



VMIAC
by and for consumers

VMIAC ANNUAL REPORT for the year 2020–2021

our vision is a world

where all mental health consumers stand **proud**, live a life with **choices** honoured
rights upheld, and these principles are embedded in all aspects of society.

VMIAC works across Victoria and acknowledges the many Aboriginal nations that have lived and cared for this sacred land for thousands of years, which continues today. We pay respect to Traditional Custodians and Elders – past, present, and emerging – and thank them for their wisdom and generosity of spirit.

We acknowledge that this land was never ceded. We support the Uluru statement from the heart.



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ABOUT VMIAC

VMIAC is the Peak Victorian non-government organisation for people with direct lived experience of mental health issues or emotional distress. VMIAC's membership comprises individuals with direct lived experience as well as associate members who are allies.

VMIAC engages in a number of activities including:

- Individual, group and systemic advocacy
- NDIS information and support
- NDIS appeals and reviews
- Royal Commission into Mental Health in Victoria
- Disability Royal Commission
- Policy and Research

VMIAC receives recurrent funding from both the Commonwealth and Victorian State Governments. The State Department of Health (DH) provides the bulk of our funding to enable us to undertake most of our work. The Commonwealth Department of Social Services provides funding to deliver an advocacy service to people who live in rural and regional Victoria.

Our Vision

A world where all mental health consumers stand proud, live a life with choices honoured, rights upheld and these principles are embedded in all aspects of society. **VMIAC aims to achieve our vision by:**

- Honouring mental health consumer diversity
- Providing advocacy for mental health consumers
- Advancing mental health consumer workforce and leadership
- Delivering information and training to the community
- Enabling mental health consumer driven education and research
- Developing strategic partnerships

Our Guiding Principles

VMIAC's work is premised on the following beliefs:

- People's experiences are respected and valued
- People are expert in their own lives
- People have a right to self determination
- People have capacity to make genuine choices
- People should be safe, respected, valued and informed free from coercion
- People's diversity is embraced

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Members of the Committee of Management for the 2020–21 year:

Chairperson	Deputy Chair	Ordinary Members	
Dr. Chris Maylea (July-Nov) Kathy Wilson (Nov-June)	Dr. Chris Maylea	Simon Katterl Josy Thomas Hamilton Kennedy James Horton	Rebecca Egan Elvis Martin Laura McWhae Zoe Mithen
Secretary	Treasurer		
Tom Wood	Ali Pain		

Committee members have also contributed to sub committees that form part of the VMIAC governance structure:

- Finance Audit and Risk Management sub-committee
 - Quality Working Group
- Human Rights Strategic Advocacy sub committee
- Membership sub committee
- Consumer Research sub committee

VMIAC Staff

CEO: Tricia, Maggie

Finance: Narelle, Piume

Administration: Liz, Jopay, Charlotte, Bryony, Suely

Advocacy: Frankie, Taylor, Beck, Dom, Lisa, Andy, Shweta

Check in: Janel, Frankie

NDIS: Neil, Shellie, Cindy, Matthew, Simone, Lauren

Royal Commission: Jess, Romy

Policy, Research and Communications: Angela, Alycia, Brent Lobna, Robin, Emily

Volunteer: Daryl

CHAIR'S REPORT

Over the 12 months July 2020 to June 2021, Chris Maylea and I were each in the role of Chair of the VMIAC Committee of Management for part of the year (Chris to November 2020 and I have been in role since then.) This report is a joint one.

Thank You

It has been a momentous year, both in terms of what it has required of VMIAC and what the organisation, has achieved – through the passion and effort of our leaders and staff team, the generous contribution and engagement of members and the people on our **consumer register**, the support of our friends and allies, and the continuing work and dedication of all of our Committee members and those people who have worked with us on sub-committees.

In particular, we would like to recognise and thank our leaders:

- Maggie Toko, who has inspired and been a role of model for what consumers can do and be. Maggie finished up in her role with VMIAC as CEO after five years. Thank you Maggie for your unwavering belief in VMIAC and in every single consumer, and for ensuring VMIAC was heard by the Commission and government.
- Tricia Szirom, who stepped into the role of CEO, not once but twice, and guided VMIAC through the enormous effort of digesting and providing early response to the Royal Commission recommendations. Tricia also led work on the VMIAC business case to government for more adequate funding. Thank you Tricia for your wisdom and vision for VMIAC as a critical leader and influencer in rebuilding 'a broken system'.
- Narelle Fousketakis, our Corporate Services Manager, who has worked tirelessly and persistently through the waves of change that impacted VMIAC ensuring a level of consistency for our organisation. Narelle also stepped up and ably co-lead VMIAC as we transitioned between CEOs. Thank you Narelle for rising to every occasion.

Our thanks go to each and every staff member, who kept on doing their jobs, through COVID, through changes in leadership and with evolving work processes. We value and recognise your effort.

We also want to welcome our new CEO (who started with us early in the 2021 financial year), Craig Wallace. Craig has worked previously in an advocacy role at VMIAC and has since been involved in a number of consumer roles including in workforce strengthening and in providing consumer leadership within the Mental Health Reform Victoria. We are looking forward to working with Craig to realise VMIAC's aspiration for being the 'best' lived experience organisation and ensuring we make the most difference in our role as systemic advocate.

VMIAC was successful in securing additional funding for the next four years and this will allow us to build our workforce including by incorporating the role of Deputy CEO. This new role will complement the CEO and better allow us to grow our strategic presence and visibility while stabilising and strengthening VMIAC operationally.

We thank the Victorian Government for its commitment to reform and for recognising the importance of consumer leadership across the reform agenda, and for investing in VMIAC. We will continue to be a fierce and proud advocate for consumer leadership and the centrality of consumer experience in system redesign in Victoria.

Achievements

The CEO's report provides detail on the many achievements, so here we want to name just a couple of areas of particular importance. In 2020-2021, VMIAC has:

- Initiated work on building VMIAC's framework and approach to research informed, designed and led by consumers. While this work will continue and deepen over the next year(s), it has been important to take early steps toward proactively shaping and influencing the mental health research agenda from the consumer perspective given its importance in the context of reform. We have self-invested and begun to build our research partnerships, the Consumer PhD scholarship with Melbourne University is set up and ready to be announced for 2021 and completed Research Strategy.

CHAIR'S REPORT CONT.

- Maintained our focus on human rights of consumers through specific position papers on Police Misconduct and Accountability, Sexual Safety in Psychiatric Inpatient Units, Gender Discrimination and Inequality, Adherence to Mental Health, Seclusion and Restraint Position, partnership with the Castan Centre for Human Rights first paper on advance statements and our responses to the Royal Commission.
- Worked to strengthen VMIAC as an organisation by better connecting to our membership and building our governance and organisation capacity. This work often feels like taking two steps forward and one back, given the enormous demands on VMIAC at every level, different expectations, and the limits to our resources, but it is one that we hold to – step by step. In the past year, we streamlined our internal financial reporting systems and reviewed our risk register, we reconnected with our members through the Member Connect Project, developed and lodged a business case for more adequate funding as Victoria's peak consumer organisation and established the Organisation Development Task Group with a particular focus on strengthening organisation capability and capacity.

