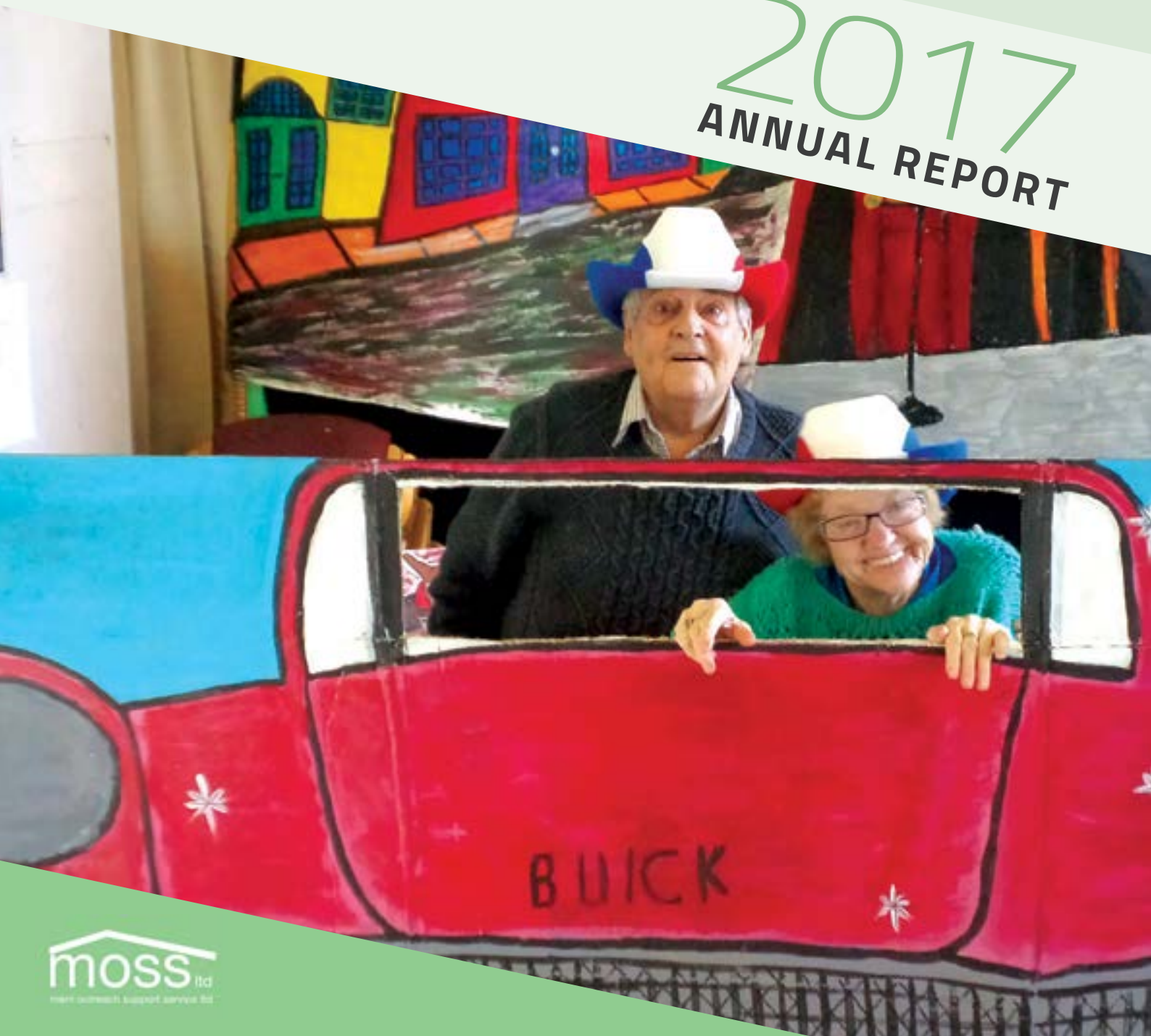


# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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# MISSION & VISION statements



## Get in touch online

Email us [merri@merri.org.au](mailto:merri@merri.org.au) or visit our website at:

▪ [www.merri.org.au](http://www.merri.org.au)

Merri Outreach Support Service acknowledges that we are on Kulin land for which traditional owners and their forebears have been custodians for many centuries and one on which indigenous people have performed age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region



## MISSION STATEMENT

Merri Outreach Support Service works to provide people who experience or are at risk of experiencing homelessness the opportunities to enjoy the security of connections, participation, contribution and control within their chosen communities. Merri Outreach Support Service works for change through individualised assistance, advocacy, community development and research. Advocacy work occurs at both the individual and the social policy level. Individualised assistance includes case management, practical assistance, referral, advocacy and information provision for individuals who experience or are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

## VISION STATEMENT

Merri Outreach Support Service seeks to address the unfair distribution of wealth, power and access to community benefits of our current social structure by working for and with women, men and children who experience or are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

While recognising the social causes and context of homelessness, Merri Outreach Support Service respects the unique experience, needs and abilities of each person who experiences or is at risk of experiencing homelessness. Merri Outreach Support Service recognises their rights to grow, learn and be healthy.



Commonwealth Home Support Program



Australian Government

Supported by the Australian Government  
Department of Health



## Chair Person's Report

Karen Sherry

This year the former Committee of Governance of MOSS Inc and the present MOSS Ltd Board of Directors reviewed MOSS's Governance processes. Our review highlighted the importance of our commitment to our principles, to MOSS staff, clients and our community. The significant time and effort we have put into examining our governance will mean that we will emerge stronger and bolder. It is an exciting time with many opportunities ahead for MOSS.

I thank the following for their work on the Board this year; Prameend Singh as the former Secretary who did a lot of work to establish MOSS Ltd as a company, Mark Goodie as Treasurer, Steve Gagen as Deputy Chairperson, Alison Dumaresq, Angela Pitts, Phillip Di Biase, Philip Murphy, Oscar Ramos, Gurhan Araci and Younes Benhim.

At a Special General Meeting of MOSS Inc. held in January it was resolved to move MOSS to a new structure, that of a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). Upon registration in February we became known as Merri Outreach Support Service Ltd. The benefits of transferring to a new structure include:

- The long established view of the public and our funding bodies such as DHHS, that a CLG is a more professional, transparent and accountable structure than an Incorporated Association.
- The obligation to appoint a registered company auditor (to enhance our accountability).
- The relative ease of having subsidiary entities (e.g. social enterprises and other charity entities).
- The ability to "conduct business" if ever needed, in states other than Victoria.
- That there are no downsides to changing from an Incorporated Association to a CLG.

Other comparable organisations have already taken this step, for example Unison (formerly Yarra) Community Housing, Launch Housing, Hope Street Youth and Family Services, all of the Victorian Community Health services including Your Community Health (formerly Darebin) and Merri Health, plus many other organisations.

I thank the following former MOSS Inc Committee of Governance members for their work during this financial year: Marion Patterson (Deputy Chairperson), ordinary members Jock Allan, Colleen Turner, Janet Hall, Mary Zaccari and Richard Grant. We also note the passing of Terry Richards, a former MOSS Inc Committee of Governance member in previous years who gave a lot of own his time and effort to support the Shrivings program at Brunswick.

On behalf of the MOSS Ltd Board of Directors, I thank Rob Sago, Tony Littman, Katrina McAuley and staff for their work over the last 12 months. A special thanks to Tony Littman for his hard work and commitment as Acting CEO during Rob's absence.

We are looking forward to the coming year.

Regards,  
Karen Sherry  
Chairperson



Chair Person  
Karen Sherry



## CEO's Report

Tony Littman

The year in review, 2016/2017 financial year has been one of much change and significant achievement for Merri Outreach Support Service.

After 20 years at the helm, the Agency's esteemed CEO, Rob Sago resigned. Rob was appointed Coordinator of Merri Housing Service in 1996, one of a workforce of only four staff members. MOSS has grown considerably since then, to a point where we now offer a broad suite of homelessness support programs from multiple sites across the North and West Metropolitan regions. MOSS now has over 70 staff members on its payroll, as well as a team of volunteers. For most of us, Rob has been a constant presence and was synonymous with MOSS. We thank him for his contribution, commitment to homeless people and MOSS and wish him the very best in what lies ahead.

Merri Outreach Support Service has grown to become a significant and respected homelessness support agency and one of the major players in the Northern Region of Melbourne. We continue to

explore better ways to deliver programs and our service models, including Bright Futures, older persons' responses and team case management to name a few, attract interest across the sector. Our input into reform agendas is sought. Imitation is the ultimate form of flattery.

New partnerships continue to develop and evolve. Our partnership with Unison at Pearcedale Parade and Mount Street are one example which shows what a willingness to try new models can achieve. These are very much win, win arrangements as we open up housing opportunities for homeless people, save at risk tenancies from breaking down and build a stronger sense of community.

Accreditation has been very much a part of the community sector's landscape for the past decade. MOSS has prided itself on embracing these processes and used them as opportunities to build excellence in practice and function. Early 2017 saw us up for recertification against the Human Services Standards and the ISO9001:2015 Quality Management System. I was delighted



we received no non-conformities, an achievement which is very endorsing of our systems and service delivery. A further quality review took place against the Home Care Standards with the Social Support Groups in scope, as part of the Commonwealth Home Support Program. Again all standards were met.

The Victorian State Government is rolling out an imposing reform agenda, including homelessness reform with a commitment to 3 Launch Sites across 3 catchments, one being the Hume Moreland catchment. The Launch Sites have been established to design and test new service approaches to reduce homelessness and trial new initiatives before scaling up successes across the state. Given our presence in Broadmeadows, MOSS is contributing widely at the various levels of project implementation. The welcome introduction of the Victorian Housing Register has been another reform initiative impacting on teams.

