

The background image shows a person in a dynamic, low-to-the-ground pose, possibly a dancer or athlete, with smoke or steam rising from the ground. A large, semi-transparent geometric pattern, consisting of concentric squares and hexagons, is overlaid on the left side of the image. The text 'VACCHO ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20' is prominently displayed in white, bold, sans-serif font in the lower right quadrant.

# VACCHO ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

RTO NO.: 20739



VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH ORGANISATION IS THE PEAK  
BODY FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES LIVING IN VICTORIA

# ACKNOWLEDGMENT

VACCHO acknowledges the Aboriginal lands on which we live and work. We pay our respect to our Ancestors, Traditional Owners and their Elders past, present and emerging.

To our Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander readers, we advise that this Annual Report may include photos, quotations and or names of people who are deceased.

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Additional copies of this publication can be obtained from: <http://www.vaccho.org.au/about-us/who-we-are/key-documents/>

Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation  
17-23 Sackville Street  
Collingwood  
VIC 3066 Australia

T: +61 3 9411 9411

F: +61 3 9411 9599

E: [enquiries@vaccho.org.au](mailto:enquiries@vaccho.org.au)

W: [www.vaccho.org.au](http://www.vaccho.org.au)

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Cover image: VACCHO staff member and proud Gunditjmara man Aidan Baginski, keeps fire for a VACCHO smoking ceremony

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# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT





## Karen Heap, Chairperson 2018 – 2020

**It's been an honour and privilege to serve as Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation's (VACCHO) Chairperson, guiding its strategic direction from 2018 – 2020. Prior to that, I was proud to serve as Deputy Chairperson from 2016 – 2018. I've met and worked with so many outstanding people along the way.**

Fighting for health equity for Aboriginal people is my passion and drives my work and commitment. I refer to "health" in its broadest definition: including physical and mental health, healthy relationships and strong families, equity in education and employment, secure housing and justice.

Aboriginal people have a right to equal standing in Australian society and VACCHO does fantastic work in this area.

Some of the landmark achievements of which I am proud include:

- Wungurilwil Gapgapduir, launched in 2018. This is an historic formal agreement between Aboriginal people, the child protection sector and the Victorian government which puts decisions about Aboriginal children back into Aboriginal hands. It marks a landmark change for Aboriginal people in the trajectory of Aboriginal children and families, with a strong emphasis on connecting to kin and culture.
- VACCHO's contribution to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System – I want to especially acknowledge Helen Kennedy for her strong contribution, and her dedication and drive in making this happen.
- Bushfire relief – VACCHO moved fast with a state-wide vision and practical negotiations to support Aboriginal people affected by this year's catastrophic fires, whether suffering damage to home and farm, loss of work, trauma and exhaustion from contributing to the fire-fighting effort, or experiencing negative impact by damage done to Country.
- Relationship with Victorian government – during my tenure VACCHO worked hard to consolidate and continue to build a strong and effective relationship with government informed by trust and a commitment to Aboriginal self-determination. We are already seeing the benefits with new

policy and specific funded programs informed and underpinned by Aboriginal self-determination – but there is still much work to be done in this area.

I'd really like to acknowledge and thank the two Acting VACCHO CEOs, Trevor Pearce and Helen Kennedy. As mentioned earlier, Helen's contribution to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System was significant.

Trevor put in good, hard work during a really tough time for VACCHO. As Acting CEO, he oversaw the restructure and guided the organisation through change, achieving pay parity for staff. He was instrumental in working with the Minister for Health to create the Aboriginal Health Forum. Trevor also led VACCHO during the catastrophic bushfires at the beginning of 2020, ensuring Aboriginal people were supported with assistance and their own efforts to support the bushfire effort.

Trevor and I worked closely with government to ensure that ACCOs had a voice in the election campaigns for both state and federal governments.

I'm so proud to have worked so closely with so many fantastic people in guiding such an amazing organisation. Huge thanks to all the tremendous VACCHO staff who gave such great support to me as Chairperson.

I'd like to encourage VACCHO Members to continue to step up into Leadership and Board positions. We have much to be proud about, and still so much to work for. All our voices are needed at the table.