Looking ahead

The work facing VMIAC in 2021-2022 will be as relentless and demanding as it has been over the past few years. But as significant as the workload, is the depth and breadth of possibility to influence change. We know that 'now and the next 12 months' is a critical time in reform. We remain committed and passionate about making the most difference we can.

In addition to continuing with our research and human rights advocacy programs, we plan to:

- Focus particularly on strengthening VMIAC as a leading lived experience organisation at governance and operational levels. This will include growing our workforce, as well as learning lessons from our past.
- Engage deeply and broadly with the Department (and other stakeholders) across the elements of reform ensuring the consumer perspective and consumer leadership remains central. As part of this, we will be further developing our consumer register, strengthening our partnerships and producing information to keep consumers connected and informed.
- Develop and implement VMIAC's NDIS advocacy strategy.
- Grow and better connect to our membership across Victoria as well as with the diversity of people with lived consumer experience.
- Revisit our strategic plan.

The Committee of Management

Over the course of the year, two members of the Committee resigned, Laura McWhae and Zoe Mithen. We want to thank them for their contribution and effort. For Laura it included keeping our focus on the importance of members, and for Zoe, NDIS and dual disability.

And the rest of the Committee, for so many, many voluntary hours – thousands – and the knowledge, skill and passion you brought to every discussion and decision. Thank you for sharing the workload and responsibility, and particular acknowledgment for the efforts of our Treasurer (Ali Pain) and sub-committee chairs (Hamilton Kennedy, Laura McWhae, Tom Wood).

Kathy Wilson and Chris Maylea

CEO'S REPORT

This year has again been one of change with COVID-19 continuing to affect the staff, members and the broader mental health system. Staff worked from home for most of the year and our advocacy work continued to effectively support members. We also had changes in CEO again this year with Maggie returning early from her secondment to the Mental Health Complaints Commission to resume her position as CEO and Tricia transferring to work on the Royal Commission especially in translating the final report and briefing members and others on the implications of key recommendations. Maggie then returned to the MHCC in May and Tricia and Narelle managed the role together for the rest of the financial year.

Royal Commission: We conducted twelve briefing sessions on the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the Mental Health System in Victoria for members and others covering:

- Broad approach of the Commission
- Lived experience workforce
- The Mental Health Act
- Seclusion and constraint
- The Collaborative Centre
- New Agency and other peer led services
- Social determinants of mental wellbeing
- Consumer led and focused research
- Regional development including Regional Boards
- Women's mental health
- Diversity including LGBTIAQ+, rural communities, CALD and older people
- Trauma informed approaches.

Papers were prepared on each topic and these have assisted in meetings with other organisations, preparation of submissions and in meetings with departmental and political personnel.

Issues Papers: With assistance from the Committee of Management and Human Rights and Ethics group we were able to produce some highly valuable issues papers throughout the year. Focused on subjects that effect consumers, we were able to put out eight papers that raised the community's consciousness of the issues that affect us directly.

Member Connect: Following a detailed process to contact all members, a new approach has been developed for connection with and involvement of VMIAC members. Over a four-month period, all members were phoned, emailed and texted at least three times to ensure that we had accurate contact information. We also asked members to tell us what they wanted VMIAC to do and the priorities they want the organisation to take on as we move forward. This process led to a re-engagement of many members and an increased appreciation of the importance of the membership base of the organisation.

CEO'S REPORT CONT.

CHECK-IN: With funding from the Department of Health we were able to develop a new peer self-advocacy program which provides participants with the support and skills to advocate for themselves when needed. The two staff provide phone support along with groups which provide tools to support participants. Three other organisations have contacted VMIAC to explore a collaborative approach and modify CHECK-IN to their situation and train their staff to conduct a similar program. This will allow the evaluation of CHECK-IN to have a stronger base and include different approaches and flexibility in the model.

Budget and organisational restructure: VMIAC received a significant increase in its core budget for the 2021/22 financial year which will be maintained for the next four years. This has allowed an organisational restructure and the appointment of a new leadership team including our new CEO, Deputy CEO, and other senior staff in Research and Policy and Membership. With this team the organisation can respond to the many demands and requests that come to VMIAC and ensure that the diverse voices of consumers are heard.

Lived Experience Advisory Group: We were able to work closely with the implementation team for the Royal Commission through both the Lived Experience Advisory Group, which we co-chair, and specific meetings with Mental Health Reform Victoria. Much of this work continues as the system is redeveloped and reform is put into place.

'Just Saying' Project: We launched the 'Just Saying' Project to address the real issues of what your rights are as a voluntary and ultimately involuntary patient in Victoria's mental health system. With the assistance of VLA and IMHA we produced a series of postcards with frequently asked questions about rights and responsibilities into a package for every consumer who is an inpatient. Packaged nicely into a set of postcards and a USB slap band which holds information about human rights, IMHA assisted in getting packages into the different services throughout the state.

Health and Wellbeing video series: We developed a set of heartfelt personal stories as videos of different consumers for release on our website. These stories of recovery and optimism were released over several weeks. The feedback we received was very positive and something which we aim to continue going into the future.

Accreditation: We again undertook our round of accreditation processes as required by the government. This is a massive undertaking to ensure that we meet all standards and that we are up to date on processes and procedures required by a not-for-profit community-based organisation. Much effort and hard work was put into the whole process, and we were successful in our tasks and duties and therefore passed accreditation with flying colours.

Thank You: All in all, it has been a fantastic year of change and forward movement. We farewelled both Maggie our CEO of 5 years, and Tricia who had worked with us as Chair and CEO and welcomed in Craig and a new leadership team to take VMIAC into an exciting future. Being part of the staff team at VMIAC can be extremely demanding and this year was a real challenge with COVID restriction of working in isolation, however there were many positive opportunities which allowed broader creative thinking and the development of new and exciting approaches. Our thanks to all of the staff who stepped up to the challenges of the year.

VMIAC has been blessed again with a strong and committed Committee of Management which has worked tirelessly over the year to achieve its strategic priorities and to maintain its commitment to building the consumer base. We are genuinely appreciative of the Committee's consistent engagement with and support of the staff and especially want to acknowledge the support of the Executive Committee.

Maggie Toko and Tricia Szirom

ADVOCACY

The Advocacy team continues to provide both Individual and Systemic advocacy for consumers, ensuring their voices are heard across a multitude of platforms.

There have been additional challenges working within the covid environment. We have noted a decrease in call levels, but a significant increase in the level of distress of consumer calls and the increased length of time the calls are taking to work through and identify the advocacy issue. This has resulted in an increase of time spent providing warm referrals, and sourcing and referring out to other services for ongoing supports wherever possible.