Reforms have not been confined to the State. Over the past 12 months we have been feeling our way through a HACC transition, with funding for over 65yos (>50yo for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) shifting to the Commonwealth. The introduction of My Aged Care on 1 July 2016 is a significant reform in service access, with staff continuing to build understanding of how we interface. The NDIS has been another significant reform with a staged roll out to the different local government areas. MOSS has applied for registration in anticipation of funding opportunities.

Acting CEO  
Tony Littman



**"MOSS continues to deliver high quality, relevant services to homeless people and those experiencing housing vulnerability."**

We commend the Commonwealth's commitment to recurrent indexed funding for our program areas presently funded under the Victorian National Partnership on Homelessness, effective from 1 July 2018. Bright Futures in particular has gone through anxious periods awaiting confirmation of funding and this certainty is welcomed. This also brings more certainty to Children's Brokerage and to Catchment funding.

The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, with its 231 recommendations is progressively being implemented. Family violence is the leading cause of homelessness and our service users have already benefitted from some of the new resources available. We look forward to being able to access additional supports for our service users affected by family violence and potential opportunities for the Agency to contribute.

In early 2017, MOSS changed its legal status from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. We said farewell to some long standing Committee of Governance members, namely Colleen Turner, Jock Allan and Janet Hall, whilst welcoming new MOSS Board Directors. We acknowledge and thank those departing for their significant contribution and look forward to new relationships and directions. I thank the MOSS Board of Directors for their support.

MOSS continues to deliver high quality, relevant services to homeless people and those experiencing housing vulnerability. Consumer surveys indicate many of our people's lives are immeasurably better for the support they have received from MOSS. Numerous program areas help build and sustain vibrant, meaningful communities, nourishing our service users. MOSS staff members and volunteers are to be congratulated on their tenacity and commitment to improving the lives of others. This could not happen without the support of the Administration Team who keep the organisation's wheels oiled. I would particularly like to acknowledge fellow Management Team member Katrina McAuley, for her support and hard work. Exciting times lay ahead.....

Tony Littman  
A/CEO

## North West Regional Children's Resource Program Report [NWRCRP]

Merri Outreach Support Service is the auspice agency for the North West Regional Children's Resource Program (NWRCRP). The NWRCRP manage the Homeless Children's Brokerage Program which is a state-wide initiative, funded through the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness. Earlier this year it was announced that this funding agreement would be an ongoing arrangement, which provides important security in the support of children experiencing homelessness and family violence.

The brokerage program was established to enhance opportunities for children experiencing homelessness and family violence. Its three main aims are:

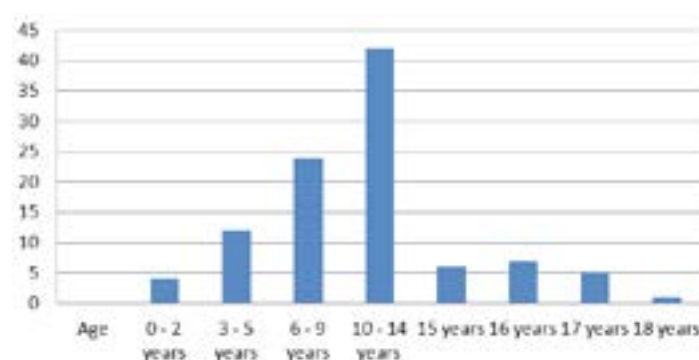
- To engage and maintain children in their education (including early education services such as childcare and kindergarten),
- To reduce social isolation by enhancing access to a range of specialist supports, and social and recreational opportunities within their community, and
- To provide social and emotional growth opportunities for children and provide opportunities to increase relational bonds between parents/carers and their children.

The Homeless Children's Brokerage Program also aims to provide further encouragement to homelessness and family violence providers to integrate child focused assessment and case planning into their work practice.

Over the 2016 -2017 financial year, 108 children from the North and West regions have been supported. The majority of children were aged between 6 and 14 years, from single parent families and with a non- indigenous background.

This year the Homeless Children's Brokerage Program has seen an increase in demand in providing assistance children to become 'school ready' by providing items such as school books and technology. However, the flow-on effect from providing more assistance for children to be 'school ready' is that there is less brokerage available to assist children to meaningfully engage in community and recreational activities.

### Age of Children Supported



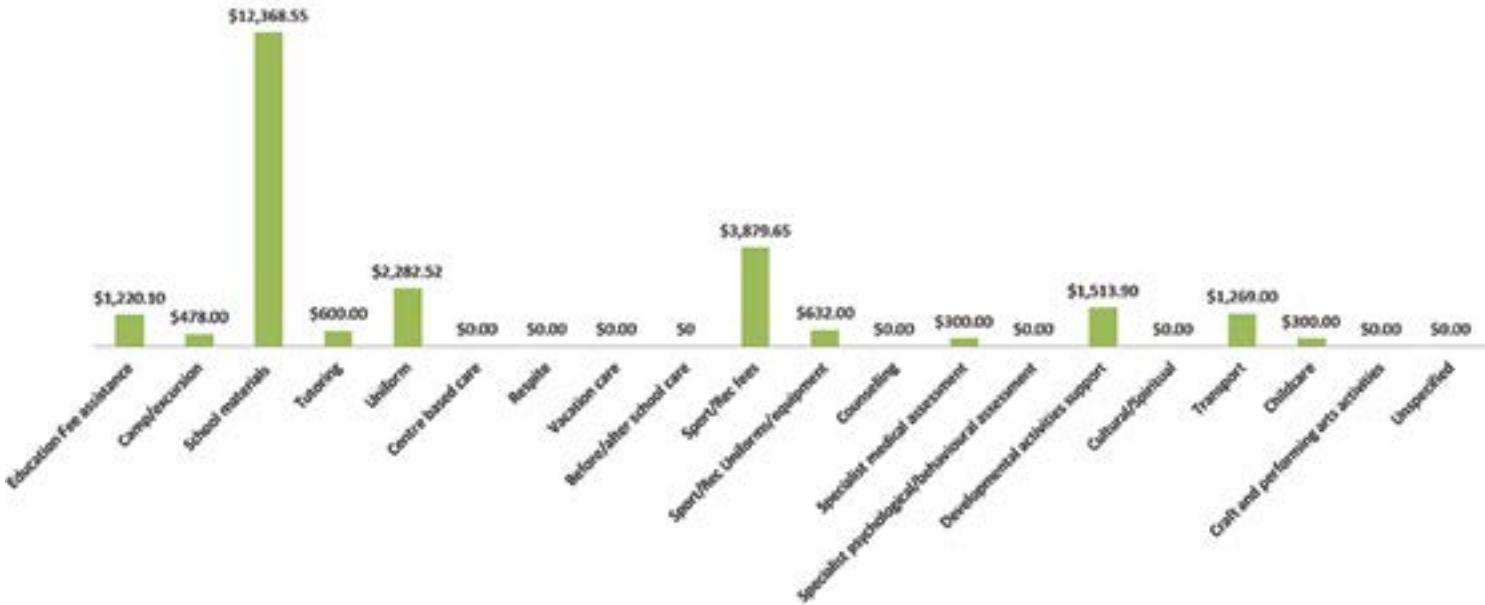
The Children's Resource Program has been proactive in raising the issue of the burden of school costs on low income families. A report was sent to government ministers outlining the financial difficulty that disadvantaged families face to be able to fully engage with education, urging an increase in funding to meet the increasing needs as well as the importance of the ongoing funding of the Homeless Children's Brokerage Program.

The Children's Resource Program is privileged to be able to assist case managers and practitioners to better support children experiencing homelessness and family violence. The use of the Homeless Children's Brokerage Program this year shows there is an increasing need for support for children who are affected by homelessness and family violence. As the only brokerage program specifically targeted at children the Homeless Children's Brokerage Program remains an important option for service providers to access within a suite of brokerage options.

### Family Type



NWRCRP Expenditure



NWRCRP rteam members Halime and Luisa

Brokerage Success Story

We applied for access to the Homeless Children’s Brokerage Program for swimming lessons for two young siblings from a CALD family. The family had spent time in a refugee camp and had recently arrived in Australia. The children had never been exposed to a swimming pool and the look of delight as they had their first lesson was priceless.

They have now been doing swimming lessons for two terms and have improved exceptionally. Every time I visit they love to tell me all of the new things they learn and just how well they are doing.

Their self-esteem has definitely increased since starting the swimming lessons and they have made lots of new friends. The family is so appreciative for the brokerage funds.



# Bright Futures Report

Bright Futures (Homeless Children's Specialist Support Service) works with infants, children and young people, 0-18 years who are accompanying their parent/s through the homelessness and/or family violence sectors. Bright Futures is currently made up of 5 EFT positions consisting of a Team Leader, 2 Children's Specialist Case Managers, a Children's Specialist Group Worker and the newly appointed Children and Mothers in Mind Clinical Practitioner. From January 2017-July 2017 Bright Futures also had a 0.4 EFT Counsellor/Advocate, piloting Stream 4 Counselling/Advocacy.

## Stream 4 – Counselling/Advocacy

Over the course of Bright Futures' existence we have received repeated requests to provide an outreach-based therapeutic intervention that would be responsive to the unique needs of children experiencing homelessness and family violence as current centre-based therapeutic services were not meeting the identified needs of these children.

In 2016 Bright Futures were approached by StreetSmart and offered the opportunity to apply for a grant of up to \$10,000 for a project we were running or wanted to run. Bright Futures took up the opportunity with excitement, applying for a grant to run a six month pilot of Stream 4 with a 0.2 EFT. Bright futures were successful in receiving \$11,000 from StreetSmart which MOSS then added to in order to take the position up to 0.4 EFT.

