 Contract Balances

##### (a) Current contract liabilities

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Revenue received in advance	215,960	32,450

#### 14 Employee Benefits

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Current liabilities		
Long service leave	13,640	6,811
Annual leave	128,510	114,429
	<u>142,150</u>	<u>121,240</u>
Non-current liabilities		
Long service leave	33,873	16,693

## Women's Health in the South East Inc

ABN 90 641 895 966

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

#### 15 Reserves

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
<b>Capital fund reserve</b>		
Opening balance	5,000	5,000
<b>Closing balance</b>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
<b>Robyn Mason reserve</b>		
Opening balance	4,510	10,000
Transfers out	-	(5,490)
<b>Closing balance</b>	<u>4,510</u>	<u>4,510</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>9,510</u></u>	<u><u>9,510</u></u>

#### 16 Financial Risk Management

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Held at amortised cost		
Cash and cash equivalents	755,886	303,720
Trade and other receivables	47,589	71,338
Term deposit	-	500,000
<b>Total financial assets</b>	<u><u>803,475</u></u>	<u><u>875,058</u></u>
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	<u>267,021</u>	<u>198,327</u>
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>	<u><u>267,021</u></u>	<u><u>198,327</u></u>

#### 17 Key Management Personnel Disclosures

The remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Association is \$ 473,009 (2023: \$ 417,408).

#### 18 Auditors' Remuneration

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Remuneration of the auditor, HLB Mann Judd, for:		
- auditing the financial statements	6,850	6,000
- assistance with the compilation of the financial statements	<u>2,255</u>	<u>2,500</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u><u>9,105</u></u>	<u><u>8,500</u></u>

## **Women's Health in the South East Inc**

ABN 90 641 895 966

### **Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2024**

#### **19 Contingencies**

In the opinion of the Board, the Association did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2024 (30 June 2023:None).

#### **20 Events After the End of the Reporting Period**

The financial report was authorised for issue on 16 October 2024 by the Board.

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

#### **21 Statutory Information**

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

Women's Health in the South East Inc  
Units 11 & 12  
2 Central Avenue  
Moorabbin Victoria 3189

**Women's Health in the South East Inc**

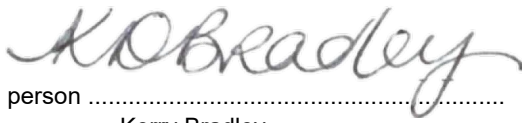
ABN 90 641 895 966

**Board of Management's Declaration**

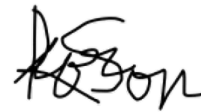
The responsible persons declare that in the responsible persons' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.



Responsible person .....  
Kerry Bradley



Responsible person .....  
Afriyie Richardson

Dated 21 October 2024





**Independent Auditor’s Report to the Members of Women’s Health in the South East**

**REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT**

**Opinion**

□ We have audited the financial report of Women’s Health in the South East (“the entity”) which includes the consolidated financial statements and the Board of Management’s declaration.

□ In our opinion, the financial report complies with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and provides a true and fair view of the entity’s financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its performance for the period ended on that date in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards – S and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

**Basis for Opinion**

□ We conducted our audit in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards – S and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022* and the *Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* issued by the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board (“the Board”) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report of the entity.

□ We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Responsibilities of Management and the Board of Management for the Financial Report**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards – S and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and for such other information as may be required by law.

□ The Board of Management is responsible for overseeing the entity’s financial reporting process.

[hlb.com.au](http://hlb.com.au)

**HLB Mann Judd (VIC) Partnership ABN 20 696 861 713**  
 Level 9, 550 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000 | GPO Box 2850, Melbourne VIC 3001  
 T: +61 (0) 3 9606 3888 F: +61 (0) 3 9606 3800 E: [mailbox@hlbvic.com.au](mailto:mailbox@hlbvic.com.au)  
 Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.

HLB Mann Judd (VIC) Partnership is a member of HLB International, the global advisory and accounting network

**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report. We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

- We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

- We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

- We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

- We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report. However, future events or conditions may cause the financial report to be materially misstated.

- We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

We do not provide any assurance or opinion on the financial report from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion on the financial report.

*HLB Mann Judd*

**HLB Mann Judd**  
Chartered Accountants

*Nick Walker*

**Nick Walker**  
Partner

M  
C