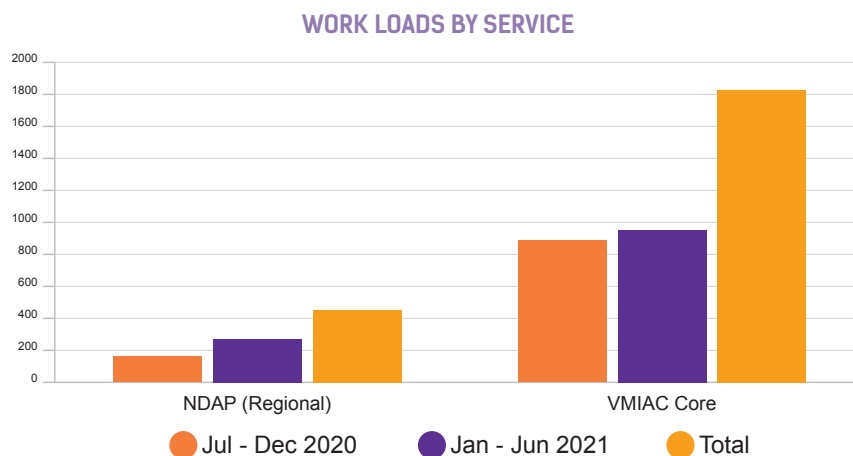
Some of the recurring themes continue to be as follows-There has been an increase in the emerging issues around complete lack of openness to inform or collaborate with consumers, in relation to their treatment plans. Inadequate, and at times dismissal of diagnosis, including misdiagnosis.

Issues around medication management continue to be a consistent theme, with consumers reporting lack of consideration of previous history and potential harm, and no explanation of what medication they are taking or any potential side effects.

Other issues highlighted include, discharged from care when consumer has voiced, they do not feel ready or safe to return home, or may not have a home to return to. General lack of follow up upon discharge in relation to ongoing supports within the community.

We have also seen an increase in consumers wanting to pursue complaints in relation to their treatment, including MHCC, HCC and legal issues.

The ongoing challenges facing both consumers and advocates, is the significant wait times to access services, for both immediate support and ongoing support, as well as identifying available services to provide ongoing support, as there is a clear lack of adequate services available.



POLICY

The 2020 – 2021 financial year was a challenging but hugely successful year for the policy team at VMIAC, and in spite of the current challenges that we are all facing, we have many achievements of which to be proud of. We achieved a significant amount of important policy and strategic advocacy work.

The newly named Human Rights and Strategic Advocacy Subcommittee (previously the Human Rights and Ethics Subcommittee) published five further position papers, including:

- Violence, abuse and neglect
- Adherence to MH laws
- Gender inequality and Discrimination
- Sexual Violence in Psychiatric IPUs
- Police Misconduct & Accountability

Two of our position papers were referenced by the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System's Final Report on multiple occasions – these were Position Paper #3 Seclusion and Restraint, and Position Paper #13 Sexual Violence in Psychiatric Inpatient Units. Additionally, both of our Seclusion Reports and our publication on Consumer Based Transformational Change were also referenced in the Final Report.

We conducted consultations with consumers in relation to areas that were identified to be of key importance in the final report of the Royal Commission. From these consultations, we were able to draft a response to the Royal Commission's recommendations on the consumer workforce as well as a response to the final report itself.

We also completed and successfully launched our 'Just Saying' project, which aims to inform voluntary consumers about their rights when admitted to hospital. This project included information in multiple formats such as postcards, slap bands that have an inbuilt USB loaded with information about voluntary consumer rights and posters with QR codes to link consumers to the information. These have been distributed around public mental health services in order to ensure that consumers are able to access the information that they need, when they need it. This project was based on advice provided to us by Victoria Legal Aid about voluntary consumers' legal rights when in hospital.



RESEARCH

During 2021-21, VMIAC worked with the consumer community to develop a draft research strategy.

In our subsequent engagement of a Policy and Research Lead we aim to take our consumer research advocacy and activities forward to a new level, finalising the Shaping the Research Agenda Strategy, and supporting consumers to take greater leadership roles in mental health research and its impacts in Victoria.

We would like to thank the members of the subcommittee for their advice and wisdom shaping the guidance we are providing to multiple consumer oriented and led research projects.

It is our hope that projects we are supporting will shape innovation, service and system improvements and increase the use of and focus on consumer research. Some of the projects we are aiding include the following:

Project title: Experiences of police apprehension for psychosocial disability: a co-designed investigation

Lead chief investigator: Rory Randall, Consumer Academic, RMIT

Project title: Realizing Human Rights and Social Justice in Mental Health Project

Lead chief investigator: Marina Morrow, PhD, Professor & Chair School of Health Policy & Management, Faculty of Health York University

Project title: "Borderline Personality as Social Phenomena" (2021-24)

Lead chief investigator: Professor Renata Kokanović, Director, Social & Global Studies Centre, RMIT

We anticipate as the implementation plan for our research agenda is shaped and bolstered by an increase in operational support that we will be able to support consumer research in more systematic and influential ways over time. We encourage consumer researchers and evaluators to contact us and share projects they are part of.

NDIS

The work of VMIAC's NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) and DRC (Disability Royal Commission) programs is shaped by our day-to-day contact with consumers and the expert guidance and advice of members of VMIAC's NDIS Critical Reference Group who share their experiences and knowledge as participants of the NDIS.

VMIAC's close working relationship with people who use our services, and the consumer movement more broadly has been instrumental in the systemic advocacy that we undertake. This has been particularly critical during the lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic where the needs of NDIS Participants have often required urgent interventions from the NDIA (National Disability Insurance Agency).

Over this past year, VMIAC has advocated strongly on behalf of NDIS participants in relation to the introduction of NDIS Independent Assessments which after strong opposition have now been set aside.

We have also authored multiple submissions to the NDIA and the Joint Standing Committee into the NDIS Parliamentary Inquiry and have in our own lived experience way contributed to building a greater understanding and focus on the needs of Participants with a psychosocial disability within the NDIS.

At a National level VMIAC continues to be active through our participation in the NDIS Mental Health Stakeholder Advisory Group and Committee's and Working Groups associated with the development and Implementation of a NDIS Recovery Orientated Practice Framework.

The following are brief reports about the activities and outcomes delivered by these important programs within the course of 2020–2021.

NDIS Appeals Program

Our NDIS Appeals Program provides advice, advocacy, and support to NDIS participants seeking to appeal decisions made by the NDIS in relation to their access and funding of support within the NDIS.

During this past year, our service has been in high demand with large spikes in the numbers of NDIS Participants requesting Internal NDIS Reviews and External AAT Appeals.

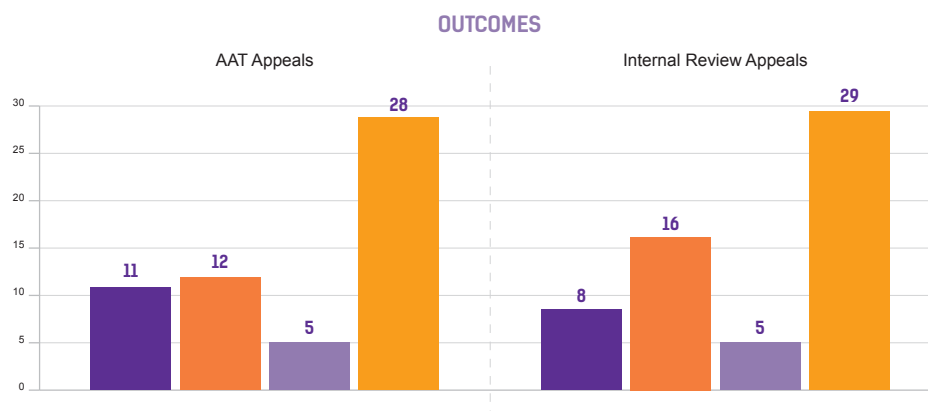
In 2020–21 the NDIS Appeals Team received approximately 167 enquiries seeking Appeals Advocacy Support. Reviewing these enquiries and ensuring that proper processes are followed has been a major undertaking. This work included phone calls, emails, meetings, documents reviewed, consultations and referrals to other services where required.

