

# sharc

Self Help Addiction Resource Centre



# Annual Report 2023/24

## How you can support SHARC's work

### Volunteer

All our programs depend upon the support of volunteers.

There are many different roles available, and SHARC provides comprehensive training and support.



### Donate

Donations to SHARC are tax-deductible. You can make your contribution online, by EFT or cheque, or join our 'Buy a Brick Campaign'.



### Sponsorship

Support a SHARC program or community group financially.



### Be Informed

Learn more about our work and the issues we are addressing, and talk about them with your family, friends, and colleagues.



### Bequests

If you choose to include a gift to the Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC) in your Will, you'll be leaving a meaningful legacy that enhances the lives of those we support and helps expand our services and programs, positively impacting the entire community.



### Membership

By becoming a member, you endorse SHARC's work and engage with our community. You will receive updates on our work, our e-newsletter, invitations to SHARC (and affiliated) events, and voting rights to elect the SHARC Board of Management.



To find out more or to discuss how you can help, call (03) 9573 1700

w: [sharc.org.au](http://sharc.org.au) e: [info@sharc.org.au](mailto:info@sharc.org.au)  
a: 140 Grange Rd, Carnegie VIC 3163

p: Helpline 24/7 - 1300 660 068

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### Offer of Respect

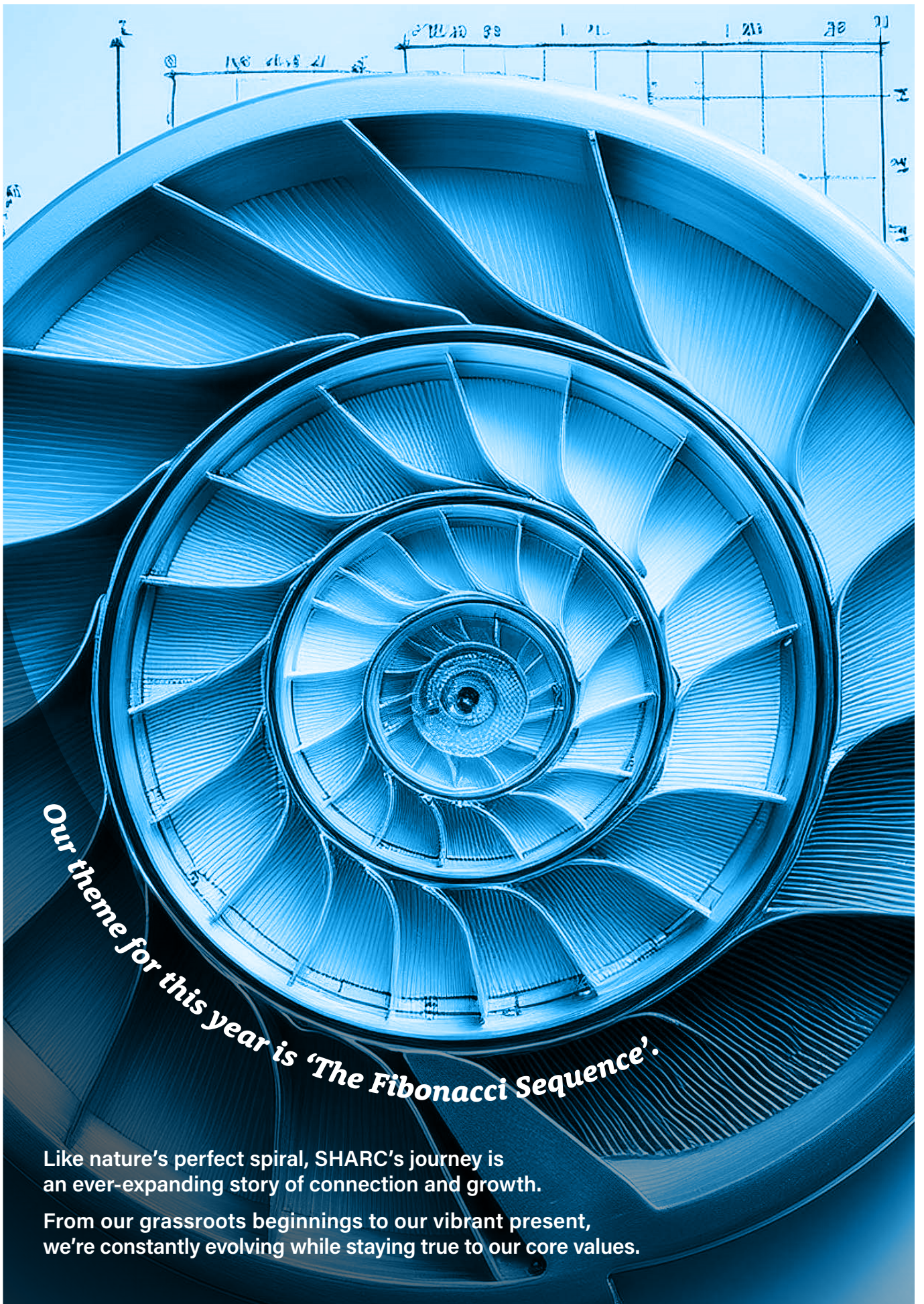
"SHARC offers its respect to people with lived and living experience who break through the barriers of stigma and marginalisation to be themselves, tell their stories and advocate for positive change for our community."

### Acknowledgement of Country

"SHARC acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present."



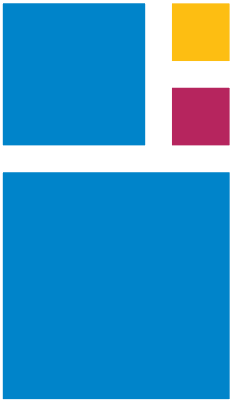


*Our theme for this year is 'The Fibonacci Sequence'.*

Like nature's perfect spiral, SHARC's journey is an ever-expanding story of connection and growth.

From our grassroots beginnings to our vibrant present, we're constantly evolving while staying true to our core values.





## Professor Margaret Abernethy, Chair from 20 February 2024 SHARC Board

The theme of the Fibonacci Sequence describes SHARC's history and beautifully depicts the future of SHARC. The Fibonacci sequence enables us to look back and see how everything we do builds on where we have been and where we are going — i.e. each number is the sum of the two preceding it. We only need to look at the growing opportunities SHARC provides to its people and those who use its services. It has been my pleasure to be Chair of the Board of SHARC and to work with our Board in supporting our CEO, Clare Davies, and her team.

It has been an extremely busy year, and the Board has seen some significant changes in its composition. Calum Henderson, our former Chair, resigned in February of this year. With his legal expertise, Calum was instrumental in enabling us to change from an Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. As I am writing this in early October, the process is almost complete. At the end of last year, we also bid farewell to two directors who have been with SHARC since 2019, Jacqui Sundbery and Catherine Flynn. Both contributed significantly to SHARC during their time with us. I enjoyed working with them. We are a volunteer skill-based board with two-thirds of the Board having a lived or living experience.

*I'd like to acknowledge the contributions of the Board to the governance of SHARC. It has been significant. Our directors have expertise in finance, risk and compliance, human resources, IT, senior business, and experience in the AOD and gambling sectors. This expertise is critical as SHARC continues to grow and expand its offerings.*

As you see in the financial report, we have increased our revenue over the last year by almost \$2 million. This increased funding not only recognises SHARC's importance in the sector but also enables us to increase access, support, and outreach, improve quality of life, and create positive outcomes for our service users. You will see from Clare's report that we are also increasing our reach internationally through partnerships with leading universities.

*A major undertaking for Clare, her team and the Board was developing a three-year strategic plan that will steer SHARC in the years ahead. The process encouraged input from all staff, the Board and other stakeholders. I have rarely seen such a participatory and extensive approach to strategic planning. We now have a plan that sets out the goals to be achieved and the objectives or targets for each of our services.*

This process helps us, as a Board, monitor achievements — a key component of good governance.