VACCHO is looking at a vibrant and successful future. Our CEO Jill Gallagher offers strong and visionary leadership which will continue to build momentum for VACCHO, to create positive change for Aboriginal people.

So, I wish everyone all the best and I will look forward to seeing you all at future state-wide VACCHO meetings.

Stay safe and all the best,

Karen Heap

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT





Ngatta (which means hello in my traditional Gunditjmara language)

**As a proud Gunditjmara woman from Western Victoria, me and the team at VACCHO would like to acknowledge the strength of Aboriginal people across the Country and the power and resilience we share as First Nation Australians and members of the world's oldest living culture.**

Today and every day, we pay our deepest respect and gratitude to Traditional Owners, Ancestors, Elders, and Leaders—past, present, and emerging. They have and continue to pave the way, with strength and fortitude, for our future generations.

It goes without saying, this is a year that will be reflected upon for many generations. I believe a legacy has been created for future generations in the way that VACCHO, its Members and Aboriginal Communities have come together – like no other – to protect each other, to support one another, to look after our families and keep our culture alive and strong.

**Social and Emotional Wellbeing** - We rallied, and we rallied hard to ensure Aboriginal voices were front and centre of Victoria's Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. Our Communities, Leaders and workforce shared their stories, experience and expertise to see that a holistic lens of social and emotional wellbeing was in scope. The Commission responded, acknowledging what we have always known: ACCO's people-centred, trauma-informed wrap-around supports are leading the way and mainstream have much to learn.

**Bushfires** - We witnessed the courage and foresight of our Members, as they instinctively rolled up their sleeves to help the worst bushfire season on record. To help protect Aboriginal people, our animals, and sacred Aboriginal lands. Many rallied hard to garner donations, many provided on the ground emergency relief and crisis supports, and some were even first responders helping to man evacuation points and eliminate fires.

**Treaty/Justice Reform** - We stood by Aboriginal Communities in the fight for justice and recognition, supporting Treaty conversations, demanding justice for the Day family and change public drunkenness laws for good.

**BLM** - We stood in solidarity with the entire globe and our Communities and were reminded of our own colonial injustices in Australia. We sought to empower our Community and took a harm

minimisation approach to Black Lives Matter BLM movements with the provision of PPE.

**COVID-19** - We saw Members and indeed the entire globe - mobilise to respond to the unprecedented global pandemic, COVID-19. I was immensely proud to witness first-hand, the creative and adaptive leadership of ACCOs.

We heard remarkable stories of ACCO's resourcefulness, commitment, and agility. They shifted their workforce and staff around to meet their Community's needs. They went above and beyond servicing communities, just in a different way. Often unfunded but they did it anyway, to keep our families and Communities safe. Of particular note:

- Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-op, located in the heart of Gariwerd, provided COVID-19 testing in Community homes, as people struggled to access clinics during isolation.
- In response to basic food and supply shortages, countless Members including, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, and Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation just to name a few, have set up local partnerships with nearby foodbanks and cafes, to make sure people had what they needed.
- 24 of VACCHO's 32 Members provided some form of COVID-19 testing supports.

What is clear and undeniable is that VACCHO and its Members understand their Communities like no other and continue to provide a 'one stop shop' - even in the face of a crisis. The low incidence of COVID-19 cases is a testament of what can happen when ACCOs and governments work meaningfully together.

But we must not lose sight of what is at stake, this pandemic has highlighted the inequalities around the globe when it comes to health care.

I am so proud to return to the helm at VACCHO, and to lead our Communities through a post-COVID world where we can reconnect and rebuild a world that is more equitable, people-focused, and community driven. Together, let's create a world where our mob enjoy equal rights, treatment and access, and are celebrated as First Nation Australians.