Covid-19 and the lockdowns which ensued continued to not only impact demand for our services but also impact the ability of our clients to gain the medical reports they required to progress their cases. The significant increase in the numbers of NDIS Appeals that have subsequently proceeded to an external review at the AAT has had major flow-on effects for all NDIS Appeals Advocacy Services.

Federal funding for free legal support during an NDIS AAT Appeal has not kept pace with the increased demand for support for legal services. This has resulted in waiting times, for legal support, increasing from an average of 2 months to 4 months.

Consequently, our Appeals advocates now face increased workloads as they represent their clients at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for a greater amount of time, in what are increasingly complex cases.

VMIAC's NDIS Appeals Advocates have worked extremely hard to produce great outcomes for many clients that have received our services. This includes supporting 19 people with a psychosocial disability to successfully appeal decisions around their access to the NDIS and a further 37 NDIS Participants to successfully appeal decisions relating to the inclusion of funding and supports within their NDIS Plans.



NDIS Information and Support Program

This peer worker delivered service assists people with a psychosocial disability who at times may struggle with their engagement with the NDIS and support providers without the support of independent advocacy. Problems experienced by NDIS Participants are often compounded by trauma, language and/or communication barriers, complex or multiple needs, isolation, severe anxiety or simply not understanding the complexities of NDIS processes. As a result, consumers may find themselves in difficult and trying situations where they feel vulnerable, alone and without the support they require to utilise the NDIS. In such circumstances, our NDIS Information and Support advocates can bridge the gap with support, assistance, education, and information that can build a person's capacity to self-advocate and achieve set goals.

Our program is a short-term, task-based service, however some of the consumers we support have NDIS issues that are complex and multifaceted, requiring often longer periods of engagement.

The scope of advocacy provided by our team includes:

- Supporting consumers to build skills around self-advocacy and the NDIS
- Collating and reviewing reports and evidence
- Planning meeting support and plan development processes
- Understanding and explaining disability rights and NDIS legislation
- Crisis mitigation – relationship breakdowns with participants and service providers, disengagement with services, invoicing disputes
- Complaint escalation through the Mental Health Ombudsman or Quality & Safeguards commission, among others
- Liaising with LACs and NDIA planners
- Referrals to mental health services and NDIS Access Programs where appropriate
- Information provision
- NDIS Access Requests where other mainstream supports are not an appropriate option

The scope of issues we regularly tackle include, but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate or insufficient funding (for supports, assistive technology, therapy, meals, travel, accommodation, and assistance animals)
- No support to connect with a Support Coordinator and thin markets for Support Coordination in general
- Finding appropriate support services and utilising plans

NDIS

- Housing insecurity, homelessness, and poor living conditions in existing SDA, SRS or SIL properties
- Poor service delivery from the NDIA and NDIS service providers
- Limited services in rural and regional areas
- Limited accessible information or support for CALD communities
- Sub-standard, culturally inappropriate supports for Aboriginal communities
- Limited support for NDIS-related distress.
- Plan reviews conducted on-the-spot or with little notice

Our NDIS Information and Support Program has found that too often there is a discord between the funding and allocation of Supports contained in NDIS plans and the needs of NDIS participants.

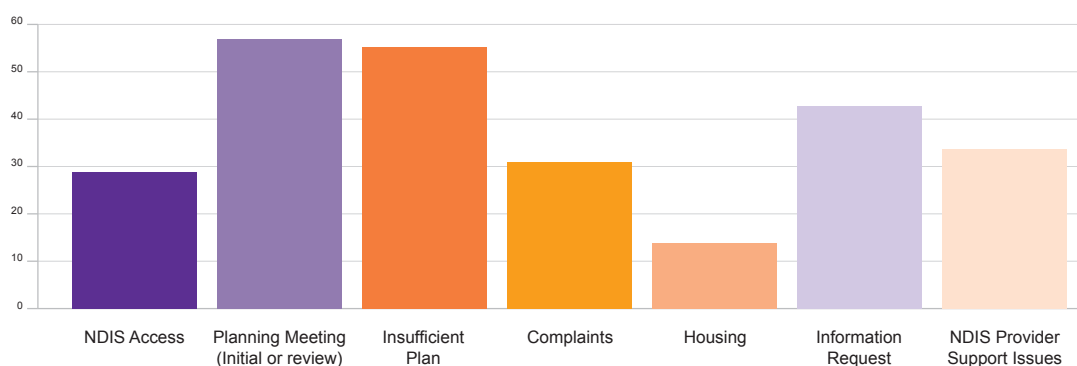
Across the NDIS Sector in general there remains a profound lack of understanding, knowledge, skills, and experience needed to successfully engage with NDIS Participants with a psychosocial disability. Currently, there are insufficient structures and systems in place to connect participants with a Support Coordinator once their plan has been approved, leaving many consumers feeling confused, overwhelmed, and unsure of what to do next.

The demand upon services and impact of Victoria's multiple Covid lockdowns has caused a significant strain on consumers and workers alike, as we all try to navigate challenges of working from home, lockdown fatigue and frustrating shortfalls of the NDIS.

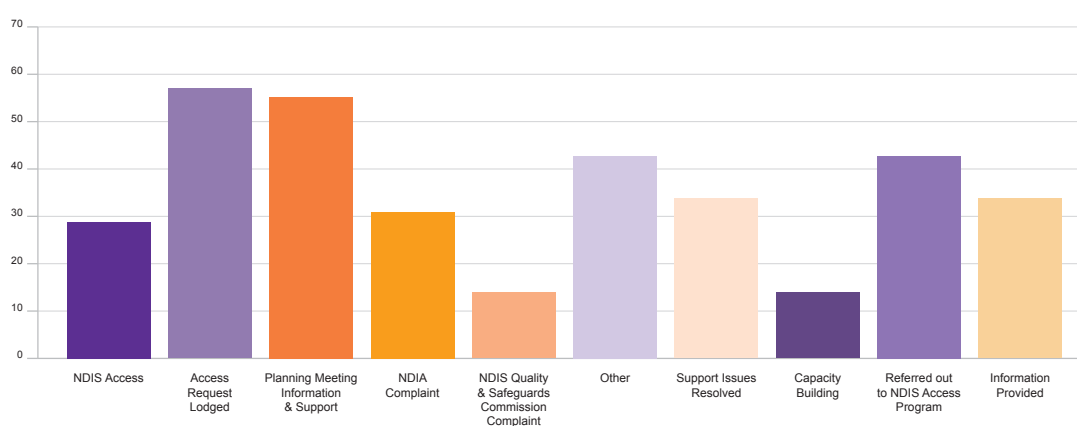
As VMIAC is a lived-experience organisation, consumers who have otherwise disengaged with services due to service-trauma, have indicated a stronger sense of trust and willingness to engage when working with our team, identifying the sense of mutuality, empathy and understanding as key aspects in building their own confidence and self-advocacy skills.