We are also investing significantly in systems that can improve our function by enabling us to measure outcomes and improve our efficiency. This can be quite taxing for our people as they need to learn and adapt to the way they work. Clare has also made some key appointments to ensure that we have the required expertise and support in HR, finance, ICT, marketing, and communication.

*SHARC's identity is changing, but we are the sum of everything we've come from. Managing change and staying true to who we are as we grow is always challenging, but Clare and her team have managed these changes extremely well. Our first ever staff survey on culture and the working environment demonstrates this.*

My heartfelt congratulations to Clare, all our SHARC employees, and our many volunteers on a most successful year. Thank you all for your commitment to continuing to build on what we have achieved at SHARC. Like the Fibonacci Sequence, we are building and expanding upon ourselves and through our community.

**Clare Davies CEO,  
SHARC Management**



Our organisational journey this year has been profound, with each achievement building on the last, creating a tapestry of impact and resilience.

In powerful collaboration with our community, SHARC embarked on the creation of our new Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 — a process that brought us together in meaningful connection and gave us the space to reflect deeply on our purpose.

*We paused to honour our rich history, understand where we stand today, and chart the course for the future. This reflective journey has led to a plan that ensures SHARC remains agile and responsive to the evolving needs of our community.*

The process was not just a review, but a moment of profound introspection — an intentional exploration of the values and guiding principles that define us. Together, we reaffirmed the essence of who we are: Inclusion, Community, Leadership, Action, and Transformation — each one grounded in the lived expertise of our community.

These values are not abstract ideals; they are the very heartbeat of our shared identity, a guiding light for the path ahead, and a testament to the power of our collective vision. The new plan is more than just a road-map — it's a declaration of our commitment to the future, inspired by the strength, wisdom, and resilience of the community we serve.

In line with our strategic focus on growing Lived and Living Experience (LLE), SHARC began several new initiatives this year, including a ground-breaking partnership with Yale University, U.S.

This project has SHARC leading the transformation of Victoria's AOD and mental health sectors by embedding LLE workforces — an extraordinary opportunity to create tangible, meaningful change.

Nurturing our LE workforce is key to SHARC's success. By providing robust training and support, we cultivate a thriving environment where individuals can share their stories and insights, creating a powerful cycle of knowledge and growth. This investment ensures our services remain grounded in lived experience, enhancing their relevance and impact.

*SHARC was deeply honoured to lead the creation of the LLE Technical Expert Hub, a groundbreaking initiative that brought together leaders from Harm Reduction, Mental Health Consumers, Mental Health Carers, and AOD service users and supporters.*

For the first time, these diverse voices united in a consultancy model, working collaboratively to drive change. This pioneering initiative is currently undergoing a review, and we are thrilled to have secured additional funding to continue advancing the Hub's vital work.

The Hub's inaugural project, the Victorian LLE leadership 10-year strategy, has been a remarkable collaboration with LLE peak bodies, the Department of Health, and key LLE leaders. Born from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, the strategy is now in its final stages of development and will set a bold, shared vision for our future collective efforts.

In a broader context, the recent announcements in the Victorian AOD sector — appointing the state's first Chief Addiction Medicine Advisor and creating a comprehensive AOD strategy — are historic milestones. These are victories that APSU has long championed, and we celebrate their arrival as transformative steps toward a more inclusive and effective future for service users and their families.

Gambling harm in Victoria is reaching crisis levels, with the rapid rise of online gambling and intrusive advertisements fueling the devastation. Every day, vulnerable individuals — often young people, those with mental health struggles, and families already on the edge — are bombarded with glossy ads that normalise gambling, making it seem like a harmless pastime when, for so many, it's a deadly trap. The rise of mobile apps and constant media promotion makes it easier than ever to spiral into addiction, and the consequences are heartbreaking: financial ruin, fractured families, and mental health crises.

Despite growing calls for action, gambling ads continue to saturate our screens, especially during sports events, perpetuating a dangerous culture of normalisation. The Victorian Government has taken some steps, but it's clear: stronger, more urgent action is needed to protect our most





vulnerable, curb the relentless promotion of gambling, and provide effective support for those suffering in silence. The harm will continue to ripple through our communities, leaving destruction in its wake. SHARC is proud of the work of Three Sides of a Coin and the FDGH team for the work they do to raise awareness and lobby for change. There's more work to do.

*SHARC's advocacy efforts also grew exponentially. Through targeted campaigns, we increased community awareness about addiction and recovery, echoing the Fibonacci principle of exponential growth. These efforts reached thousands, helping to break down barriers and promote a more compassionate view of those impacted by addiction.*

In closing, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, volunteers, and community partners. Your commitment to our purpose fuels our growth and impact, allowing us to flourish like the intricate patterns of the Fibonacci sequence. You are the heart of the SHARC community, and I can't thank you enough for everything you do.

# Strategic Plan 2024—2027

## Strategic Pillars

### Strengthening our Foundations

We will strengthen our governance, corporate systems, financial sustainability, brand and internal connections to support us as we deliver and expand our work.

### Sustaining our Community

We will continue to develop our innovative models and support consumer- and family-led initiatives to transform systems, policies, and social attitudes.

### Expanding Lived Experience-Led Services

We will deliver, enhance and expand our lived experience-led services for people impacted by alcohol and other drugs, gambling and related harms, strengthening self-help and mutual support.

### Embedding Lived Expertise

We will lead sector change, building knowledge, skills, and capacity to embed lived expertise voices and roles across the alcohol and other drugs sector, mental health, justice and beyond.

### Changing Systems and Society

We will continue to develop our innovative models, and support consumer- and family-led initiatives to transform systems, policy and social attitudes.

## Developing Our Strategic Plan

SHARC developed its strategic plan through a comprehensive consultation process with staff, volunteers, board members, consumers, the community, and other stakeholders.

Our distinctive lived and living experience perspective continues to shape our strategic direction, ensuring we remain connected to the communities we serve.

*This planning process reinforced SHARC's commitment to meaningful engagement with all community members as we work towards our shared vision.*

This culminated in a Strategic Planning Day in October 2023, during which all interested parties gathered to provide feedback on SHARC's priorities, vision, purpose, and values. Further refinements were made during the early part of 2024, and the Strategic Plan received Board approval shortly afterwards.



## Our Vision

Lived expertise is at the heart of inclusive communities and services, where people proudly share their experience and support each other in a society free of stigma and discrimination.

## Our Purpose

We transform lives, services and society through our community's lived and living experience of alcohol and other drugs, gambling and related harms.

## Our Values

### Action

We work together, taking action to address power imbalances as we fight for equity.



### Lived Expertise

We embrace the richness of each person's experience and recognise people and communities as the experts in their own lives.



### Inclusion

We are welcoming and empathetic.



### Community

We sustain our community for the progression of all, building a sense of belonging through genuine relationships.