Stream 4 (S4) was piloted between February 2017 and July 2017 and provided support to five children (across four families) between the ages of six and 12. Four of the children lived in the Northern Metropolitan area of Melbourne, one child lived in the Western Metropolitan area of Melbourne. All of the children lived with their mother and had infrequent to no contact with their fathers, 4/5 of who were the identified perpetrator of family violence. All S4 clients had been through Stream 1 and were being

concurrently supported in Stream 2 alongside S4. Four children were supported in one-on-one counselling sessions occurring at their school whilst one child was supported in a parent (mother)-child dyadic model, with sessions occurring at home. Three of the children received medium-term interventions ranging from 12-15 sessions, whilst two children were supported through a brief intervention model of four sessions.

Some of the main themes of support for the five children were:

- Supporting children to make sense and meaning out of their experiences, specifically violence and separation from their fathers
- Enhancing a child's safety
- Advocating for the child's needs by engaging their support system
- Building a children's protective behaviours
- Strengthening the mother-child relationship in the context of family violence perpetrated by the children's father
- Building emotional intelligence
- Identity – Helping a child develop alternative stories to their negative identity conclusions
- Support that is responsive to the mother's mental health and parenting capacity through an anti-oppressive and trauma-informed lens

The feedback from the S4 clients, their parents and the Counsellor/Advocate was positive, highlighting the benefit of the outreach model as well as the opportunity for accessing therapeutic support. Bright Futures are now in the process of capturing the amazing work that was done and looking for opportunities to provide Stream 4 in the future.



**"Bright futures were successful in receiving \$11,000 from StreetSmart which MOSS then added to in order to take the position up to 0.4 EFT. "**



## Children and Mother's in Mind

In early 2017 Bright Futures were invited to join a consortium of services across Melbourne tendering for money through the Therapeutic Interventions funding (State funding) that came about following the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The tender, which was successful, is to run the Children and Mother's in Mind program.

Children and Mother's in Mind (CMiM) is an Australian first program for mothers and children (four years and under) who have experienced family violence and no longer live with the perpetrator. CMiM is a 22-week evidence-informed program that takes a "two generations" approach, focusing on both the mother and child. CMiM works from a relational trauma and attachment theory base, with the aim of providing early support to mothers and infants to overcome the impact of trauma resulting from family violence, amongst other aims such as decreasing isolation, increasing parenting capacity and strengthening mother-child bonds. The model includes an additional case work component throughout the program, distinguishes CMiM from traditional counselling or case work models of intervention.

Bright Futures will run groups in the Northern Metropolitan area in partnership with Children's Protection Society, who are also leading the project. Bright Futures are excited to be part of this project and look forward to seeing how it develops.

## Connections Team Report

The Connections Program brings together the Community Connections Program and Active Connections. We support people experiencing homelessness and housing issues accompanied with complex unmet health needs across North East Metro Area who often fall through the service delivery gaps. Active Connections focuses support for people over 55 years old living in social and low cost housing. The Broadmeadows based team includes 5.5EFT.

To facilitate effective and timelier service responses, the Connections Program started using electronic tablets in 2015 and we have continued to build on this innovation to aid better outreach service delivery. Electronic tablets allow easy access to our web-based database Service Record System (SRS) so that we can access required information during outreach visits. We can also demonstrate to clients how their information is recorded and stored, creating a more transparent system.

Electronic tablets enable the traditional office environment to be taken into the client's living space. Clients' Initial Needs Assessments are conducted in their accommodation where possible or other community space. Referral documents and release of information forms that clients need to sign can now be done directly on the tablets, saving waste paper and making safer and direct storage of documents without needing to return to the office, allow more immediacy of response. External referrals can be made in the presence of the client. Efficiency gains means the team can focus on support plans and accomplishing quality housing and health outcomes.

Referrals are also taken from a range of external and internal services. External referrals include Haven; Home, Safe, local councils aged and disability departments, RDNS Homeless Persons Program, Unison. Internal referrals include self-referrals and sometimes concerned neighbours. The Program proactively engages new clients through assertive outreach to Public Housing estates, special residential services and rooming houses across the North East Metro Area.

**"We support people experiencing homelessness and housing issues accompanied with complex unmet health needs across North East Metro Area who often fall through the service delivery gaps."**

Typically support responses link clients to community health services, occupational therapy, podiatry, dentistry, dietetics, mental health services, RDNS and other specialist supports required for better health outcomes. Clients are linked to the new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or My Aged Care for support packages to enable continued independence into the future and to address the impacts of aging and disability on the person and their families. At the end of the day we aim to support our clients to be able to sustain their housing in the community and avoid prematurely entering nursing homes or hospitals due to unmet health needs and isolation.



### Case Study

The Connections Program received a referral from the local Homelessness Access Point, outlining the needs of a 76 year old male war veteran, with no social or family connections and who was homeless and was suffering from a chronic health disorder, stress and anxiety. He spoke very limited English. The referral provided no address and only a mobile contact number, and for 4 weeks the Connections Program persisted in trying to make contact. This happened when Mr Huong visited a DHHS Housing Office to discuss his housing application and he was redirected to the Connections Program which arranged an assessment.

Mr Huong outlined how he had separated from his wife 8 years prior and that he had minimal contact with his adult children, who lived interstate. Since then he described a transient lifestyle, spending time with his daughter and with various friends of the family. At that time, he was staying in a friend's garage, with no running water and only a basin to wash. He cooked all meals using a rice cooker and slept on a mat, on the concrete floor. Mr Huong was unable to access the hot shower at this friend's property, he was supported to use the shower at the local leisure centre with a HACC (Home and Community Care) worker twice a week though the local council.

Mr Huong health was poor. he had been suffering from lung cancer and this was now in remission but he still suffered from high blood pressure and his living situation was causing heightened stress and anxiety.

Mr Huong was assisted to access Transitional Housing through the local Access Point, and later into a safe, permanent, affordable and appropriate older persons unit through DHHS Housing property. He was provided with a suite of furniture and white goods to allow him to settle in and to make good use of the accommodation.

Throughout the engagement period with Mr Huong, he continued to experience financial hardship though addiction to gambling. Many methods of supporting him to manage his rent payments were undertaken. He was internally referred to MOSS's Housing Support for the Aged Program for continued support around his hospital visits and rent monitoring, given associated risk of homelessness due to rent arrears.

Mr Huong is familiar with his location and is a short trip from shopping and other amenities. He smiles broadly when he speaks of his new home as he has not experienced such peace and comfort for many years.

\*\* Huong is a pseudonym





## Older Persons High Rise Report



### COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM

Older Persons High  
Rise Support Program  
Brunswick

### Older Persons High Rise Support Worker Barkly Street

The Older Persons High Rise Support Program (OPHRSP) has been operating at Barkly Street, Brunswick for just over 5 years. The Program has become a crucial addition to the two other programs (Volunteer Coordination and Social Support Group) there.

The Program continues to support and case manage residents in the building assisting with a variety of tenants' issues including, complex health issues, referrals to appropriate services, advocacy and support, general counselling, tenant disputes, assisting in maintaining tenancies, transportation and community development activities. There have been some great outcomes in the past year, supporting clients to maintain their tenancies, access health and support, move into supported accommodation and work with families and carers.

The Program continues to offer a responsive, professional service to all current and new tenants whilst also assisting clients from the surrounding area.

For the 2016-2017 financial year, the program continues to meet its targets set by management and DHHS, having serviced 42 clients. The program utilised its budget of \$24K during the year in the context of case management to support people requiring support on the estate.

The program's worker continues to work closely with the Volunteer Coordinator, referring clients in the building who would otherwise be isolated from services. Through activities run by the volunteers like the food bank, pool competition and barbecues, the program can engage with more social isolated tenants providing opportunity for links to support this vulnerable population.

Betty & John, Older Persons  
High Rise Support Program  
Northcote

Throughout the year the OPHRSW has also worked closely with the Broadmeadows Office of Housing to address some of the concerns residents have with security on the estate. Residents have reported an increase in people who do not reside in the building coming in to the building to sleep in the laundry, purchase drugs, use communal laundry facilities and visit friends in the middle of the night.

New security measures have been implemented including increased police patrols, additional security cameras and a 24 hour fob access to the building. This will hopefully cut down criminal activity and deter people who do not live in the building from coming in and staying in the building.

I would like to thank my team members Stephanie Bell and Sarah Goodie for all their hard work and contributions to the Housing Support for the Aged program and to Lyn Darmanin our Volunteer Coordinator for her support throughout the year.

### Older Persons High Rise Support Program Holmes Street

The OPHRSW office is located at Holmes Street, Northcote, which is a public housing high rise estate for over 55 year olds. The OPHRSW is staffed by two full-time workers and has been operating since 2011.

The program provides support to the tenants within the estate. Support can be varied and focused on identifying and addressing unmet health and social needs. The program aims to engage and support isolated and vulnerable tenants to access support and services, support tenants to develop independence and a sense of community and security, assist tenants at risk to maintain their tenancies and support tenants to participate in social and recreational activities



During the 2016/2017 year OPHRSP have provided individual support to 100 tenants and provided group support (activities) to 64 tenants. OPHRSP have provided information and referrals to health and allied health services, My Aged Care, NDIS, personal safety services, recreational activities and material aid providers. We have also provided support and advocacy with relation to utilities, end of life preparation, Department of Housing, home care package providers, VCAT hearings and Centrelink.

Activities OPHRSP have offered on the estate are annual hearing tests facilitated by Australian Hearing mobile bus service, lawn bowls competition, Bread Program through Bakers Delight, Community garden program facilitated by Cultivating Communities, Bike loan program (bicycles and electronic 3-wheeled trikes), non-denominational prayer service facilitated by a local Parish, singing and dancing with live entertainment and an end of year/Christmas celebration.

Community development activities continue with our weekly morning tea. We have a regular volunteer (tenant) who assists with food preparation and is an ex-chef. We have another volunteer (tenant) who assists with serving the food and cleaning up. Both volunteers are passionate about their roles which give them a sense of purpose. We have had organisations come to morning tea to provide information on services available in the community.