This year our information and support team assisted an estimated total of 193 consumers. Due to the multifaceted nature of each enquiry, reasons for referral and outcomes are varied and multiple as outlined the following charts:

REASONS FOR REFERRAL



OUTCOMES



VMIAC is committed to bridging the gap in services and providing consumers with the support they need. VMIAC will advocate strongly at a State and Federal level for further funding and interventions that can make the NDIS a better and safer place for people with a psychosocial disability.

Disability Royal Commission Program

Our Disability Royal Commission (DRC) workers are currently supporting both individuals and services with engagement to the DRC. We believe that there is a key role for VMIAC to play in making the Disability Royal Commission more accessible to Victorian consumers so that experiences of mistreatment, neglect, discrimination, and abuse experienced by people with a psychosocial disability can help inform the findings and deliberations of the Royal Commissioners. This involves developing trusting relationships with both individual consumers and services, fostering referral pathways between organisations, and the dissemination of resources and information developed by VMIAC.

Moving forward, we will continue to develop social media content, educational resources, and organisation-specific resources to facilitate multiple modes of DRC engagement as there are many ways that stories and truth telling need to be told to be better heard.

Our DRC team strives to establish safe and empowering relationships with individuals to facilitate their success in the submission process. Our work aims to build capacity of both individuals and services particularly within regional areas so they can engage with the DRC in a way that is sensitive to their needs and lived-experience.

With the extension and increase of DRC funding granted until 2023 enabling more workforce capacity, over the coming year we will seek to further engage with more individuals, organisations, and communities. Throughout this time, we will keep consumers updated on the work of the DRC and the findings revealed, ensuring the content remains accessible, useful, and relevant to all.

Emotional CPR DH Funded Program

Over the past twelve months, VMIAC has continued to support the ongoing development and capacity building of Emotional CPR (eCPR) Training in our State. eCPR is a community focused educational program developed by the consumer movement in the US. It is designed to teach anyone to assist another person through an emotional crisis.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, VMIAC approached DH and was successful in securing funding to deliver 10 Online eCPR Workshops to workers employed in State Government-funded services across Victoria.

From July on over a period of three months VMIAC with the support of eCPR Trainers drawn from across Australia provided Certificate Level Emotional CPR Training to 127 Participants from State-Funded Mental Health and AOD programs.

Of the 127 people that we trained two-thirds of the participants worked in lived experience roles whilst the rest worked in other practices, including nurses, OT's, counsellors, mental health support workers.

Participants who undertook it almost universally rated this training as of high value and of being a very timely and helpful intervention for their own mental health and sense of connection with others whilst Victoria struggled through the incredibly hard and gloomy months of lockdown brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

VMIAC also delivered five eCPR workshops to Neighbourhood House staff and volunteers in metropolitan and rural locations across Victoria.

Over the months of April and May, in response to COVID-19, and in collaboration with the National Empowerment Centre and the eCPR Training Community, VMIAC began developing Virtual eCPR Training delivered via Zoom. In early June VMIAC delivered Online Training to fourteen staff at Being, the Consumer Peak in NSW.

CONSUMER REGISTER

The Consumer Register is a partnership between VMIAC and the Department of Health. The Register was established to ensure people with lived experience of mental distress are able to advise the department and be appropriately remunerated when engaged in mental health policy and service development.

VMIAC's current approach to the Register is to:

- Recruit consumers to join the Register
- Support existing participants
- Facilitate connection between departmental officers and participants
- Provide training to consumer members of the Register
- Report to the department on all DH-funded remuneration activity

Funding: in the last financial year, DH allocated \$125,000 to VMIAC for the operation of the consumer Register which was allocated to the employment of a part-time staff member to manage all aspects of the operation of the Register and a support worker to assist with administration. In addition, the funds were used to fund participants for their involvement.

In September 2020, we recruited consumer members to join the Register through an expression of interest form. We had much interest from our consumer members and held information sessions.

At the end of 2020, and beginning of 2021, a more detailed training program was developed designed to build the skills and knowledge of consumers who are taking roles to influence the development of the mental health system so that it is more responsive to the consumer voice. Each workshop was 2 hours and they were all held online to allow for people from rural locations to attend.

The training included Human Rights, VMIAC Policies and Positions, gaining influence through committee settings, co-design and co-productions, public speaking and representing the consumer voice.

In the main the requests are for speakers at conferences, membership of working groups and committees, research and focus groups. We have had a total of 21 participants doing engagements in 2020-21.

The Royal Commission into Mental Health Services in Victoria (The Commission) made a number of recommendations about the role of consumers in the development of a new approach to mental health challenges, ranging from increasing the number of consumers in the workforce through to ensuring that the consumer voice is central in decision making at the highest levels and in all aspects of system design.

The recommendation of the Commission has meant the future of the Consumer Register in 2021-22 will look very different with increased demands.

ROYAL COMMISSION

In 2021 The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System delivered its final report on 3 February 2021, and it was tabled in Parliament by the Victorian Government on 2 March 2021. This report marked a massive shift in advocating for positive change for lived experience consumers. Many of these recommendations reflected the needs of lived experience consumers and the government's dedication to enacting these changes has so far been very exciting.

Our 4 Page Brief Summary Response to the Royal Commissions final report was released as a precursor to our more detailed reports. This summary highlights the key areas of interest to VMIAC and our members.

We are also in the process of publishing a number of more detailed responses to the Royal Commissions findings. These reports are based on some briefings we held earlier in 2021, after the release of the report, that highlighted some of the topics we found most addressed the needs and interests of our members. These briefings also gave an opportunity for feedback from our members, prior to the writing of our official reports.

With the release of The Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, VMIAC have prepared a number of briefings for our membership based on our readings and findings from the Royal Commissions final report. Topics present within the report include:

- Governance of the System and regional implementation
- Consumer Workforce including consumer leadership
- Whole of governance response to social determinants, trauma and LGBTQIA +
- Abolishing the Mental Health Act and the elimination of all forms of violence
- The mental health impacts on women
- The representation of cultural diversity
- Consumer led research including an overview of the Collaborative Centre and the importance of different perspectives
- NDIS-the implications for those in NDIS and those who are not able to access the service
- The impact of Trauma

VMIAC response to interim report can be found on our website.

<https://www.vmiac.org.au/policy-campaigns/our-response-to-the-interim-report/>

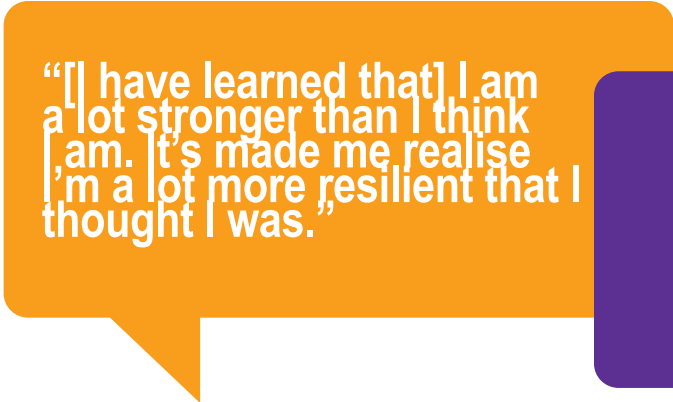
A graphic consisting of two overlapping speech bubbles. The top bubble is orange and contains the word 'CHECK' in white. The bottom bubble is purple and contains the word 'IN' in white.