### Transformation

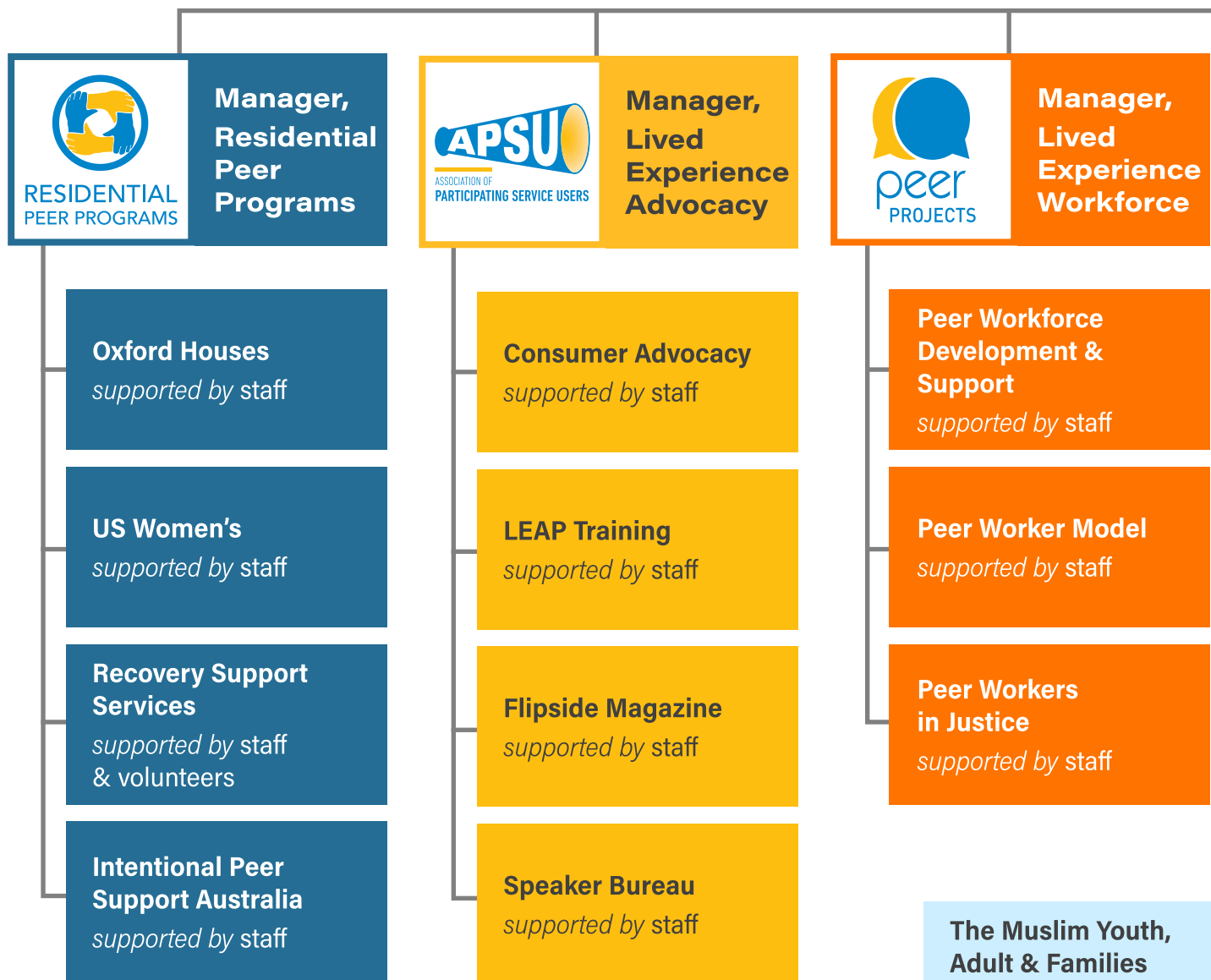
We are innovative and resourceful, constantly learning and evolving as we respond to community needs and create lasting positive change.



### Leadership

We lead by example.





## Management Team

Clare Davies — Chief Executive Officer

Nicole Thompson — Deputy CEO/Manager Residential Peer Programs

Heather (Bella) Anderson — Manager, Lived Experience Advocacy

Matthew Corbett — Manager, Lived Experience Workforce

Robert Campbell — Program Manager, Family Drug and Gambling Help

Catherine Raine — Manager, Finance, ICT & Contract Management

Andrew Wilson — Manager, Organisational Support and Development



**Governance**

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**

**Executive Assistant**



**Program Manager, Family Drug & Gambling Help**



**Manager, Finance, ICT & Contract Management**



**Manager, Organisational Support & Development**

**Three Sides of the Coin**  
*supported by staff & volunteers*

**BreakThrough**  
*supported by staff & volunteers*

**InFocus**  
*supported by staff & volunteers*

**Helpline**  
*supported by staff & volunteers*

**Family Support Groups**  
*supported by staff & volunteers*

**Senior Bookkeeper**  
(AP, AR, Payroll)

**External ICT Partner Management**

**Human Resources & Quality Coordinator**

**Marketing & Communications Coordinator**

**Administration & Front-of-House.**  
Including Facilities & Maintenance Support

**Board Members**

- Professor Margaret Abernethy, *Chair* (From 20 February, 2024)
- Nicole McCoy, *Deputy Chair*
- Judy Thompson, *Treasurer*
- Neha Joshi, *Director*
- Anna Bardsley, *Director*
- Fergus Porter, *Director*
- Chris Boileau, *Director*
- RESIGNED 2023 - 24
- Calum Henderson, *Chair*
- Associate Professor Catherine Flynn, *Director*
- Dr Jacqui Sundbery, *Director*



# Family Drug & Gambling Help (FDGH)



Long time Support Group volunteer Eleni (right), receives recognition at Volunteers Week

Family Drug and Gambling Help (FDGH) is making a significant impact through its strategic plan for promotion, community awareness, and enhanced support for families. By raising awareness of the challenges faced by those affected by addiction, FDGH fosters understanding and compassion within the community.

*Their initiatives aim to educate the public, reduce stigma, and create a network of resources for families in need.*

Through workshops, outreach programs, and partnerships, FDGH empowers families to seek help and navigate their journeys together. This commitment to support and advocacy not only strengthens families but also cultivates a healthier, more informed community for everyone.





Carolyn & Sunenna after performing *Happily Ever After*

## Three Sides of the Coin

Three Sides of the Coin continues to move, inspire and make a difference in the community. Since 1st July 2023, two women at each end of the gambling harm spectrum have been performing their story, *Happily Ever After*, to various audiences with resounding appreciation.

See below for Carolyn (a former gambler) and Sunenna's (affected by her husband's gambling) performance. The group have performed far and wide in a range of diverse locations, including:

- City of Hume Gambling Symposium
- Williamstown Community Education Centre
- Ballarat Town Hall for Gambling Harm Awareness Week
- National Australia Bank Melbourne Vulnerability teams
- IPC Health
- Keep Romsie 'Pokies Free' campaign



Carolyn & Sunenna during a performance



3 Sides of the Coin performers Carolyn & Sunenna with Director – Cathryn (centre back) & Coordinator – Judy (right) at National Australia Bank performance

## Good News Story

### Feedback from a grateful family

“Our son is now clean for three years, working and supporting himself and his children.

Your organisation and the programs you provided us had a significant impact on us and him. We became more knowledgeable and talked openly with him about what we were learning. He has since told us that when he saw us involved and, in fact, caring, it really helped him to question himself and to push harder.

***Finding out that other people were experiencing the same problem was a godsend. To know we weren't alone was so comforting.***

It even allowed us as a couple to build common knowledge and common ground on which to move forward. Since that period, I have been more open with friends and family about our son's addiction, as I am not ashamed anymore.

Our son has shown incredible strength and perseverance to get through this, and we hope that with all our hearts, he can keep progressing. The long-term effects of drug use are still prevalent in his physical and mental health, but life goes on and we pray for a long and happy life for him.

We want to thank you for providing the education courses and support groups for families. You helped to change our lives and we'll be forever grateful.

**Good luck for your future work.”**



Rob recognises the value of our volunteers during National Volunteer Week

## Volunteering What a world of difference!

National Volunteer Week at FDGH celebrates the invaluable contributions of our volunteers. Their dedication enriches our community, fostering positive change and empowering families grappling with the impact of addiction.

We honoured their selflessness and commitment and enjoyed a day of African drumming and dancing, good food, and connection. Significant milestones were achieved by Jan Coffey and Anna Bardsley, both of whom have volunteered for over 10 years. We had a visit from Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah, Federal Member for Higgins, who presented the Higgins Community Spirit Award to Jan Coffey for over 10 of years volunteering at FDGH in the helpline. Anna Bardsley received the Glen Eira City Council Volunteer Recognition Award for her work in Three Sides of the Coin.