Some organisations have included Victorian Ombudsman, Continence Vic, U3A (University of 3rd Age), Victoria Police Crime prevention officer, Arthritis Vic, Your Community Health dietitian (previously Darebin Community Health) and Public Transport Vic. We also celebrate events during the year such as Harmony Day, Grand Final Day and so on.

OPHRSP have facilitated several outings over the past year which have all been successful and well attended. Some of these include a trip to Cuckoo Restaurant in Olinda to celebrate Christmas in July, an outing to the cinema with coffee and cake afterward, an outing to Caribbean Gardens & Markets with afternoon tea, a visit to Lavandular Farm and Devonshire tea at Shepherds Flat & lunch at Hanging Rock.

## Consumer feedback:

*"When I first moved into Holmes Street I did not know what to expect but since I moved in it has been the best thing I have done. I get on well with the staff and other people that live here. What is really good is that we have programs and great trips. It is fun. I have gone to lots of places I had never been to so it has opened a lot of doors. Also you do feel like you are really important to the staff."*

LORRAINE CROFT

## Intergenerational Day

OPHRSP were excited to facilitate a new initiative, which we hope will continue in some form or another. Westgarth Primary School children were invited to attend the Holmes Street estate in hopes of fostering intergenerational connections within the local community. We were fortunate to have a group of grade 6 children come along with the school's Assistant Principal.

The children spent time with the tenants, talking and engaging respectfully with them. The children were polite, asked a variety of questions and were genuinely interested in making connections. The children were carefully selected by the school and were required to submit an expression of interest in order to participate in the initiative.

Tenants were informed of the pending visit and it was suggested they bring along items of interest that they were happy to share and talk about. One tenant brought his war medals and coin collection which he showed off proudly. He kindly gifted some coins to the children he connected with, whom were surprised and grateful.

We provided a space which was both informal and inviting. We arranged to have a balloonologist attend who roamed around, making balloons of all shapes and sizes. We also had a mobile petting zoo set up which was a welcome surprise for both the children and tenants alike. The room was buzzing and full of chatter and laughter. Fun was had by all making the day a huge success!

Grade 6 students from Westgarth Primary School



## Housing Support for the Aged Report

The Housing Support for the Aged Program (HSAP) at MOSS is based at 351 Barkly Street, Brunswick and sits alongside the Older Person's High Rise Program. It provides outreach case management to people over 55 years old who reside in public housing who have chronic health and social issues. It is staff by two part timers Stephanie Bell and Sarah Goodie.

The program has a social support component and monthly breakfasts are hosted in local cafes for all the clients to meet and catch up in a social situation. Many social events have been organised for clients throughout the past year with trips to the theatre, concerts, sporting events and outings with other team activities.

Steph and Sarah provide comprehensive case management with a focus on health rehabilitation and stability. One of the common themes for this group of clients is chronic health issues that are poorly managed and reviewed. A lot of the work our team does goes into ensuring all medical appointments are kept and that advocacy and support is provided to ensure that health plans are communicated and implemented. This can be an enduring process in attempts to keep people out of hospital and independent as long as possible in their own homes. Both Steph and Sarah have done a great job providing support to 26 clients in the past financial year over five local government areas.

Stabilising clients housing has also been a great challenge to the team and ensuring that clients are paying their rent and meeting their financial obligations has been a focus for the case plans. The introduction of bill smoothing with utility companies and Centrepay has prevented many clients from accumulating debt and sustaining their tenancies. The team has had some amazing outcomes in the past year and Sarah and Steph are to be commended for all their hard work and commitment.



### Case Study: HSAP

Elvis (pseudonym) is a 78 year old single male who has been a consumer of Merri Outreach Support Service for over 16 years.

Elvis has been residing in a first floor bedsit in Northcote for over 15 years. He lives with ongoing chronic health issues, behavioural and anxiety issues, cognitive impairment and an Acquired Brain Injury. Elvis has a history of being institutionalised. Elvis does not cope well with any form of change.

In August 2015 Elvis was admitted to St Vincent's Hospital with severe thrush and ulcers in his mouth. After some days the admitting issue had been addressed with antibiotics and steroids, however, doctors were unwilling to discharge Elvis due to concerns with his level of confusion.

One and a half weeks later HSAP team was advised Elvis was being assessed by the ACAS (Aged Care Assessment Service) team due to concerns regarding his poor cognition and ability to live independently.

HSAP team discussed Elvis's strong connection to the local community and supports to maintain Elvis's wish to remain living independently, including HSAP support and advocacy, HACC services and meal delivery. It was confirmed Elvis was able to self-care, controlled his own finances including management of rent, utility and services payments.

The ACAS worker was unconvinced, but agreed to meet with in a joint meeting with Elvis. Initially Elvis stated he was confused, didn't know what was going on – didn't know who his doctor was and couldn't understand why he couldn't go home. After a short period Elvis managed to engage in general banter about his unit, the birds, his mail, his concerns about his bills etc. Elvis chatted about his neighbours the footy and "bloody Abbott". The ACAS worker stated Elvis appeared much better today and said they would keep an eye on his progress.

HSAP had witnessed Elvis deteriorate with each day hospital. His eyes were sunken, voice was flat. He kept repeating he didn't know why they were keeping him there and was becoming weaker with his former spark diminishing.



## Case Study: HSAP continued...

HSAP liaised with the Unit Manager, urging them to discharge Elvis with comprehensive discharge plan in addition to existing supports. Geriatricians agreed he would be able to remain living independently with supports. Two days before the long promised discharge Elvis contracted a hospital acquired infection and had to remain on the ward.

Elvis was not discharged nearly 4 weeks after being admitted to emergency with a throat infection. Without the advocacy and continuity of care of the HSAP Elvis would have been moved to assisted living in August 2015. His mobility has never fully

recovered. A year after discharge, HSAP managed to secure his transfer to a ground floor unit in Elvis's residential block.

In March 2017, 2 years after discharge, HSAP contacted My Aged Care. Elvis was assessed and approved for a level 3 home care package. Elvis still remains living at home and is now being supported by Wintringham.

## Volunteer Coordinators *Report*

The Volunteer Program at Barkly Street Brunswick comprises of a full time Volunteer Coordinator and currently 10 Volunteers. The aims of the program are to recruit, train and support Volunteers who live on the estate or in the local area and provide social interaction and support to residents of the Barkly Street high rise public housing estate.

The aim is to provide a sense of safety and security onsite as well as a welcoming and inclusive community for older people to live. It also aims to support people to age in place and provide the necessary services for older people to transition into their later years of life with dignity, autonomy and respect.

It has been a difficult year for the Volunteer Program as there have been a number of Volunteers pass away due to illness and a few others having to retire or take extended breaks to manage their health conditions. This has put pressure on the other Volunteers as they struggle to keep the activities going. The outcomes this year have been consistent with previous years. Although the Volunteer numbers have dropped due to ageing and people passing away we have contacted the local church to assist us in recruiting new Volunteers to the estate.

The outcomes this year have been that the Food Bank has continued to grow with many people now reliant on it for assistance with their weekly shopping budget. Feedback is provided to the Volunteers on the quality of the food and grocery produce and suggestions are made as to what new items may

be considered. This year saw an increase in families requiring assistance and we've had to purchase nappies and baby formula to support the growing need of families experiencing hardship. People begin to queue up for the Food bank very early in the morning as the need for fresh food and groceries increases. This is a vital service to the community and we thank our Volunteers for their work, for without them, this wouldn't happen.

Transporting clients to and from the Social Support Group at the Shrivings Day Centre has also been a great outcome this year. Our Volunteers drive the bus to pick up clients and bring them back to the Shrivings Day Centre. The bus driving role ensures that people in the local community can access the program and not have concerns regarding navigating public transport.

Two of our Volunteers Con Darmanin and Lesley Skepper have contributed their experiences of being MOSS Volunteers:

"My name is Con, I am a volunteer at 351 Barkly Street, Brunswick. This is an Office of Housing estate for people over 55 years old. I am a volunteer for MOSS at present I do volunteer work 3 days a week transporting clients to and from the program. I also take clients on outing and have social support with these clients. On Thursdays I assist other Volunteers picking up food for the food bank. I enjoy having this role and I feel it's both beneficial to the clients and myself. Hopefully I will be able to continue this volunteer work for a few more years."



## VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS Report continued...

Lesley and Terry have both volunteered for MOSS for 18 years. Terry sadly passed away this year.



"My name is Lesley, I have lived at the high rise flats since 1999. I have been a volunteer here for 18 years. I do the washing for Shrivings every week, this includes all the kitchen tea towels and anything else. I also work Thursdays at the Food Bank grading the fruit and veges and on Friday mornings at 6am help with distributing the food parcels. On the weekends I do some cooking for some people if they have not been well, also I do some shopping for them if needed. I sometimes attend the social outings with Shrivings if they need extra help. Terry Richards was a Volunteer here at the high rise for 18 years. He moved into the high rise in 1999. Terry done everything from cooking the BBQ's, moving furniture around for people, and locking up the doors every night. Every day he would collect the newspapers and deliver them to those who couldn't get out to get them, he did this seven days a week. Terry was also in charge of the community bus and ensured that it was always well maintained and services. Marion, Lyn and Terry started up the food bank years ago. Terry and other's would get the food, come back and put it away for the following day, he'd also pick up the donated bread from Bakers Delight at Barkly Square bring it back and bag it all up. Terry sadly passed away this year and he is terribly missed by myself and all the volunteers and tenants here at Barkly Street. RIP Terry."