CHECK

IN

During 2020-2021 VMIAC developed the CHECK-IN program seeking to respond to community members struggling with the increased complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic and the public health orders increased the need for VMIAC's support/ increased need of mental health of consumers through service delivery, occurring simultaneously to the decreased capacity of other services to respond to increased need. This need was identified by VMIAC's Advocacy, NDIS and reception teams due to both a higher number of calls they were receiving, and the increased distress and complex experiences they heard consumers experiencing. The 2020 VMIAC Membership survey also expressed these concerns and their own heightened experiences of distress, isolation, and increased need for support due to the pandemic.

With funding from the Victorian Government's Keeping Victorians Connected and Supported – Mental Health and Wellbeing Coronavirus Response Package VMIAC developed a peer-supported self-advocacy program. The program seeks to support consumers to recognize their own strengths, to reflect on times they have overcome difficulties, and to identify the supports they have walking alongside them. It incorporates art and narrative therapy approaches alongside peer support and follows a structure that allows consumers to put together their own stories of navigating challenging times.

An orange speech bubble containing a testimonial.

“I have learned that I am a lot stronger than I think I am. It's made me realise I'm a lot more resilient than I thought I was.”

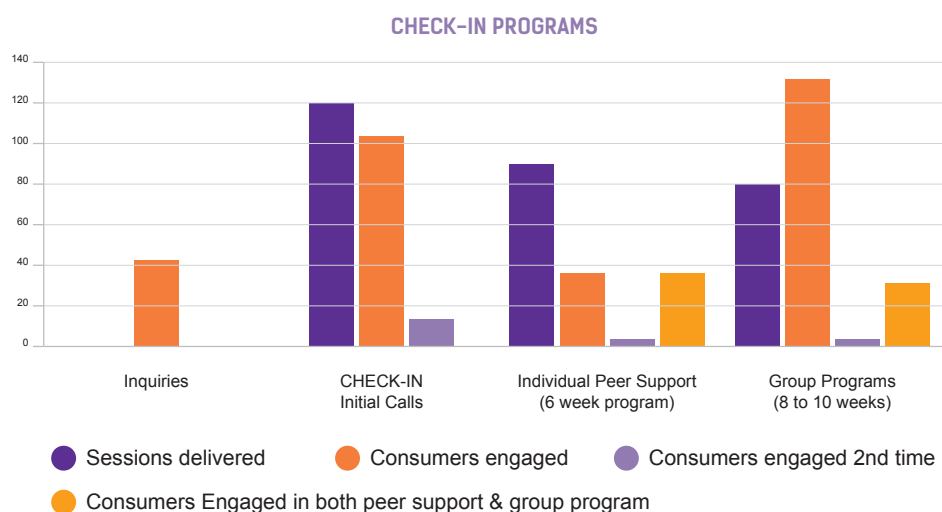
A purple speech bubble containing a testimonial.

“[CHECK-IN offered me]..the space and the opportunity to take control of my own reins.”

CHECK-IN Programs, honouring and building on the history of peer work

CHECK-IN built upon VMIAC's legacies of advocacy and peer support for community members seeking consumer led spaces. The program drew upon a rich knowledges of peer workers, project officers, and community members to develop an approach recognizing the diversity of living experiences. Consequently, the team offered multiple forms of support in 2020/2021. The support included group well-being programs, individual peer support, and one-off CHECK-IN calls for brief support.

CHECK-IN, Our Impact



CHECK-IN supported over 100 consumers through its programming. Consumers accessed the program for a range of experiences. This included consumers who connected and re-connected with the program as their situations changed across the year. They identified advocacy issues including challenges with gender identity and sexual orientation, need for connection and support, lack of access to trauma informed supports, chronic health issues and disability, stigma, and challenges related to working in peer work and consumer workforce roles.

CHECK-IN supported a diverse range of consumers and received referrals from within VMIAC and across community services and mental health supports. The program completed outreach activities to reach regional and rural dwelling consumers, with 17% of CHECK-IN participants based in rural and regional locations.

Demographic feature	Number of participants
Identified as part of the LGBTIQ+ community	35% Yes
Identified as culturally or linguistically diverse	33% Yes
Identified as having a lived experience of emotional distress or mental illness	96% Yes
m	70% Female 23% Male 7% Non-binary or genderqueer

CHECK

IN

CHECK-IN program has seen VMIAC partner with community mental health services, youth specific services, and other consumer led programs. It's seen us develop tailored programs that adapt to different lived experiences of community members. We've engaged external facilitators offer Yoga with Mei Lai Swan, meditation with Coco and Wayapa Wuurrk with Alana Marsh to offer different modalities enabling/supporting community members to explore their feelings and journeys. Connecting with a wide range of consumers is a key principle of CHECK-IN, which is led through a Social Justice Oriented and Intersectional Feminist Framework. CHECK-IN's work aligns with recommendations handed down as part of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, to improve access to services that are responsive to a range of lived experiences. The program has aimed to recognize the need for cultural responsiveness within peer led services, and to continually recognize and challenge power structures as they emerge through their work.

Honouring the wisdom of consumers, encouraging connections with documents

The CHECK-IN peer work team supported the creation of collective documents which we hope honours the wisdoms of consumers and encourage connections between experiences. Documents created for consumer are intended to share wisdom and experiences with other consumers. Peer workers offered these documents to other consumers who they felt would benefit from reading and connecting with the experiences of others. The opportunity was provided for consumers to give anonymous responses with the document's authors, allowing an additional point of connection. These documents have been used to record experiences including grief, compulsory treatment, experiences of lockdown in Victoria, insecurity, and parenting. The documents contained personal experiences, poetry, artistic representations of emotion, and collaborative work between peer workers and community members. The documents record the strength and knowledge of consumers and are tools which connect consumers engaged in CHECK-IN to one-another while maintaining privacy and confidentiality.

"I feel thankful for the group wisdom and being in a virtual room knowing that we're going through different things. I noticed a value of talking to people with different experiences."

- Consumer

Team reflections

These words are shared by the team to reflect on their experiences of sharing the space of CHECK-IN with one another and with consumers.

Sar (Support Officer) - "I am thankful already for the opportunities to reflect and witness one another that I have been a part of so far. I feel a great honor in being able to help tell the stories of CHECK-IN. They are filled with rich characters of joy, resilience, pain, trust, hope, learning and growth and countless others – and I cannot wait to get to know them even more."

Janel (Peer Support Project Officer) - "As a peer worker in CHECK-IN, I've appreciated hearing the many stories of VMIACs members and community and using these stories to shape a program that is meaningful. Offering voice and agency to those that the service supports is exciting. Leaning on the wisdom of each individual, CHECK-IN holds spaces for people to connect, to support and to self-advocate; this is something I value."