Our volunteers enjoying African drumming & dancing during National Volunteer Week

Bella presents Illy, an APSU volunteer, a certificate for her contribution



Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah, Federal Member for Higgins, presenting the Higgins Community Spirit Award to Jan Coffey.





RESIDENTIAL  
PEER PROGRAMS

2 ■

# Residential Peer Programs (RPP)

## Recovery Support Services (RSS) Highlights

RSS has been a haven of growth, connection, and transformative experiences. We have been on journeys of community-building, personal development, and creating lasting memories, particularly for many of our disadvantaged residents who have never experienced opportunities like these before.

*Our efforts have focused on enhancing the residents' well-being through meaningful experiences and initiatives aimed at fostering personal empowerment and positive social interaction.*

Some of the year's highlights include the camp to Phillip Island, our networking day with the incredible HoMie organisation, and the introduction of new tools to aid in concentration and mental well-being.



## Good News Story

### A Second Chance

Ben (not his real name), a psychiatric nurse, is tackling recovery head-on at Oxford Houses for the second time. Despite previously achieving three and a half years of abstinence — no small feat — a relapse knocked his confidence and left him struggling to find his footing.

**Though initially daunted by OHA's shared recovery environment, Ben recognised it as his chance to rebuild. The prospect of living with peers who'd push him to be his best self sparked hope, even as doubts lingered.**

With support from NMHPV, Ben applied to OHA, hoping recovery and the program would help him to understand his substance misuse, problematic gambling, and mental health challenges. Ben embraced recovery by attending therapy, strengthening his relationships, and embracing self-help groups. Eight months abstinent, Ben's now back nursing part-time and thriving. Through spirituality and meaningful connections, he's crafting a new future.

*“ My experience in Oxford over the last 6 months has been one of enduring support and understanding. Stepping into a culture that promotes self-development has guided me through my early recovery, keeping me connected to like-minded people. Feelings of loneliness and isolation have been replaced with community and growth. Oxford Houses have shown me that help is available if I take a leap and simply ask”.*

## Phillip Island Camp — A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience

For many of our residents, the camp at Phillip Island was more than just a getaway — for some, it was the first holiday they had ever been on. The significance of this opportunity for those who have faced considerable disadvantages in their lives cannot be overstated.

*The trip was about more than just escaping the day-to-day routines of the residential setting; it was about forging deeper connections with each other and the staff who support them.*

Our residents bonded on a new level in between spotting koalas, wandering with highland cows on Churchill Island, and tackling challenges at A Maze N Things together.

The highlight was watching the iconic Phillip Island penguin parade. They waddled up the beach at sunset, and there wasn't a dry eye among us (looking at you, coordinator!) as we watched that natural phenomenon. It was pure magic — and the perfect symbol of our own journey as a group, supporting each other every step of the way.



## HoMie Day — Fresh Looks and Fresh Starts

Another highlight of the year was our networking day with the HoMie organisation, which specialises in empowering disadvantaged individuals through fashion and grooming. One hundred per cent of their streetwear profits go towards achieving their mission of supporting young people affected by homelessness or hardship.

Residents were treated to haircuts, nail care, and a chance to select new clothes. For many, this was a rare opportunity to experience self-care in a way that boosted their confidence and self-worth.

*The pride and happiness were palpable as residents sported their fresh looks and walked away with a renewed sense of dignity. Beyond the makeovers, the day was also about creating connections — with each other and with the broader community.*

It served as a reminder that everyone deserves to feel good about themselves and that self-expression through personal style can be a powerful tool in fostering confidence and self-respect.



## Oxford Houses Highlights

Oxford Houses Australia (OHA) celebrates significant wins, with residents thriving through our peer-support model and many successfully transitioning to independent living.

*A major milestone was relocating the iconic Barcelona House — one of OHA's original properties.*

Barcelona House, once loved for its pristine pool and converted garage bedroom, held a special place in our community's heart. When maintenance issues mounted, we secured a new property despite the challenging housing market.

*Thanks to our dedicated Alumni and community support, the new Barcelona House quickly established its own vibrant culture while maintaining OHA's core program guidelines.*

## New Initiatives — Fidget Toys for Focus

This year, we also implemented a new initiative to help residents with focus and concentration during group sessions by introducing an array of fidget toys into our group room space.

A surprisingly simple novelty tool, they have proven to be an effective way to assist individuals who may struggle with attention and nervous energy, allowing them to participate more fully in group activities.

*Feedback from residents has been overwhelmingly positive, with many reporting that they feel more engaged and relaxed during group discussions.*

## Good News Story

### Against the odds

Sam (not his real name), now 25, first accessed RSS in late 2022, then returned in April 2024 under a corrections order following his release from prison. His background, however, is far more complex than the label of “former inmate” might suggest. Diagnosed with acute ADHD in childhood but withheld from receiving medication, Sam's journey with self-regulation and mental health challenges began early. By the age of 13, without access to support, Sam had started self-medicating for a range of mental health conditions — ADHD, PTSD, anxiety, and depression — setting him on a tumultuous path that led him in and out of juvenile detention and, later, the adult correctional system.

His first stay at RSS in 2022 was rocky — a medicated detox followed by struggles with peer support and emotional regulation, ultimately ending in relapse. Yet each return showed growing self-awareness and engagement.

Sam's latest assessment revealed a confronting history of abuse and family violence. Without proper support, medication, or trauma-informed care throughout his life, he had desperately tried managing his conditions alone.

His transformation has defied expectations. Once prone to violence and social anxiety, Sam has emerged as someone remarkably self-aware and honest. For the first time, he feels safe and part of a genuine community.

*Now approaching six months substance-free, properly medicated for ADHD, and free of any involvement with law enforcement for the first time in his adult life, Sam has become a role model at RSS. Thanks to his positive influence on peers, he's pursuing further education and being considered for a senior resident position.*

While managing private psychiatric care and prescription costs on Centrelink presented significant hurdles, Sam's determination prevailed. His journey from crisis to stability showcases the profound impact of lived experience support and trauma-informed care.





# 3 Peer Projects

## SHARC Collaborates with International Experts on Lived Experience Initiative

In a groundbreaking move, SHARC was awarded funding to launch the Lived and Living Experience at Heart (LLEAH) Program, aimed at revolutionising the integration of lived experience workforces within Victorian AOD and mental health organisations.

LLEAH is set to enhance organisational capacity, ensuring that the invaluable contributions of lived experience workers are recognised, valued, and supported. The program will boost employee engagement and retention while creating essential career pathways and development opportunities.

*Backed by the Victorian Department of Health, LLEAH collaborates with top experts, including Dr Louise Byrne, Mental Health Victoria, and Yale University.*

Building on SHARC's extensive expertise in the Lived Experience Workforce (LLEW), the program includes two dynamic projects: The Learning Collaborative (TLC) and Supporting Organisational Lived Experience (SOLE).

TLC, Australia's first learning collaborative for lived experience workforces, will connect organisations to foster mentoring and mutual support, leveraging Yale's successful model. Meanwhile, SOLE is designed to assist mental health organisations at any stage of their lived experience workforce development journey.

Get ready for a transformative leap in the way lived experience workforces are embraced across Victoria!

## AOD Lived Experience Workforce Support

Peer Projects continues to broaden its impact, supporting Lived Experience Workforces (LEW) across Victoria's AOD sector and beyond, expanding into Mental Health, Homelessness, Gambling Harm, and Family/Carer support services nationwide.

*Our Lived and Living Experience Workforce (LLEW) Development Program, completed in June 2024, delivered two major achievements:*

- *A revitalised Peer Worker Training program, incorporating insights from the Our Futures report and community feedback*
- *Development of pioneering AOD Consumer and Family Lived Experience Workforce Discipline Frameworks, launching in 2024-2025*

Twenty-two Victorian AOD Peer Workforce members contributed their expertise to these initiatives, with participants noting significant improvements in their practice:

*"I feel more confident after this course... the practical skills I gained have already made a difference in my approach to peer work."*

Following these successes, the Department of Health Victoria has committed to increased funding to strengthen AOD LEW support. This investment will help us equip peer workers with essential skills, fostering more person-centred, inclusive services throughout Victoria.