We would like to pay tribute to Terry Richards and Peter Tsivelis who both passed away this last year. Both volunteers gave enormously to MOSS and made a huge difference to the people and culture at Barkly Street. Their presence is missed. We look forward to recruiting more volunteers in the next year and continuing on the great work. Thanks to Lyn, our Volunteer Coordinator who will be celebrating 30 years of service this upcoming year and all volunteers during the year; Graham, Lesley, Tom, Con, Zdenka, Ksenija, Marion, Margaret, Peter, Terry, David, Jock and Darrell. This year our volunteer Margaret Buoy retired after 29 years volunteering. Margaret began her volunteer work in 1988 at Grohn Place in Brunswick for the Brunswick Public Tenants Association, Margaret has retired at 89 years old. Her contribution to the community has been enormous. What an extraordinary effort, thankyou Margaret.



Margaret Buoy retired this year aged 89 years after 29 years as a volunteer

MOSS Volunteers at Margaret Buoy's Retirement lunch



## Social Support Groups Report

The 2016-17 year has been one of great change in the program and yet it is one also that has consolidated our success in being one that is both consumer driven and meeting their needs.

### A Changing Landscape

The responsibility for Aged Care is shifting to the Commonwealth and My Aged Care has been introduced as the central coordinating body for Aged Care. The State government continues to fund part of the program to service the persons under 65 who attend our program under the HACC Younger Persons Program. This funding is important as our programs are sited on Housing Estates targeting persons over 55. These changes have meant the separation of reporting for our under and over 65's and the implementation of new systems to accommodate Aged Care data collection and reporting. With these changes has come a new moniker- gone is Planned Activity Groups (PAG) and now we have Social Support Groups (SSG). The change in name is welcomed as better reflecting the key purpose of our program.

### The joy of Social Support

There is much joy in the Social Support Program at MOSS. The Social environments created are valued by both participants and staff working on the program. It shows when all present sit down and share a meal together an invaluable experience for a client group that will for the most part eat alone at home. It shows when we are able to enable clients to access community activities they may have thought were beyond their reach. Recently we have been providing increased access to art exhibitions. Outings are scheduled weekly and can include the movies, op shopping tours, trips to parks and gardens or any event Melbourne has on offer. Armchair travel has become hugely successful and well attended. A highlight in particular was armchair travel journey to Cuba. Props were created including a 1950's buick and a Havana streetscape, customs, inflight entertainment and refreshments and a meal in keeping with the theme. Even a faux Cuban cigar surfaced. There have been armchair travel trips to Ireland, Paris, and the Oscars in Beverly Hills. The Bollywood activity was also a great workout provided by the girls from Bindaas Bollywood Dance Company.

### Yonne McQueen-Thomson

One of our key workers, Yvonne, resigned in May. Yvonne had worked in the early 1990s at what was then the Shrivings Planned Activity Group leaving to pursue various positions as a Diversional Therapist. She undertook Food Supervisor Training and cooked in a range of Aged and Child Care settings. She also developed a passion for Occupational Health and Safety, training too in this area. Her skills meant she was immediately valued when she returned to Shrivings in 2009- working in PAG, joining the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and relieving as cook as required. When the Heidi and Holmes St PAGs commenced operation Yvonne's experience and breadth of knowledge came to the fore working with colleagues to create new and interesting social environments for these communities. Yvonne loves craft activities and has always active in expanding the range of these offered to our client. She takes her responsibilities seriously whether they be client welfare, Occupational Health and Safety, or Food Safety. Our clients greatly benefited from her work and valued her 'friendship'.

### Client Comments

"Heidi PAG is run Mondays and Wednesday and the staff are great we all have a lot of fun. We all get on very good and welcome newcomers. The food is good. We have a lot of good outings that everyone enjoys. We have games that we really like and do puzzles. We have a gardening group and we do exercises and go for walks. We make cards and do decorations. We are glad we have this club as it helps to keep us looking forward to a lot of fun".

M Ma

"When my G.P. suggested I attend the activities at Shrivings I was less than enthusiastic but I realised that I had no valid reason to ignore his suggestion. I made contact with the organisation in Brunswick. Since then my experiences at Shrivings have been extremely pleasant. The staff have created an atmosphere that is warm and welcoming. Everyone is treated with respect and everyone responds pleasantly and cooperatively. Each session is a time of engagement and my apprehensions did not materialise. Thankyou to the staff and attendees of Shrivings."

M Mo





"MOSS provides three social support groups and all three are staffed by a dedicated team of workers who manage all sorts of creative, fun, safe and welcoming environments for all who attend. We would like to thank Pam, Wendy, Gaetano, Debbie, Mary, Dan, Jack, Louise, Alison, Channa, Ray and of course Ken."





# Hume Support Teams Reports

## Team 1 Report



### HOUSED

Hawa and her daughter

Hawa, her Australian born husband and their son migrated from Kenya in September 2011, so their son could access necessary medical assistance through the Royal Children's Hospital to address severe kidney disease. He has survived through dialysis treatments and feeding through a tube/bag. In September 2014 Hawa gave birth to a healthy girl.

Homeless, the family were offered a Transitional Housing property in 2012 by the local access point and referred to Team One for Homelessness Support. MOSS has since supported Hawa and her family with public housing application, immigration processes, medical access, links to hospice and family support services, referral to disability services, financial counselling, Deaf School enrolment and infant material aid assistance. In April 2017, Team One supported Hawa to move into public housing.

### Hawa's story

Hello, my name is Hawa and I was referred to MOSS in 2012. We were referred to MOSS because we were homeless. My husband and I have 2 children but when we were referred we actually only had our son who is now 6. My daughter is 2 years old. My son has hearing loss and also kidney failure so has been quite sick.

We were placed into transitional housing and we were lucky to have Team One support us. They have supported us in regards to permanent housing and also finding equipment such as an air conditioner and washing machine. These things made a big difference for my children. It has been difficult because my husband left us about 8 months ago, so having the support from Team One has been very helpful.

Communication was very good and we had regular visits and phone calls to check up on us from time to time. I always felt that I could call Team One if I needed any help at all.

Now that my family are settled in permanent housing we are very happy and I guess trying to enjoy our new area and trying to figure out things around the neighbourhood.

I would like to say a big thanks to Miguel, Hope, Peter, Shirley, Erin and Karen. I know it was tough but you made it happen, without the support we would not be here. The kids love their new home. Thank you from Hawa

**"I know it was tough but you made it happen, without the support we would not be here. The kids love their new home."**

THANK YOU FROM HAWA



## Team 2 Report

Lily and her 2 year old son was referred to MOSS late last year for transitional support by the local Homelessness Access Point, having fled family violence and relocated interstate. As a consequence they were homeless. Lily was also pregnant.

Lily and her child was housed by VincentCare Victoria in a subsidised private rental property in Craigieburn through their Home Direct program. This program is a part of the rapid housing program for women and children who have experienced family violence.

Upon Team Two's receipt of the referral, the challenge of sustaining this model of housing beyond the 12 months subsidy became apparent. Affordability, isolation (with her family living in Ghana) and a lack of material possessions and assets, having fled family violence were obvious barriers.

The team worked with Lily around these issues. They ensured she was receiving her full Centrelink entitlements, correct rent assistance and as a contingency plan supported her to submit a Homeless with Support Application for public housing. Lily was supported to build her connections to her local community, including a strong connection to her local church. Her local church in turn offered support with her new born son, child care to her now 3 year old son, house work support, material aid and general in home support on a regular basis. Lily often talks about the great support her local church provides her.

The team supported Lily around pregnancy and with the subsequent birth of her second son, including being present at the birth. Lily has been linked with a Maternal Child Health Nurse, as well as social workers from The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Hume Council's Healthy Mums Healthy Bubs for support during and after pregnancy as well as for support with baby goods. Lily can now self-manage these links to support as required.

The Family Violence Flexible Support Package funding, stemming from the Royal Commission into Family Violence response has provided a wonderful resource to families fleeing family violence. Team Two helped Lily successfully apply for a package through Kildonan Uniting. Significant brokerage has been accessed to meet rent arrears, pay for child care, white goods, cutlery and crockery amongst other things. Lily reported that the funding from the package has made a significant difference in her and her

family's life and made it possible for them to sustain housing. Lily expressed a desire to commence studying a Diploma in Nursing as she builds a future for her family.

More recently, Lily has been advised that her property is only available for another 12 months, with demolition plans. The team is now advocating for Lily, to be offered an alternative property offering longer term, more sustainable housing. The team is mindful of how stress placed on vulnerable individuals and families who live in transient housing circumstances, having to repeatedly move..

### IN TRANSITION

Lily and her child



## Banyule Support Program Report



TOST, ICMI and Banyule Team members

TOST expanded as a team to incorporate Banyule Housing Support in July 2016 and we welcomed Esme and Natasja on board. Although Banyule is part of the bigger TOST team at Northcote, they are based and operate from Shop 48, West Heidelberg. This has allowed greater access to other services operating from Shop 48 and networking has naturally progressed which has been a positive for the program.

The past year has been focused on transferring all the existing clients from Banyule over to TOST and also getting all the files onto the electronic SHIP database. The files also needed to be in line with all other MOSS program files which took some time. It has been a challenging and productive year for the team to get through all the files and also meet all the clients which required referrals to be placed on hold.

We have now re-opened our referrals and are managing referrals through the Entry Point, Haven Home; Safe and also from any Banyule Council Services in line with funding agreement and subject to capacity on the Program.

Banyule team is located at Shop 48, West Heidelberg

There have been some great housing outcomes for the program with successful applications for Kids Under Cover that have been built, access to Rapid housing properties and also some movement with Office of Housing offers and clients accessing transitional housing.

Despite these great outcomes, there are still many families who are unable to access affordable housing and we continue to provide support and advocate for sustainable housing options. Banyule have also taken on Maria as a Social Work student on placement and this has been a positive and refreshing addition to the team as she brings with her a lot of experience to share while also learning from the various team members and Programs at MOSS.

We look forward to the year ahead and continue to work towards positive and unique outcomes for our clients.