Frankie (Peer Support Project Officer) - "I am so privileged to witness the double storied accounts of peoples experiences. We are more than our trauma, more than our illness. When I finish having a chat with someone, I often feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude that this person has chosen me as a peer. These relationships with community members grow me. They contribute to my own recovery. They shape my healing.."

PARTNERSHIPS

Just Saying

“Just Saying” is a consumer rights project from VMIAC, aimed at answering questions consumers have about their rights when in voluntary in-patient care. The “Just Saying” project is inspired by the many Victorian consumers who receive voluntary treatment in hospital but who are unsure about their rights or where to go for help when they feel like their rights may have been breached.

Whilst services such as IMHA and protections such as the Mental Health Act exist to protect involuntary consumers. No such resources have previously existed for voluntary consumers. A lack of resources on voluntary consumer rights means that voluntary consumers are not getting the care and support they need out of the inpatient system, and many voluntary consumers are being made involuntary without the proper protections.

Implementation

The Just Saying project consisted of resources developed with the support of VLA and IMHA that answered some of the common questions consumers had about their rights when in voluntary inpatient care. These resources were then issued on a series of resources delivered both online, and into the inpatient settings with the support of IMHA. Examples of resources were:

- resource books that were issued to various support workers and organisations,
- small “gift” bags containing a series of postcards each answering one or two questions consumers may have, as well as a USB stick containing the full “Just Saying” resources, as well as additional IMHA support material,
- and a Website that provided downloadable versions of all resources, plus additional IMHA resources and background on the project.

This project was launch on April 20th with the launch of the website and materials, hosted at VMIAC, and attended by a number of sector workers, peer workers, and consumers. With a talk on voluntary consumer rights and resources were then sent to IMHA to be delivered to the various inpatient clinic across Victoria.

Results

We have had an estimated 183 views on the Just Saying page on the website, with the average viewer spending 3 minutes on the page, viewing and downloading the resources. We have also had reports from consumers, accessing advocacy and other services, who have accessed inpatient services, that the resources were seen inside the wards, and that some people found out about VMIAC through this promotion.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Year ended 30th June 2021

2020/21 has been a productive year for VMIAC, resulting in a strong operating position despite the current challenges. VMIAC has continued its navigation of COVID19 by using online platforms for consumer consultations, advocacy and enabling staff to effectively work from home.

VMIAC's financial operations have resulted in an audited surplus of \$131,408 reflected in the Statement of Profit and Loss report for the year ended 30 June 2021, with the following notable items -

- VMIAC received a \$50,000 Covid-19 Stimulus Cash Boost to assist with our adapting to the changing customer and staff and organisational environment
- Salaries and related costs were on budget this year, due to active and focussed recruitment during the year where all positions were filled as at 30/6/2021.

VMIAC's Balance Sheet indicates –

- A continued healthy cash position with an audited figure of \$915,690 of income carried forward into 2021/22
- The Equity section of the Balance Sheets indicates VMIAC's operations have generated \$893,325 of value in the organisation. A strong position.

Financial areas of focus for the coming year will include –

1. VMIAC's Risk Management profile and minimising all aspects of organisational risk
2. Continuing regular Program & Project reviews to analyse progress and ensure maximum impact and full utilisation of our budgets.
3. Reviewing Budgets to ensure appropriate resources are allocated to ensure effective operation into a "Covid Normal" future.
4. Continuing to deliver on the Strategy and delivering projects which achieve VMIAC's vision.
5. Continuing to maximise return on funds.



— Ali Pain

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council
ABN 28 642 080 520

Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2021

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VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue from ordinary activities	2	2,641,855	2,441,140
Employee benefits expense		(2,023,078)	(1,652,197)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(47,718)	(46,522)
Finance costs		(6,889)	(7,790)
Consultants fees		(125,261)	(15,845)
Direct program expenses		(78,113)	(230,864)
Rent and rates		(5,550)	(2,716)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		<u>(223,838)</u>	<u>(259,137)</u>
Surplus before income tax expense		131,408	226,069
Income tax expense	1(h)	-	-
Other comprehensive income (net of tax)		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total comprehensive income after income tax expense for the year		<u><u>131,408</u></u>	<u><u>226,069</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	2,223,188	2,514,966
Trade and other receivables	4	10,286	16,554
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>2,233,474</u>	<u>2,531,520</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	5	146,850	174,595
Intangible assets	6	-	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>146,850</u>	<u>174,595</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>2,380,324</u>	<u>2,706,115</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	187,223	195,043
Income in advance	8	915,690	1,325,795
Provisions	9	97,961	110,935
Lease liability	10	39,837	39,524
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>1,240,711</u>	<u>1,671,297</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Income in advance	8	142,768	142,625
Provisions	9	20,179	28,022
Lease liability	10	83,341	102,254
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>246,288</u>	<u>272,901</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>1,486,999</u>	<u>1,944,198</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>893,325</u>	<u>761,917</u>
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained Surplus		893,325	761,917
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		<u>893,325</u>	<u>761,917</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	535,848	535,848
Surplus attributable to the entity	226,069	226,069
Other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at 30 June 2020	761,917	761,917
Surplus attributable to the entity	131,408	131,408
Other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u><u>893,325</u></u>	<u><u>893,325</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from government and sponsors		2,190,916	2,662,771
Other grants, donations and sundry income received		46,010	132,469
Payments to suppliers and employees		(2,484,423)	(2,066,770)
Interest received		<u>1,181</u>	<u>2,306</u>
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	11	<u>(246,316)</u>	<u>730,776</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for purchase of plant and equipment		(5,800)	(980)
Proceeds on sale of assets		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(5,800)</u>	<u>(980)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Repayment of lease liabilities		<u>(39,662)</u>	<u>(39,524)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(39,662)</u>	<u>(39,524)</u>
Net cash (decrease)/increase cash held		(291,778)	690,272
Cash at the beginning of the year		<u>2,514,966</u>	<u>1,824,694</u>
Cash at the end of the year	3	<u><u>2,223,188</u></u>	<u><u>2,514,966</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

Financial Reporting Framework

The Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity because it is unlikely there are users of these financial statements who are not in a position to require the preparation of reports tailored to their information needs.

Accordingly, these financial statements have been prepared to satisfy the Committee's reporting requirements under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The Association is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

Statement of Compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. These special purpose financial statements comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards except for those specified in AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* as in accounting for income, recognition of all grant income has been deferred until the related expenses are incurred without assessing whether there are enforceable performance obligations to transfer a good or service to a third party which are sufficiently specific to know when the performance obligation has been satisfied. Refer to Note 1(f) Revenue below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless stated otherwise. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

Impact of COVID-19

VMIAC has not experienced any significant financial impacts in the 2021 Financial year due to the extraordinary circumstances relating to COVID 19.

Operationally, staff are and will continue to be working from home, face to face program delivery has decreased, however all identified necessary face to face support is continuing as required. As with all businesses, many of the normal practices carried out by VMIAC were altered to ensure safe continuous service for staff and clients, resulting in an increase in expenditure associated with PPE and IT equipment to support remote working and delivery.