### Good News Story

#### Our Peer Mentors in Justice Program

Peer Projects' dedicated peer mentors support participants in the Children's Court of Victoria — Family Drug Treatment Court, the Magistrates' Court of Victoria — Drug Treatment Court and the County Court of Victoria — Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court (DATC). Peer mentors are people who have been through similar challenges and now use their experiences to guide others.

Our peer mentors transform these programs through their lived experience, offering something uniquely powerful: an authentic understanding of feeling stuck, overwhelmed and stigmatised. They don't aim to 'fix' participants; instead, they walk alongside them, sharing genuine empathy and practical wisdom gained from their own recovery journeys.

Through weekly support groups and one-on-one connections, our mentors break down barriers and create belonging. They demonstrate recovery is possible by sharing their own stories of transformation, helping participants develop vital coping strategies and life skills.

Our peer mentors' impact extends beyond practical support; they embody hope, showing participants that no matter how challenging the path appears, positive change is achievable.





# 4 Association of Participating Service Users (APSU)

## Speaking up to change the system

APSU's diverse community expertise drive change through their lived experience, transforming both service delivery and systemic approaches.

Throughout the year, our members shaped critical reforms across Victoria's AOD and mental health and wellbeing systems, partnering with the Department of Health among other organisations to develop:

- A Statewide Peer Callback Service supporting those affected by suicide
- Safer Care Victoria's program to reduce compulsory mental health treatment
- Mental health information sharing reforms
- An LGBTIQ+ aftercare program for suicide prevention
- Health-led responses to mental health emergencies

Our members also strengthened key government initiatives, including North-western Melbourne's Health Needs Assessment and the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing's Strategic Plan. Through the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA), they advanced respiratory health programs and helped create an integrated framework for dual diagnosis services.

## Building up PACE

APSU facilitated the establishment of a statewide AOD consumer and family participation community of practice to create a regular meeting place for connecting, building relationships, and sharing knowledge about consumer participation.

*"It's been so satisfying to see AOD consumer voices Victoria-wide coming together in PACE."*

*I firmly believe consumer voices are key to making services better and reducing the stigma we experience, whether as service users or family members.*

*That's why I keep being active and keep doing this work." (PACE member)*

## Good News Story:

### **Daniel Ramazanov shares his experiences volunteering as a project researcher at APSU.**

#### **Project outcomes**

The outcomes of the Age Appropriate AOD Support for Older People will include a report with recommendations and a self-assessment tool for services to measure and build their capabilities in providing age-sensitive AOD support and treatment.

Volunteering on the Age Appropriate AOD Support for Older People project transformed both my perspective and career path. Under Bella Anderson's mentorship at APSU, I found more than just a return to research – I discovered a team that truly values and integrates its volunteers.

*This project opened my eyes to a critical gap: the shortage of AOD support for older adults. Through our focus groups, we uncovered how this community often feels invisible in the system. Their powerful testimonies revealed both systemic failures and potential solutions.*

Working alongside peers who infuse their lived experience into research has deepened my commitment to the AOD and mental health field. The project sharpened my qualitative research skills while letting me apply my neuroscience and biomedical background in meaningful ways. Most importantly, it reinforced what drew me to this work: the potential for growth, community-building, and hope.

I am grateful to our participating members for allowing me to take part in the co-design program and trusting us to communicate their expertise. I found community at APSU and SHARC.



Daniel, APSU's invaluable volunteer with Lola

## The Art of Amplifying Our Voices

Partnering with Three Sides of the Coin (3SOC), APSU delivered innovative Speaker Bureau training. The training was driven by 3SOC's unique, signature performance techniques. All participants discovered new ways to delve into their experiences and share their stories.

*'It challenged every part of me, and I strongly believe that is where growth happens.'*

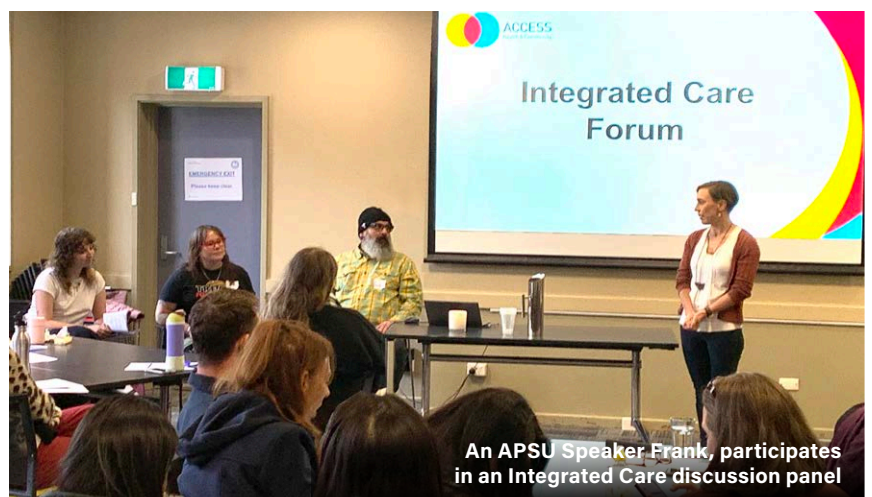
*'I am glad it wasn't optional to participate because I might have taken the easy way and opted not to act in front of people. I am really happy that I challenged myself to do that. Love your work APSU!'*

APSU also piloted a creative writing and storytelling workshop with **Karen McKnight, an award-winning writer** with a talent for storytelling.

*'I don't have to fear writing.'*

*'I tapped into a fun part of myself.'*

*'Sharing myself and hearing others share was really inspiring. I could have listened for hours.'*





# Intentional Peer Support (IPS) ■

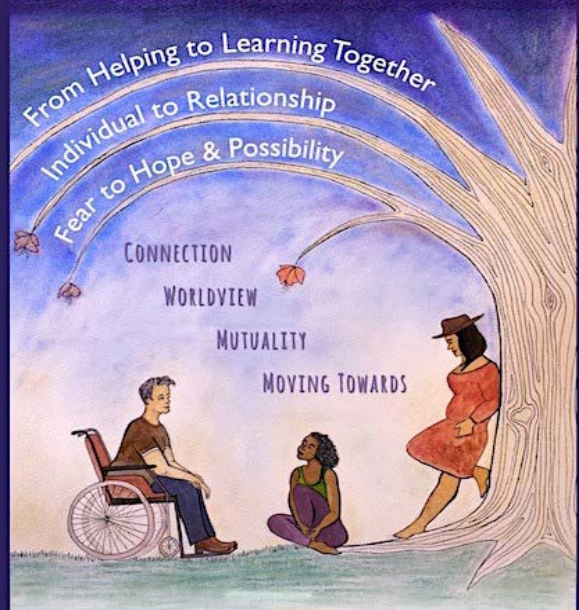
## IPS Embraced Nationally

The IPS Hub has experienced remarkable growth across Australia due to soaring demand. We've forged valuable partnerships across multiple states, from Peninsula Health in Victoria to the Western Australia Mental Health Commission.

Our subsidised IPS Core training has opened doors for community participants previously unable to access the program, helping many return to work and bolstering community participation.

A highlight was hosting US IPS Co-Director Chris Hansen at SHARC in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health for an intensive 'Train the Trainer' session. We celebrated with leaders from Vic Health, SHARC, Community Health, IPS National Trainers, and our vibrant lived experience community.