**"TOST expanded as a team to incorporate Banyule Housing Support in July 2016 and we welcomed Esme and Natasja on board. "**



## ICMI Report



### Intensive Case Management Initiative

The last 12 months have continued to be both challenging and productive for the ICMI program, with a focus on trying to get the case load down to a manageable number of clients. There are currently 6 families and 3 individuals receiving ICMI case management support. The name of this program directly reflects the nature of support provision required to effectively meet the needs of the clients who come into ICMI, most of whom have endured incredibly difficult circumstances throughout much of their lives.

Accordingly, building and maintaining rapport and trust continues to be such an important part of my role in this program. As ICMI case manager, I will typically work with an individual and family who I have met when experiencing homelessness, during their time staying down at WT Onus aboriginal hostel for example, right through to their long term housing outcomes.

From providing court support to clients that have experienced significant trauma and stress in all their dealings with the law, to working closely with families who have ongoing family violence issues and child protection involvement, the work within the ICMI program can be really intense and varied. The year has included completion of numerous fine revocation requests, flexible family violence funding applications, Rapid housing application funding applications & office of housing and aboriginal housing applications, along with requests for brokerage for school books and sporting uniforms. ICMI funding has been put to great use, with the purchase of white goods, short term accommodation, course fees, rubbish removals, Coles and Myki cards. And all have been received with real appreciation from the clients.

Cultural awareness training provided by VACCA, and healing aboriginal families training provided by the Bouverie Centre, have both been a great resource to me this year in growing greater understanding and awareness of Aboriginal history and culture, and of the issues which have so greatly affected aboriginal people from early colonization right through to the present day. The families and individuals that I work with have typically shown incredible resilience, pride and humor in the face of great adversities, discrimination and marginalization as Aboriginal Australians and it continues to be a privilege to play a supportive role in their lives throughout their involvement with this program.

## Transitional Outreach Support Team Report

The Transitional Outreach Support Team (TOST) provides practical, emotional and case planning to persons experiencing (or at risk) of homelessness in the North East Melbourne Area.

It encourages people to develop and maintain life skills and knowledge necessary to sustain long term tenancies; and address the issues which are factors in their homelessness.

### Case Study

The Nicodemus family consists of Mr and Mrs Nicodemus (in their 80s) and Junior (30s). Prior to accessing our service, the family were residing in an unsustainable private rental and was faced with eviction due to financial issues, and chronic mental health experienced by Junior.

Junior was caring for his elderly parents and in turn they were caring for him. His main income was DSP. Junior was withdrawn and despondent, experiencing the effects of a serious co-morbid mental health issue and substance dependency. His ability to use self-care and manage a tenancy was significantly affected. His only support was from his aged and frail parents.

Through life skills and coaching, Junior was able to resume his connection with a psycho-social program. He began to develop insight into managing his mental health and awareness in identifying early signs of when to seek support through his local mental health service.

Junior was able to develop skills that encouraged him to take social risks and make supportive friends, consider the benefits of support and how to access holistic supports. He then made use of these skills in other domains of his life such as mental health services, education and employment programs. The skills learned in one area helped him access other social domains. Through evaluation, we collaborated on what techniques worked well and he self-directed these techniques to take control of his case plan.

Junior's engagement with our service led to his willingness to use coping techniques to help sustain housing and to practice these discoveries in other domains in his life. He began to apply his interpersonal skills in areas of employment, training and education which resulted in him gaining part time employment.

He is currently studying and making meaningful connections to his chosen community. His family relationships have improved and also making active interpersonal relationships outside the immediate family.

Junior is managing his budget more effectively, has increased self-worth and increased health management. He now identifies periods of being unwell and seeks assistance preventing a decline in his mental health. A solution focused, strengths based approach has enabled Junior to take charge of his life. Through support, his capacity to manage challenges has significantly developed.

## Crisis Response Program Report

The Crisis Response Program (CRP) provides Outreach Case Management support to people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness in the Northern Suburbs of Melbourne. A large number of the women and families who are referred to our program for support are those who have been impacted by family violence. Over the past twelve months the Crisis team has supported 198 people which includes 74 families with 105 of the clients being children. The housing outcomes have been a success this year with a lot of hard work going into sourcing private rental (52), transitional housing (32), family violence rapid rehousing YWCA (5), community housing Unison(10), emergency accommodation (5).

### Crisis Team Outcomes

Over the past 12 months



Housing outcomes



Crisis Team



### Case Study

One such family was Nancy and her child who were referred to the Crisis Response Program over a year ago for some case management support after fleeing a family violence relationship. The work that we initially undertook with the family resulted in them moving into a short term private rental property. As part of her support with our program, Nancy discussed some of the trauma she had endured and this resulted in the police becoming involved.

However, things were going really well for Nancy and her child, for well over 6 months. She had returned to education and her child was attending a local school and the family had been much happier than they had been in a long time, until she came into contact with her ex-partner in the local area. As a result, Nancy no longer felt safe living in her private rental property and the team rallied around her to try and find an alternative housing option.

Fortunately for Nancy there had recently been established some programs and funding specifically targeting those who had experienced family violence one of which was a Rapid Housing program being managed by YWCA. This program is aimed at securing 12 month private rental tenancies for women who have experienced family violence at a subsidised rate. During this time support services remain involved to help them address the trauma and the impact that the family violence has had on them and their children.

Nancy was referred to this program and was successful in getting a rental property in a completely new region. Although Nancy is no longer in the catchment area for CRP, we are committed to providing ongoing support for at least the first year. Now that a new property had been found, we now had the dilemma of trying to find funding to pay for the move and to help establish the family in their new community.

Again we were fortunate to be able to apply for a family violence support package through Anglicare. This package allowed for Nancy and her child to relocate, pay for removal costs, new furniture that was required and to fund the fees for her course that she is undertaking.

Although we are the support service involved who are regularly meeting with Nancy to try and work on her case plan and any other issues that may arise, it is clear that this fantastic response that Nancy received would not have been possible if there were no other programs that we could partner with.

Given the amount of people who are supported by MOSS each year who have been directly affected by family violence it is positive to see the Government identifying that both homelessness and family violence are closely connected and as such are funding much needed programs and innovations to help address these issues.

I would just like to take an opportunity to thank the members of the Crisis Team for the Crisis Response Program and the Youth and Family team: Alison, Kate, Peter and Sooie for all of their hard work over the last year which resulted in some amazing outcomes



# Youth Teams Reports

## Catchment Youth Refuge

Within the Crisis Program at Merri Outreach Support Service there are two youth specific responses, the Catchment Youth Refuge and the Youth and Family program.

Catchment Youth Refuge provides safe and secure short-term crisis accommodation and holistic team case management to homeless single young people, including young parents and (their children) aged 16-25 years old. The refuge has a very homelike environment that is staffed 24 hours per day and is located in inner suburbs of Melbourne. The refuge has accommodated and supported 102 young people this financial year 18 of those being under 5 years of age. The Catchment team worked very hard to secure housing outcomes this year with some great results for young people. The partnership with Unison assists young people to access community housing with 14 of our refuge clients securing properties at Mount Street, in Heidelberg. Other housing outcomes secured were transitional housing (4), private rental (29), family violence rapid rehousing YWCA (2), home direct (1) and other youth housing (9). Our overnight bed was introduced in the past year and has had some great indirect successes. We were able to accommodate 37 young people on short term stays, with the majority choosing to move into longer term rooms as they became available. The overnight bed provides young people with an option of trying out the service to see if it suits their needs but also provides a safer crisis option than a hotel or rooming house.

Catchment Youth  
Refuge Team

### Catchment Youth Refuge Outcomes

Short-term crisis accommodation & holistic case management provided

102

YOUNG PEOPLE

18

UNDER 5  
YEARS OF AGE

#### Housing outcomes

14

MOUNT STREET

4

TRANSITIONAL  
HOUSING

29

PRIVATE RENTAL

2

FAMILY VIOLENCE RAPID  
HOUSING YWCA

1

HOME DIRECT

9

OTHER YOUTH HOUSING



In 2017, DHHS employed Thick Consultants to undertake a co-design project which is reviewing the current refuge models within Victoria. In a key document in this process Thick identified that this partnership that MOSS currently has with Unison clearly represents the importance of creativity and the collaboration of services to achieve great outcomes for the people that we work with.

## Case study

Susan and her child were sponsored on a humanitarian visa to come to Australia, by her Father where she lived with his family for just over a year. However, soon after due to overcrowding and conflict within the family home, this broke down which resulted in both Susan and her son becoming homeless and coming to the refuge to live.

Susan and her child stayed at the refuge for close to 3 months and during this time a great deal of work was undertaken to ensure that they would be able to transition from the refuge into an alternative long term housing options with the supports in place to maintain it.

As Susan's housing situation was stabilised she was able to increase the study that she was undertaking. Staff at the refuge were able to make referrals that could support her child to get the support he needed to meet his development milestones through referrals to the Enhanced Maternal Health Nurse and case management through the Bright Futures team at MOSS.

The team at the Refuge have done an amazing job supporting the young people that have stayed there over the last year. And as such I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work.

Whilst living at the refuge, a vacancy became available and Susan was then moved into a Social Housing Property in Heidelberg through a partnership that MOSS currently has with Unison. This partnership allows for the Crisis Program to be co-located at a High Density building in Heidelberg, which some of the clients that we work with are housed in. In return, the Crisis program provides ongoing case management to these residents in addition to responses and short term linkages for others referred by Unison who may require support within the building. Those who require support are aware that we are there one day per week, which allows for them to get any support needs addressed.

Once Susan moved into this property the Youth and Family stream of the Crisis team were able to take over the support of the family. By being present on site one day per week, this has allowed for the family to be independent in their own property with the security of a safety net, if issues arise.