COVID has resulted in an expansion of business practices for VMIAC, resulting in a small increase in funding for the Financial year. It is anticipated that as Community needs continue to increase next financial year, VMIAC will be successful in delivering these services, offering an increase in opportunities for VMIAC.

VMIAC received the Government cashflow boost and does not have any debt / loans that it is not be able to service in the normal manner through this period and holds sufficient cash reserves to meet all short-term operating costs. The Board do not believe COVID-19 will have an impact on VMIAC's ability to continue as a going concern.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (cont.)

a. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

b. Property, Plant and Equipment

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation or amortisation.

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold Improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

c. Employee Entitlements

Short-term employee benefits

Provision is made for the Association's obligation for short-term employee benefits. Short-term employee benefits are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service, including wages, salaries and sick leave. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the (undiscounted) amounts expected to be paid when the obligation is settled.

The Association's obligations for short-term employee benefits such as wages, salaries and sick leave are recognised as part of current trade and other payables in the statement of financial position.

Other long-term employee benefits

Provision is made for employees' long service leave and annual leave entitlements not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Other long-term employee benefits are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on government bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the terms of the obligations. Upon the remeasurement of obligations for other long-term employee benefits, the net change in the obligation is recognised in profit or loss as part of employee benefits expense.

The Association's obligations for long-term employee benefits are presented as non-current provisions in its statement of financial position, except where the Association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period, in which case the obligations are presented as current provisions.

d. Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (cont.)

e. Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the Association reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is an indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is recognised in the statements of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

f. Revenue

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any discounts.

Grant Income

All grant income has been deferred upon receipt and not recognised as revenue until the related expenses are incurred, without assessing whether enforceable performance obligations exist. This does not comply with AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*. This policy has been adopted to ensure grant income from all sources is consistently recognised.

Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument.

Donations

Donation income is recognised when the Association obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

g. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

h. Income Tax

The Association is exempt from paying income tax by virtue of Section 50-45 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, 1997. Accordingly, tax effect accounting has not been adopted.

i. The Company as Lessee

At inception of a contract, the Association assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the Association where the Association is a lessee. However, all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Initially the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the Association uses the incremental borrowing rate.

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (cont.)

i. The Company as Lessee (cont.)

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date;
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of purchase options, if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options;
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease.

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest.

Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Association anticipates exercising a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Note 2: Revenue from ordinary activities		
Operating grants	2,594,807	2,306,365
Other income	46,010	132,469
Interest received	1,038	2,306
	<u>2,641,855</u>	<u>2,441,140</u>

Note 3: Cash and cash equivalents

Petty cash	728	933
Cash at bank	2,079,692	2,371,408
Term deposit held for restricted purposes - VMIAC Awards - Estate of DJ Western	142,768	142,625
	<u>2,223,188</u>	<u>2,514,966</u>

Note 4: Trade and other receivables

Trade and sundry receivables	200	6,414
Rental bond	5,000	5,000
Prepaid expenses	5,086	5,140
	<u>10,286</u>	<u>16,554</u>

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Note 5: Property, plant and equipment		
Furniture and equipment - as cost	118,506	112,706
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(107,523)</u>	<u>(102,358)</u>
	<u>10,983</u>	<u>10,348</u>
 Motor vehicles - as cost	 30,893	 30,893
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(21,303)</u>	<u>(19,090)</u>
	<u>9,590</u>	<u>11,803</u>
 Leasehold improvements - at cost	 57,705	 57,705
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(46,165)</u>	<u>(44,071)</u>
	<u>11,540</u>	<u>13,634</u>
 Right of use asset - premises at 1/22 Aintree Street Brunswick East	 187,685	 173,512
Less accumulated amortisation	<u>(72,948)</u>	<u>(34,702)</u>
	<u>114,737</u>	<u>138,810</u>
 Total property, plant and equipment	 <u>146,850</u>	 <u>174,595</u>
 Note 6: Intangibles		
Website development costs	-	10,000
Less accumulated amortisation	<u>-</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
 Note 7: Trade and other payables		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade creditors and other accruals	38,523	77,375
Payroll liabilities payable	74,002	32,504
GST liability	<u>74,698</u>	<u>85,164</u>
	<u>187,223</u>	<u>195,043</u>
 Note 8: Income in advance		
<i>Current</i>		
Unspent grant funds - Commonwealth and State	<u>915,690</u>	<u>1,325,795</u>
 <i>Non-Current</i>		
VMIAC Awards Trust - Estate of DJ Western	<u>142,768</u>	<u>142,625</u>

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Note 9: Provisions		
<i>Current</i>		
Employee entitlements - annual leave	87,678	79,688
Employee entitlements - time in lieu	2,526	23,740
Employee entitlements - long service leave	7,757	7,507
	<u>97,961</u>	<u>110,935</u>
<i>Non-Current</i>		
Employee entitlements - long service leave	<u>20,179</u>	<u>28,022</u>
Note 10: Lease Liability		
<i>Current</i>		
Lease liabilities	<u>39,837</u>	<u>39,524</u>
<i>Non-current</i>		
Lease liabilities	<u>83,341</u>	<u>102,254</u>

During 2021 the Company entered into a lease for office premises at 1/22 Aintree Street Brunswick East. The lease is due to expire in June 2024.

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Note 11: Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with surplus ordinary activities after income tax		
Surplus after income tax expense	131,408	226,069
<i>Non-cash flows in surplus:</i>		
- Depreciation and amortisation	47,718	46,522
- Interest	6,889	7,790
<i>Changes in assets and liabilities:</i>		
- Increase/decrease trade and sundry receivables	6,268	(5,411)
- Decrease/increase trade and other payables	(7,820)	41,696
- Decrease/increase income in advance	(409,962)	356,406
- Decrease/increase provisions	(20,817)	57,704
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	<u>(246,316)</u>	<u>730,776</u>

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30 JUNE 2021

The Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee of Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc.:

a) the financial statements and notes of Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc. are in accordance with the Associations Incorporation *Reform Act (Vic) 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission*

i. giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and

ii. complying with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* ; and

b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Signed

Dated: 11th October 2021



Signed

Dated: 11th October 2021

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL
ABN 28 642 080 520

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION
60-40 OF THE AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT-FOR-PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as auditor for the audit of Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2021, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- i. no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- ii. no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Sean Denham

Dated: 12th October 2021
Sean Denham & Associates
Suite 1, 707 Mt Alexander Road
Moonee Ponds VIC 3039

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL**

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial report, of Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and the certification by members of the committee.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report of Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council Inc. has been prepared in accordance with Div 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (ACNC Act)* including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complies with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and Div 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of my report. I am independent of the association in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the association's reporting responsibilities under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibility of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee of the association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 of the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee are responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intend to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or have no

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of responsible entities' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions that may cause the to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



Sean Denham

Dated: 12th October 2021
Suite 1, 707 Mt Alexander Road
Moonee Ponds VIC 3039

VICTORIAN MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS COUNCIL

CERTIFICATE BY MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

I _____, of _____, certify that:
(name) (address)

a. I attended the annual general meeting of the Association held on _____.
(date)

b. The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2021 were submitted to the members of the Association at its annual general meeting.

Committee member

Dated: _____

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