3 principles and 4 tasks of Intentional Peer Support







# Shared Services Team ■

## Introducing our 'Shared Services Team'

### SHARC's evolution has led to the addition of 'Shared Services'.

2023 marked a transformative milestone for SHARC with the launch of our Shared Services division — a strategic response to our organisation's growth and expanding contracts. This new team unifies our finance, ICT, communications, marketing, and HR operations, providing robust support across all programs.

Under Andrew Wilson's leadership as Manager, Organisational Support and Development, we've strengthened our HR and OHS compliance while revolutionising internal communication. A shining achievement of Andrew's was coordinating the first Organisational Staff Survey, which netted the following notable results:

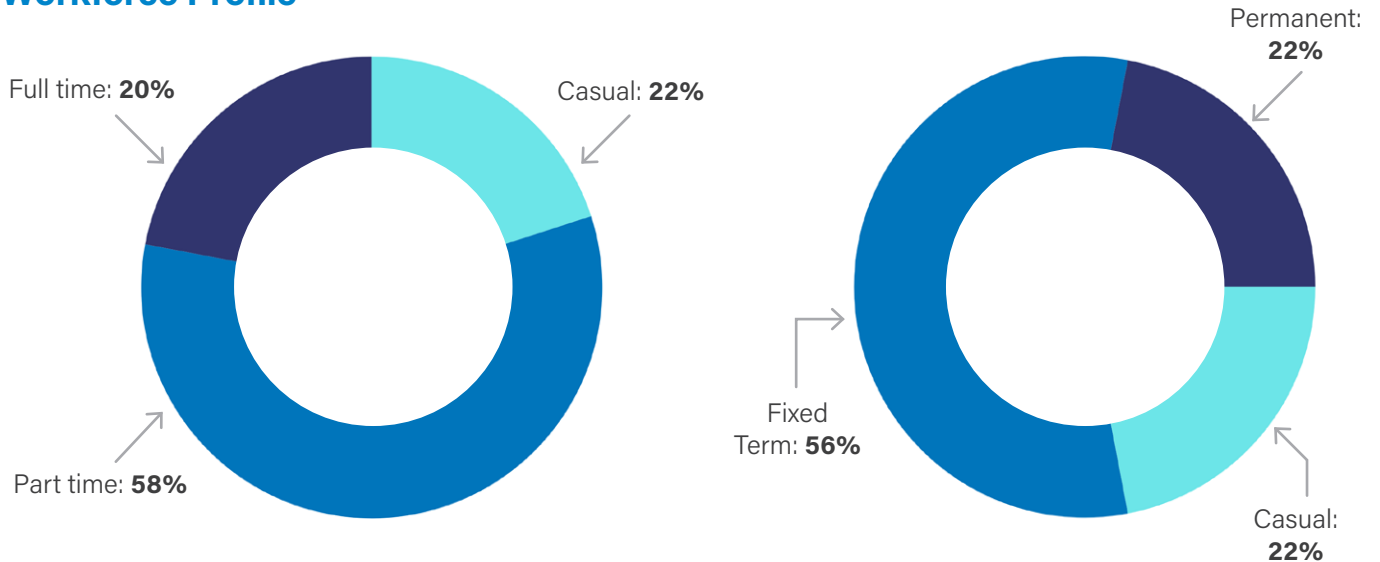
- “ • 97% of SHARC staff would recommend SHARC as a great place to work
- 92% of SHARC staff are proud to work at SHARC
- 89% of SHARC staff feel their managers genuinely care about them and their well-being. ”

Catherine Raine, Manager of Finance, ICT and Contracts, has modernised our financial governance, streamlined reporting processes, and enhanced cybersecurity infrastructure. Meanwhile, Marketing and Communications Lead Raashka Mannie has spearheaded a comprehensive communications refresh, developing strategic frameworks that elevate SHARC's community profile.

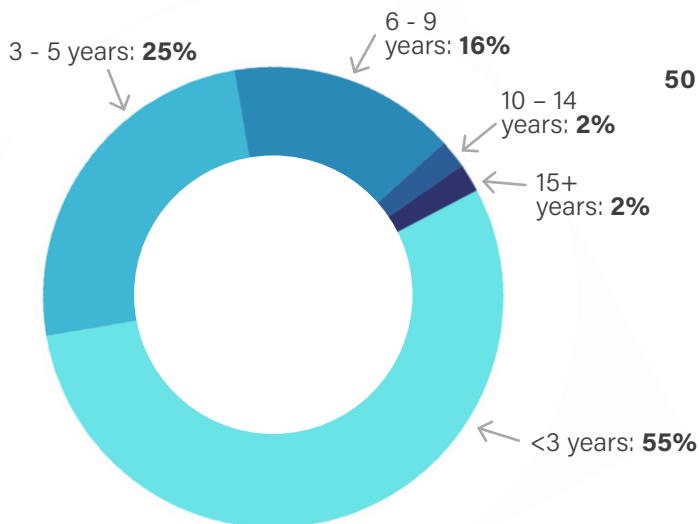
These improvements position SHARC for continued growth and impact in the sector.



## Workforce Profile



## Length of Service



## Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

50 Headcount

32.75 FTE

## Helping to Turn Ideas into Reality – Regina Brindle Grant Program

The Regina Brindle Grant Program awarded \$5,000 to 'Run into Recovery', a new exercise and social group for people in addiction recovery and their supporters.

The grant funded a website and branded merchandise to expand the group's reach. The website hosts personal stories of lived experience while supporting continuous engagement and encouragement with group members.

*The program honours Regina's contributions to consumer advocacy in Victoria's AOD sector, supporting projects that amplify the consumers voice, promote inclusion, and reduce stigma.*

Send application enquiries to [apsu@sharc.org.au](mailto:apsu@sharc.org.au)







Proud members of SHARC's Green Team

## Go Green-Team: Maintaining SHARC's Oasis

SHARC received a **Stronger Communities Grant** from Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah (Federal Member for Higgins) to enhance its front garden with a water feature, outdoor furniture, and new plants.

This project, supported by staff and volunteers, aims to create an inviting and relaxing space for connection while welcoming visitors to SHARC through a leafy entrance to our front doors.

## Going Greener: Our New Triple-Bin System

Keeping up with our commitment to improve our environmental footprint, SHARC introduced a colour coded, easy to identify, triple-bin system to sort our waste better.



(L-R) Andrew, Matthew, Sara and Nic at Midsumma

## Out & About Midsumma

On Sunday, 21 January 2024, SHARC proudly participated in this year's Midsumma Carnival at the Alexandra Gardens in Melbourne. It was a great opportunity for SHARC to network with other service providers and to provide information to the LGBTQIA+ community about the services available at SHARC.



SHARC team in action  
(Karen and Nic) at Midsumma



This little one found a squishy ball on the ground and claimed possession - very cute!





**Judy Thompson**  
**Treasurer's Report**

SHARC achieved a surplus of \$255,142 for the financial year ending 30 June 2024, comprising revenue of \$6.82 million and expenses of \$6.57 million. This surplus represents a net operating margin of 3.7%.

Revenue grew by 36% this year and was primarily driven by increased State government funding and additional fee-for-service activities. This revenue increase demonstrates the demand for and trust in SHARC's lived and living experience expertise, and we anticipate this growth to continue in the future.

*While our revenue increased, our expenses also rose as SHARC continued to expand its services and invest in key areas.*

Employee benefits expenses grew by 27%, reaching \$4.06 million, reflecting our expanding program team and increased service delivery. Staff FTE grew from 41 FTE in June 2023 to 53 FTE in June 2024. We also invested in creating a stronger Shared Services team to support our growing operations.

Program expenses rose by 76%, totalling \$1.07 million. This increase was largely due to additional technical expertise to support the Lived and Living Experience Strategy (LELS) project and the costs associated with the Lived Experience Workforce & Advocacy Client Relationship Management Tool.