## Youth and Family Program

The other stream of work with young people is the Youth and Family program funded through the Family Reconciliation and Mediation Program. This team works with young people aged between 16 – 25 years old who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness, with a key focus of early intervention and a deterrent out of the homelessness system if possible. The Youth and Families team supported 36 young people this year with 11 of those being under 5. The team secured some great housing outcomes this past year for young people with transitional housing (15), private rental (16), family violence rapid rehousing YWCA (1), and community housing Unison (17). The team has a dual focus on case management and counselling. We have a space set up in our Northcote office for young people to feel safe and counselling is provided to work with young people of re-engaging with family, education and their communities to prevent entering into the homeless service system. Our youth and families team Soozie and Alison have great engagement skills with young people and have done a brilliant job in the last year settling into a new team structure. We thanks them for the dedication, professionalism and commitment to young people.

### Early intervention & deterrent from homelessness system

36  
YOUNG PEOPLE

11  
UNDER 5  
YEARS OF AGE

### Housing outcomes

15 TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	16 PRIVATE RENTAL
1 FAMILY VIOLENCE RAPID HOUSING YWCA	17 COMMUNITY HOUSING UNISON

# Acknowledgements

and Thank you

to the supporters of Merri Outreach Support Service

Homie

St Kilda Mums

Telstra

The Brunswick Club

Specsavers

Centrelink Staff – Broadmeadows (donations from staff)

Magistrates' Court of Victoria

Queens Fund

Second Bite

College of Optometry

Foodbank Victoria

Homer Bassig (Scenovia)

The Walter and Eliza Hall Trust

Home Safe Haven

VincentCare Victoria Housing Services

Melbourne Youth Support Service

The Footpath Library

Unison Housing

Hume City Council

Banyule City Council

Darebin City Council

Moreland City Council

Big Group Hug

Pinchapoo

Bakers Delight

SPAN Community House

Senior Constable Jeff Bell and Leading Senior Constable Alicia Lippiatt

Paul Bentley and Jacqui Wilson from Broadmeadows Housing Office

Public Transport Victoria

Continence Victoria

Presentation Sisters Balnarring

Melbourne Citymission

YMCA

Public Transport Victoria

Melbourne Fire Brigade

University of the Third Age

Westgarth Primary School

Darebin Community Health Centre

Street Smart

Department of Health and Human Services

Anthony Hinds

Cathy D'Alterio

Darebin Legal Centre

St Martin of Tours (primary school who gave Christmas hampers)

West Heidelberg Legal Centre

Banyule Community Health

Himilo Community Connections

Neami National

Anglicare-Preston (Family Violence Packages)

Aboriginal Hostels



## "Thank you to the supporters of Merri Outreach Support Service"



### DELIVERED!

Ben Hallpike and his team  
of Friendly Moving Men

## The Friendly Moving Men

Every year the Friendly Moving Men our preferred removalist suppliers puts together an annual calendar and sells it around Christmas time and the full proceeds go to MOSS.

They also use the calendar to raise issues regarding the impacts of family violence has on homelessness. Ben Hallpike and his team of removalist's are a great support to MOSS and we also thank them for judging our office Christmas decoration completion. Their calendar this year raised \$4000.00 which went straight to supporting women and children experiencing family violence.

## Dangerzone Tattoos

We would like to thank Shell Valentine from Dangerzone Tattoos in Fitzroy for the second year in a row Shell and her team of tattooists donated their time in exchange for toy donations at Christmas for MOSS clients. The toy donations amounted to over \$8,000 worth of gifts which filled our meeting room. The toys were greatly appreciated by staff and clients.

## Broadmeadows Specsavers

We would like to particularly acknowledge the support of Johnny Tang and his team at Specsavers Broadmeadows. Not only has the team support MOSS financially but they also donated a number of hampers which were filled with toiletries and personal care items. These hampers were distributed to members of our community. So a special thankyou to all at Specsavers Broadmeadows!



\$8000 WORTH OF GIFTS  
FROM DANGERZONE  
TATOOS

Shell Valentine from  
Dangerzone Tattoos  
with Katrina

# Fundraising Supporters



A room full of donations  
from Dangerzone  
Tattoos

Data proforma for MOSS agency data

## Specialist Homeless Programs 2017

MOSS has supported and registered 2090 clients in the past financial year. The age range has been from newborn through to 96 years of age. 68% of MOSS clients are children under the age of 18. The main presenting reason for accessing support is family violence (55%). Our support programs main housing exit is private rental and our main income type is Centrelink benefits. Overwhelmingly our clients are on their own managing to struggle housing affordability and the cost of living on a single income, this includes sole parents, single young people and older single adults. Chronic health issues and stress related mental health are the most commonly identified support needs. Aboriginal clients are overrepresented in our data in comparison to population representation and their histories of homelessness and disconnect from family and community are ever present.

It is clear preventative approaches are required to support families to remain housed before homelessness is an issue. It is significantly more costly to be homeless than to be housed despite housing affordability being a major contributor to homelessness. Chronic disease management and stress related mental health conditions keep people out of the workforce and reliant on Centrelink benefits which puts them at risk of homelessness. The impact of homelessness on children's sense of stability, educational achievements and development is a clear precursor to the cycle of homelessness beginning. Preventative programs, rapid rehousing, affordable housing and family violence interventions are the key to ending homelessness.

2016/2017 TOTAL SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS SECTOR PROGRAMS	Number
Total Clients	1468
Adult females	322 (22%)
Adult males	146 (10%)
Children and young people <26yo	1000 (68%)

FAMILY TYPE	Number
Single parent families	869 (59%)
Singles	204 (14%)
Other families	410 (27%)
Family Violence one of the presenting factors	807 (55%)

CULTURAL IDENTITY	Number
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	151 (10%)
Culturally & Linguistically Diverse	485 (33%)
Anglo &/or Australian	832 (57%)
Main income Centrelink or no income	1448 (99%)

ACCOMMODATION TYPE AT PRESENTATION	Number
Primary homeless	62 (4%)
Crisis accommodation	225 (15%)
THM	484 (33%)
Public housing	162 (11%)
Private rental	162 (11%)
Other incl no tenure, missing	373 (26%)



Data proforma for MOSS agency data

# HACC and Aged Care 2017

2016/2017 TOTAL SUPPORT PERIODS HACC & AGED CARE PROGRAMS	Number
Total Clients	622
Adult females	281
Adult males	341
Lives alone	509
Lives with family	63
Lives with others	52

AGE RANGE	Number
<45yo	52
45>55	56
56>65	137
66>85	259
>85yo	118

CULTURAL IDENTITY	Number
Anglo &/or Australian	484 (33%)
Culturally & Linguistically Diverse	162 (11%)
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	162 (11%)

SERVICES PROVIDED: *CONTACTS	Number
Assertive outreach	650
Care Coordination	971
Groups*	470

HEALTH	Number
Diabetic	62
Epilepsy	8
Asthma	16
Chronic Health Illness	88
Drug and Alcohol	90
No disability	181
Physical	81
Psychiatric	118
ABI	83
Intellectual	13
Not stated	15
Dementia	44

ACCOMMODATION TYPE	Number
Primary homeless	5
SRS	20
Public housing	388
Private rental	61
Other	34

# MOSS DHHS funded programs as Specialist Homelessness Services

## Commentary

### Specialist Homelessness Services

#### DATA SUMMARY

MOSS DHHS funded programs funded as Specialist Homelessness Services provided support to 1468 consumers during the review period of 2016/2017 financial year. This was an increase of 274 on the previous year. SHS programs include transitional support programs, crisis programs, youth refuge, children's programs, intensive case management and family reconciliation.

Those programs see significantly more women than men and two thirds of our consumers are children and young people up to the age of 25 years. This highlights the important of our children's programs and our work with children across all program areas. Catchment Youth Refuge plays a vital role in our suite of services. Given the number of children, not surprisingly most consumers reside as part of a family, with 14% of consumers presenting as singles.

Over half (55%) of our consumers have family violence as a factor in seeking homelessness support and/or current are experiencing family violence. In terms of family type, 59% of our consumers belong to a single parent family, many of whom have a history of family violence. This is consistent with research evidence that shows family violence is the leading cause of homelessness. It underlines the importance of the recommendations coming out of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

In aggregated terms of cultural identity 57% of consumers were Anglo, 33% CALD and 10% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. MOSS is proud of its responsiveness to the Aboriginal community and partnership with community organisations. As expected a high number (99%) of consumers were reliant on Centrelink incomes.

### Aged Care Programs

#### DATA SUMMARY

MOSS Aged Programs are funded by Commonwealth Home Support Program, Home and Community Care Young Persons and the Low Cost Accommodation Support Program through DHHS. This is the first financial year that MOSS has implemented the DHHS and CHSP funding split. Our data reflects that we see 60% of our clients are over 65 and 40% are under 65. These programs have seen a total of 622 clients in the past financial year and males make up 54% and females 46% of our client group.

The accommodation types our clients reside in combine 54% public housing tenants, whilst the other accommodation types include rooming houses, supported residential services, private rental and primary homeless. The cultural identity of our age care clients is 56% Anglo, 40% CALD and 4% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The main presenting support issues with our Aged clients is physical disability, diabetes, drug and alcohol, acquired brain injury, psychiatric illness and chronic health issues.

**MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE LIMITED**  
**ABN 42 318 912 323**

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2017**

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>INCOME</b>			
Government funding		5,468,860	5,051,016
Banvule Housing - transfer of net assets		-	1,391,802
Donations and Philanthropic Income		9,738	32,914
Interest received		28,934	26,395
Other income		125,923	51,114
		<u>5,633,455</u>	<u>6,553,241</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Employee benefit expense		4,411,822	3,982,545
Occupancy		356,187	305,761
Computer		56,527	47,540
Telephone		54,582	51,220
Depreciation		57,865	72,158
Motor vehicle		235,934	241,960
Client Expenses		435,008	383,904
Other expenses		116,707	55,122
		<u>5,724,632</u>	<u>5,140,210</u>
Surplus/(deficit) before income tax		(91,177)	1,413,031
Income tax expense	1b	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) before income tax		(91,177)	1,413,031
Other comprehensive income net of income tax		-	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the period		<u>(91,177)</u>	<u>1,413,031</u>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

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**MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE LIMITED**  
**ABN 42 318 912 323**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2017**

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash	3	1,569,679	1,535,933
Trade and other receivables	4	66,655	49,701
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>1,636,334</u>	<u>1,585,634</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,291,127	1,324,881
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>1,291,127</u>	<u>1,324,881</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u>2,927,461</u>	<u>2,910,515</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other creditors	6	448,688	424,249
Provisions	7	704,149	628,475
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>1,152,837</u>	<u>1,052,724</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Provisions	7	50,973	42,963
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>50,973</u>	<u>42,963</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<u>1,203,810</u>	<u>1,095,687</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>1,723,651</u>	<u>1,814,828</u>
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>			
Retained surplus		1,723,651	1,814,828
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		<u>1,723,651</u>	<u>1,814,828</u>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

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**MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE LIMITED**  
**ABN 42 318 912 323**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2017**

	Retained Surplus \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2015</b>	401,797	401,797
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus for the year	1,413,031	1,413,031
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income	<u>1,413,031</u>	<u>1,814,828</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2016</b>	1,814,828	1,814,828
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus for the year	(91,177)	(91,177)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income	<u>(91,177)</u>	<u>(91,177)</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2017</b>	<u><u>1,723,651</u></u>	<u><u>1,723,651</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

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**MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE LIMITED**  
**ABN 42 318 912 323**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED**  
**30 JUNE 2017**

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from Government Grants		5,468,860	5,051,016
Receipts from other sources		124,589	378,550
Payments to suppliers and employees		(5,564,058)	(4,894,836)
Interest received		<u>28,934</u>	<u>26,395</u>
Net Cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9	<u>58,325</u>	<u>561,125</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payments for purchase of property and equipment		(24,579)	(19,528)
Proceeds on disposal of assets		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net Cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		<u>(24,579)</u>	<u>(19,528)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		33,746	541,597
Cash at the beginning of the year		<u>1,535,933</u>	<u>994,336</u>
Cash at the end of the year	2	<u>1,569,679</u>	<u>1,535,933</u>

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

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MERRI OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE INC.

## Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting

### MINUTES of the 2016 Annual General Meeting of Merri Outreach Support Services Incorporated

6.30pm	<p>Ms Sherry (Chair) opened the meeting, welcomed attendees and asked that any proxies be handed to Mr Singh.</p> <p>Ms Sherry advised those in attendance that the meeting would be recorded to assist with minute taking and invited any objections to that process. There were no objections.</p> <p>Ms Sherry introduced Derek Mortimer as the Association's legal advisor. Ms Sherry also advised on the voting process for election to the Committee of Governance ("CoG") and that Tony Littman would act as returning officer.</p> <p>Attendance: Tony Littman (manager non-voting), Katrina McAuley (manager non-voting), Maree McGinty, Therese Brandon, Jock Allen, Robert Sago (CEO non-voting), Karen Sherry, Angela Pitts, Mark Goodie, Prameend Singh, Stephen Gagen, Alison Dumaesq, Philip Murphy, Tony MacCartney, Mary Zaccari, Colleen Turner, Janet Hall, Gurhan Araci, Joe Morris, Margaret Phillips, Richard Grant, Derek Mortimer (legal counsel, non-voting)</p>
Apologies	<p>Marion Patterson, Younes Benhim, Zdenka Radonjic, Andrea Sharam, Terry McNaughton, Andrew Couper, Phillip Di Biase, Riley Trueman, Damien Thomas, Simon Daly, Oscar Ramos</p>
Confirmation of the minutes of the previous annual general meeting held on 28th October 2015.	<p>Moved: Mark Goodie Seconded Janet Hall</p> <p>Motion carried</p> <p>Rule30(4)(a) of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>
Confirmation of annual report of the Committee of Governance ("CoG") on the activities of the Association during the preceding financial year.	<p>Ms Sherry invited comment and questions.</p> <p>There was discussion about the annual and long service leave provision in the financial report.</p> <p>Mr Sago stated that the issue had been identified and was being discussed at the CoG. It was noted that there were "measures in place" if the financial provision for annual and long service leave was allowed to build. Mr Sago noted that the issue was also about ensuring the health of staff.</p> <p>Ms Sherry asked for a motion to accept the annual report. (The financial report part of the annual report to be moved separately).</p> <p>Moved Prameend Singh Seconded Jock Allan</p> <p>Motion carried</p> <p>Rule30(4)(b)(i) of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>

## MINUTES OF AGM 2016 continued...

Confirmation of the financial statements of the Association for the preceding financial year submitted by the committee in accordance with Part 7 of the Act	<p>Mr Goodie presented the financial statements as Treasurer. Mr Goodie stated that the auditors' report by Sean Denham and Associates states that all accounts are true and correct and that the auditor has not identified any issues.</p> <p>Mr Goodie then presented the statements for resolution.  Moved Richard Grant Seconded Alison Dumaresq  Motion carried</p> <p>Rule 30(4)(b)(ii) of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>
Resolution to appoint Sean Denham and Associates as our auditor for the financial year 2016-2017.	<p>Ms Sherry asked for a motion to reappoint Sean Denham and Associates as auditor for the financial year 2016-2017.</p> <p>Moved Richard Grant Seconded Tony MacCartney  Motion carried</p>
Resolution that the Office Bearers of the CoG (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) be appointed at the first meeting of the CoG after the AGM.	<p>Ms Sherry stated that solicitors' advice has indicated that the AGM cannot proceed with this resolution due to model rules requiring the election of the CoG to be conducted at the AGM.</p> <p>There was discussion about the merits of altering the rules to allow for election of office bearers to occur at the first CoG meeting after the AGM. Mr Mortimer spoke to that discussion.</p>
Resolution to decide the number of ordinary members of the CoG (if any) it wishes to hold office for the next year.	<p>Ms Sherry declared all positions open and declared that Mr Singh is to conduct the election, and Mr Littman is to act as returning officer.</p> <p>Rule 53 of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>
Election of the members of the Merri Outreach Support Service Inc. CoG.	<p>There was discussion about the election process. It was noted that each "office bearer" position is decided in order, with nominees unsuccessful with one position, being entitled to stand for other office bearer positions.</p> <p>Mr Singh took the chair for this part of the meeting.</p> <p>Mr Singh declared that there were 2 nominees for President – Anthony (Jock) Allan and Karen Sherry.</p> <p>Mr Singh invited candidates to make a short speech.</p> <p>Mr Allan and Ms Sherry both spoke.</p> <p>Mr Singh called for a ballot as the position was contested.</p> <p>Votes : Jock Allen 12      Karen Sherry 19</p> <p>Mr Singh declared Ms Sherry as President.</p> <p>Deputy Chairperson nominations:  Mr Singh declared that there were 2 nominees for the position of Deputy President - Colleen Turner and Stephen Gagen.</p>

# MINUTES OF AGM 2016 continued...

Continued...	<p>Nominees made short speeches and then a ballot took place.</p>
Election of the members of the Merri Outreach Support Service Inc. CoG.	<p>Votes: Colleen 12 Stephen 19</p> <p>Mr Singh declared Mr Gagen as Deputy President</p> <p>Secretary nominations:</p> <p>Mr Singh was the only nominee and accordingly he was elected unopposed.</p> <p>Treasurer nominations:</p> <p>Mr Singh declared that there were 2 nominees for the position of Treasurer - Mark Goodie and Richard Grant</p> <p>Nominees made short speeches and then a ballot took place.</p> <p>Votes: Mark 19 Richard 12</p> <p>Mr Singh declared that Mr Goodie as Treasurer.</p> <p>Ms Sherry asked for a resolution to decide the number of ordinary Members on the CoG. Mr Goodie proposed a motion to have 4 office bearers 8 ordinary members.</p> <p>There was discussion about operation of the merger deed. Mr Mortimer spoke to that discussion and stated that CoG positions created by the merger deed cease at the AGM, but persons may nominate for election to the CoG following the process in the model rules.</p> <p>Mr Goodie proposed the motion to have 8 ordinary members.</p> <p>Moved Mark Goodie Seconded Prameend Singh</p> <p>Motion carried</p> <p>Ms Sherry advised on the process the elect ordinary members by ballot and noted that there were 13 nominees for 8 positions.</p> <p>Ms Sherry stated that the nominees were Zdenka Radonjic, Younes Benhim, Phillip Di Biase, Simon Daly, Oscar Ramos, Philip Murphy, Alison Dumaresq, Mary Zaccari, Gurhan Araci, Angela Pitts, Jock Allan, Colleen Turner, Richard Grant.</p> <p>A ballot took place.</p> <p>Votes: Angela Pitts 24, Philip Murphy 23, Alison Dumaresq 22, Younes Benhim 20 Gurhan Araci 20, Simon Daly 20, Oscar Ramos 18, Phillip Di Biase 17, Colleen Turner 12, Richard Grant 12, Jock Allan 10, Mary Zaccari 12, Zdenka Radonjic 3.</p> <p>Mr Singh declared Angela Pitts, Philip Murphy, Alison Dumaresq, Younes Benhim, Gurhan Araci, Simon Daly, Oscar Ramos, Phillip Di Biase as ordinary members.</p> <p>Rule 53 of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>
	<p>Ms Sherry proposed a motion that nil membership fees be set for ordinary membership.</p> <p>Moved Angela Pitts Seconded Stephen Gagen</p> <p>Motion carried</p> <p>Ms Sherry thanked outgoing members and staff and closed the AGM.</p> <p>Rule30(4)(d) of the Model Rules for an Incorporated Association; Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012.</p>
8.15pm	Meeting Closed at 8.15pm



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