Administrative expenses totalled \$398,673, which included a larger investment in ITC Costs, ensuring staff have the tools and systems to work effectively and efficiently. The digital transformation investment of SHARC will continue into the next financial year.

Consulting and professional fees rose to \$426,176, which included the strategic planning process and increased use of the outsourced finance team.

Repairs and maintenance expenses increased to \$66,603 and included set up and maintenance of our new garden, OH&S compliance initiatives and additional general building maintenance.

*SHARC's balance sheet on 30 June 2024 is strong, with Total Assets of \$10.09 million, Liabilities of \$5.43 million and Net Equity of 4.66 million.*

Cash has increased due to income received in advance from the Department of Health for projects that will be delivered next financial year. This increase in Cash is reflected in the growth of income in advance, which rose from \$3.2 million to \$4.2 million.

SHARC has a positive Working Capital ratio of 1.2, with Current Assets at \$6.49 million and Current Liabilities at 5.39 million, demonstrating the organisation is on solid financial ground in terms of liquidity and is able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

*Overall, SHARC has recorded a positive financial result for the year that ended 30 June 2024 and is well positioned to remain financially sustainable while continuing to grow and meet the needs of the community.*

I want to thank all SHARC staff for their support with the significant changes in our finance processes this year, especially the Management and Finance Team for their ongoing assistance.

## Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,852,558	3,033,809
Trade and other receivables	560,378	464,842
Financial assets	3,041,403	1,306,750
Other assets	35,217	50,000
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>6,489,556</b>	<b>4,855,401</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	3,508,563	3,599,544
Right-of-use assets	96,780	114,090
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>3,605,343</b>	<b>3,713,634</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>10,094,899</b>	<b>8,569,035</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade And Other Payables	835,446	531,435
Borrowings	106	219
Lease Liability	65,625	73,446
Employee Benefits	310,355	274,030
Income In Advance	4,176,875	3,232,828
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>5,388,407</b>	<b>4,111,958</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>		
Lease Liability	35,602	47,192
Employee Benefits	12,597	6,738
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<b>48,199</b>	<b>53,930</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>5,436,606</b>	<b>4,165,888</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>4,658,293</b>	<b>4,403,147</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Reserves	1,959,353	1,959,353
Accumulated surpluses	2,698,940	2,443,794
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>4,658,293</b>	<b>4,403,147</b>

## Statement of Profit or Loss & Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>6,822,982</b>	<b>5,024,576</b>
Employee benefits expense	(4,064,051)	(3,209,790)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(164,732)	(198,159)
Finance costs	(8,943)	(12,409)
Program expenses	(1,071,271)	(608,937)
Administrative expenses	(398,673)	(165,246)
Consulting and professional fees	(426,176)	(203,315)
Motor vehicle expenses	(72,142)	(59,989)
Cleaning expenses	(24,140)	(16,814)
Repairs and maintenance	(66,603)	(28,591)
Occupancy expenses	(174,131)	(162,507)
Audit fee	(21,660)	(19,863)
Other expenses	(75,314)	(63,694)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>(6,567,836)</b>	<b>(4,749,314)</b>
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	255,146	275,262
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>255,146</b>	<b>275,262</b>

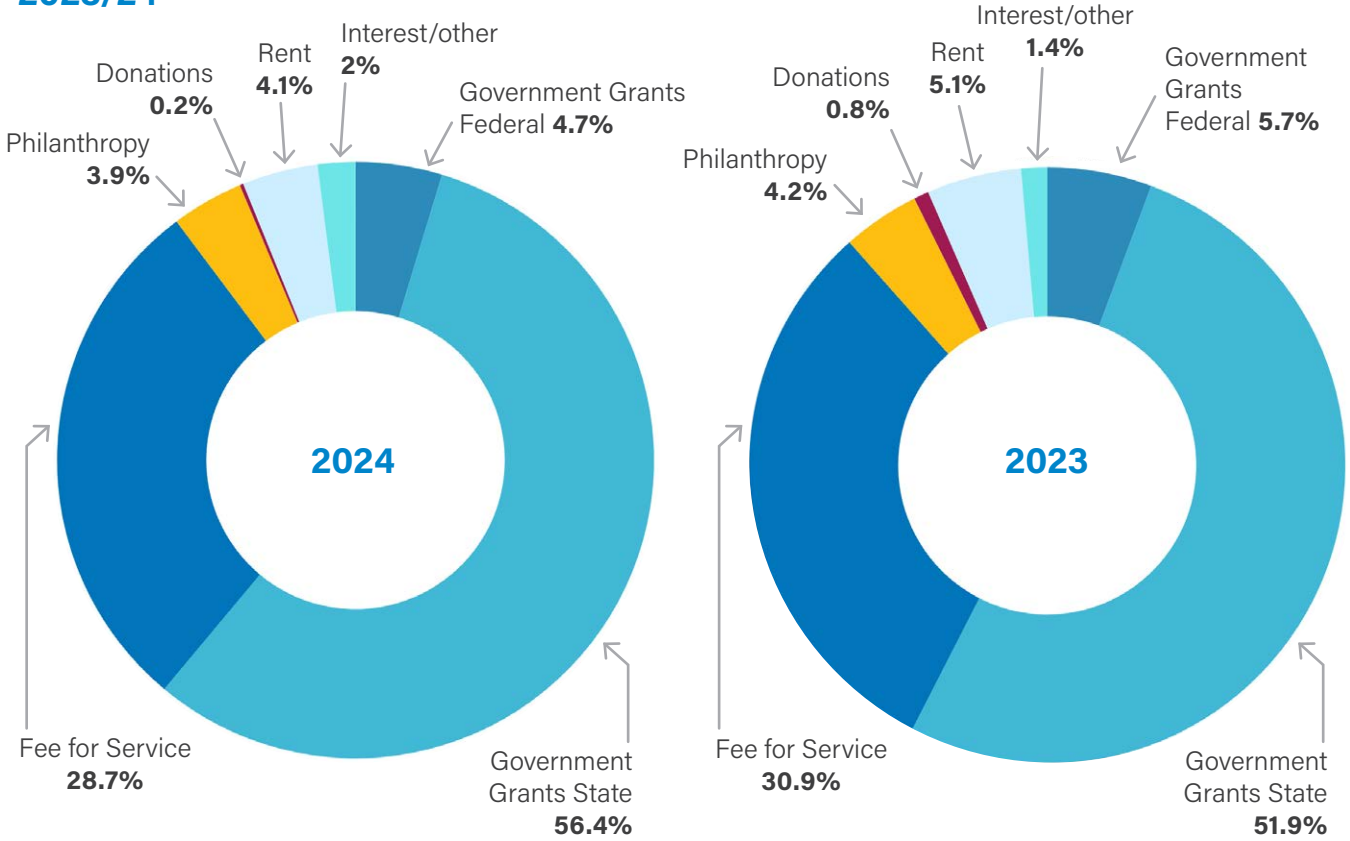


## Statement of Cash Flows

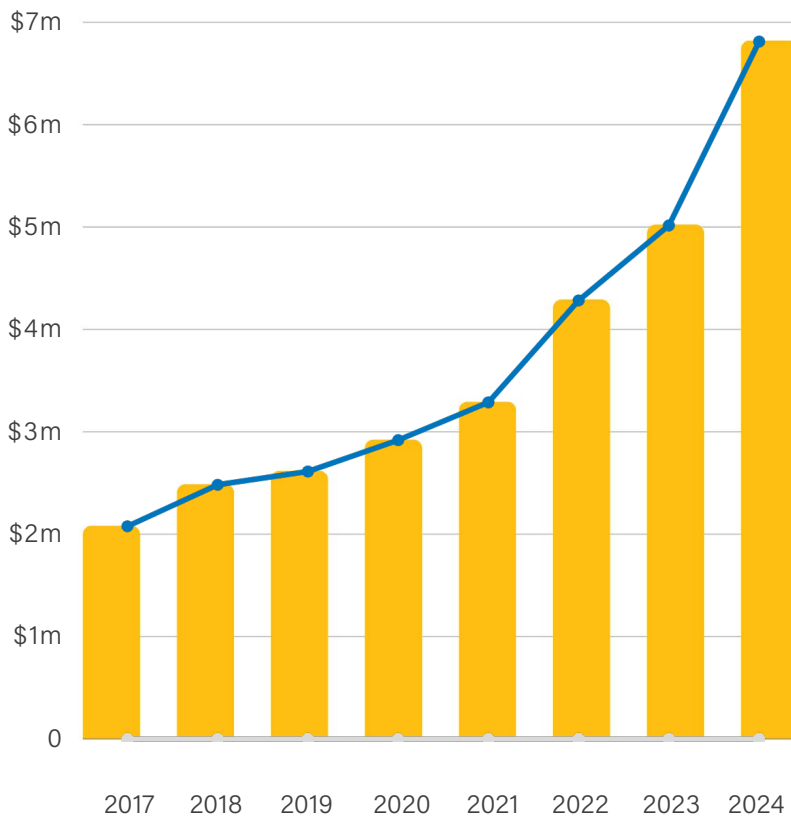
For the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Receipts from government, donors & customers	\$8,351,649	\$5,738,458
Payment to suppliers and employees	(\$6,747,344)	(\$5,041,902)
Interest received	\$77,298	\$44,971
Interest paid	(\$8,943)	(\$10,070)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>\$1,672,660</b>	<b>\$731,457</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Fixed asset purchases	(\$8,237)	(\$87,346)
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	-	\$41,936
Redemption (placement) of term deposits	(\$1,734,653)	(\$906,750)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(\$1,742,890)</b>	<b>(\$952,160)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Net (repayment)/drawdown of bank loan	(\$113)	(\$243)
Payment for lease liabilities	(\$110,908)	(\$121,009)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>	<b>(\$111,021)</b>	<b>(\$121,252)</b>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held</b>	<b>(\$181,251)</b>	<b>(\$341,955)</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year</b>	<b>\$3,033,809</b>	<b>\$3,375,764</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>\$2,852,558</b>	<b>\$3,033,809</b>

## Revenue Mix 2023/24



## Revenue Growth 2017 – 2024



Scan the QR code to open SHARC's complete **2023/24 Financial Report**



## SHARC Supporters & Partners

- Access Health & Community
  - Alcohol and Drug Foundation
  - Anglicare
  - Australian Alcohol and other Drugs Council (AADC)
  - Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (ANMF)
  - Australian Community Support Organisation (ACSO)
  - Australian Government, Department of Health
  - Ballarat Community Health
  - Banyule Community Health
  - Barwon Child, Youth & Family Services
  - Barwon Health
  - Bendigo Health
  - Big Feels Club
  - Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast Primary Health Network
  - Children's Court of Victoria Family Drug Treatment Court
  - Chisholm Institute
  - Connect Health
  - City of Glen Eira
  - City of Monash
  - City Mission Tasmania
  - Colac Area Health
  - Cohealth
  - Code Nation
  - Consumer Participation Practice Network (Victoria)
  - Consumers' Federation of Australia (CFA)
  - Consumers Health Forum
  - County Court of Victoria Drug and Alcohol Treatment Court
  - De Paul House
  - Department of Justice and Community Safety (Victoria)
  - Department of Health (Victoria)
  - Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (Victoria)
  - Deakin University
  - Djerriwarrh Health Services
  - Disability Resource Centre
  - Drug Education Network Tasmania
  - Drug Policy Australia
  - EACH Social and Community Health
  - JAMH (Joint Addiction & Mental Health) ECHO (Extension of Community Healthcare Organisations)
  - Eastern Consortium Alcohol and Drug Services
  - Eastern Health
  - Eastern Peer Support Network
  - Eating Disorders Vic (EDV)
  - Fitzroy Legal Centre
  - Fuse Initiatives
  - Forensicare
  - Frankston & Mornington Drug & Alcohol Service
  - Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education
  - Gambler's Help
  - Gateway Health
  - Genovese Coffee
  - Glenhuntly Medical Centre
  - Gladstone Mindcare
  - Grand Pacific Health
  - Grief Line
  - GV Health
  - Harm Reduction Victoria
  - headspace
  - HealthAbility
  - Health Consumers Centre
  - Hepatitis Victoria
  - Holmesglen Institute of TAFE
  - Ian Rollo Currie Estate Foundation
  - Ian Potter Foundation
  - Impact Co.
  - IMPACT Philanthropy
  - Intentional Peer Support
  - Inspiro Health & Community
  - Islamic Council of Victoria
  - Jesuit Social Services
  - Joe White Bequest
  - KPMG
  - Latrobe Community Health Service
  - Launch Housing
  - Lives Lived Well
  - Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
  - Mackillop Family Services
  - Maddie Riewoldt's Vision
  - McAuley For Women and Children
  - Magistrates' Court of Victoria, Drug Court
  - Matilda Centre
  - Mildura Residential Rehabilitation Withdrawal Service
  - Mental Health Wellbeing Division, Department of Health (MHWD, DH)
  - MIND Australia
  - Moorabbin Justice Centre
  - Monash University
  - Monash Health
  - Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place
  - Murray PHN
  - MyCentre Multicultural Youth Centre
  - Narcotics Anonymous
  - NAS Recovery
  - Nexus Dual Diagnosis Service
  - North Richmond Community Health
  - North and West Metro Alcohol and Drug Service (NWMAODS)
  - North Western Melbourne PHN
  - Northern District Community Health Services
  - Nurses and Midwives Health Program Australia (NMHPA)
  - Odyssey House Victoria
  - Office of Responsible Gambling
  - Pennington Institute
  - Peninsula Health
  - Portland District Community Health
  - Primary Care Connect
  - Rainbow Committee
  - Reclink
  - Red Panther
  - Relationships Australia Victoria
  - RMIT
  - Roses in the Ocean
  - Rotary Albert Park
  - Run into Recovery
  - Sacred Heart Mission
  - SANDAS
  - Second Bite
  - SECADA
  - St Vincent's Health Australia
  - South Eastern Melbourne PHN
  - South West Healthcare
  - Star Health
  - Sunbury Community Health
  - Switchboard
  - TACSI (The Australian Centre for Social Innovation)
  - Tandem
  - Tasmanian Health Service
  - Taskforce
  - The Bouverie Centre
  - The Outdoor Experience (TOE)
  - The Link AOD Youth Service Tasmania
  - The Salvation Army Victoria
  - The Salvation Army Tasmania Bridge Program
  - The Salvation Army Australia Territory, Social Mission Department
  - The University of Melbourne
  - Today Design
  - Turning Point
  - Uniting AoD Vic/Tas
  - University of New South Wales
  - Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)
  - Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing (VCCMHW)
  - Victorian Government Department of Health
  - Victorian Legal Aid
  - Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC)
  - Victorian and Tasmanian PHN Alliance
  - Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation
  - Vincent Care
  - Voices for Change
  - Wellways
  - Western Region Alcohol and Drug Centre (WRAD)
  - Western Health
  - Westcoast Youth and Community Support (South Australia)
  - Youth Drug and Alcohol Advice (YODAA)
  - Youth Support & Advocacy Service
  - YWCA Australia
  - Yale University
- The Lived and Living Experience community
- We also gratefully acknowledge the generous support of individual and family donors





### Diversity Statement

SHARC values and celebrates diversity and is committed to providing inclusive services that are sensitive and responsive.

### Copyright statement

This report was developed by the community, leaders and members of SHARC (Self Help Addiction Resource Centre).

#### SHARC

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Self Help Addiction Resource Centre Inc. is an incorporated association registered in Victoria (No. A0032803B) - ABN 18 052 525 948 - ARBN 660 199 940

**Helpline 24/7  
1300 660 068**

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