Regards

Jill Gallagher AO

# OUR MEMBERS

## TIMELINE

Established VACCHO  
Member

1973	1997	VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE
1974	1997	MURRAY VALLEY ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1974	1997	NJERNDABORIGINAL CORPORATION
1974	1997	RUMBALARA ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1975	1997	DANDENONG & DISTRICT ABORIGINES CO-OPERATIVE
1975	1997	GIPPSLAND & EAST GIPPSLAND ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1977	1997	KIRRAE HEALTH SERVICE INC.
1977	1997	NGWALA WILLUMBONG
1978	1997	WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1979	1997	BALLARAT & DISTRICT ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1982	1997	GOOLUM GOOLUM ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1982	1998	GUNDITJMARA ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
1983	2013	CUMMERAGUNJA HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
1984	1997	MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES
1991	2002	ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY ELDERS SERVICES
1991	1997	WINDA-MARA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
1992	1997	RAMAHYUCK DISTRICT ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
1993	1997	MOOGJIBORIGINAL COUNCIL EAST GIPPSLAND
1994	1997	DHAUWURD WURRUNG ELDERLY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE
1994	1999	MUNGABAREENA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
1997	2003	LAKE TYERS HEALTH & CHILDREN'S SERVICE
1999	2003	BUDJABUDJABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
2001	2002	BENDIGO & DISTRICT ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE
2001	2011	MELBOURNE ABORIGINAL YOUTH, SPORT & RECREATION CO-OPERATIVE
2005	2011	ALBURY WODONGA ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE
2005	2020	MULLUM MULLUM INDIGENOUS GATHERING PLACE
2006	2017	BOORNDAWAN WILLAM ABORIGINAL HEALING SERVICE
2007	2019	KIRRIPIABORIGINAL CORPORATION
2007	2011	LAKES ENTRANCE ABORIGINAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION
2009	2012	OONAH HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
2011	2016	WEETHUNGA HEALTH NETWORK
2012	2016	BUBUP WILAM ABORIGINAL CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE



**VACCHO was established in 1996 - responding to an identified need to form a collective and united voice to influence health, wellbeing and social policy- ensuring Aboriginal voices and organisations have a seat at the table and influence decisions being made about their Communities. VACCHO's motto has, and always will be clear: Aboriginal health needs to be in Aboriginal hands.**

Over the last 24 years VACCHO's Members have continued to grow, expand and influence in line with Community need and aspirations. From small Community organisations with a handful of staff, our Members are now large, high performing organisations, providing comprehensive wrap-around services and holistic supports to improve the health and wellbeing of complex client groups.

Our full Members are vibrant and diverse organisations that deliver culturally responsive and appropriate primary health care, as well as childcare, community services, family services, employment services, housing, justice, and all aspects of health and wellbeing.

Our Associate Members are organisations that share our vision to deliver quality services to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal Victorians, according to the Aboriginal definition of health.

Our Members know what works and they are looking to the future, establishing themselves as sustainable organisations.

In order to respond the growth of our Members and support their aspirations, VACCHO has expanded our capacity in the areas of training and development, advocacy, health research and evidence, statewide health promotion, partnership development and business and project management support.

Today, VACCHO has 32 Members. These Members operate across metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria, and provide our Communities with access to high quality, culturally appropriate and holistic services.

Our Membership continues to grow, with the addition of two Associate Members this financial year, demonstrating the value VACCHO provides to our Members and their Communities.

## **VACCHO'S MEMBERSHIP REPRESENTS THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROL AND HOLISTIC HEALTH CARE.**

Mallee District  
Aboriginal Services

Murray Valley  
Aboriginal  
Co-operative



3

2

Cummeragunja  
& Development  
Corporation

Njernda Aboriginal  
Corporation

Rumbalara  
Co-operative

Goolum Goolum  
Aboriginal Co-operative

Bendigo & District  
Aboriginal Co-operative

Budja Budja Aboriginal  
Co-operative

Ballarat & District  
Aboriginal Co-operative

Kirrip Aboriginal  
Corporation

Healesville  
Community

Mullumbidgee  
Gathering

Boorndal  
Aboriginal

Dandenong  
Aborigines

Winda Mara Aboriginal  
Corporation

Wathaurong Aboriginal  
Co-operative

Kirrae Health  
Services Inc.

Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly  
and Community Health Service

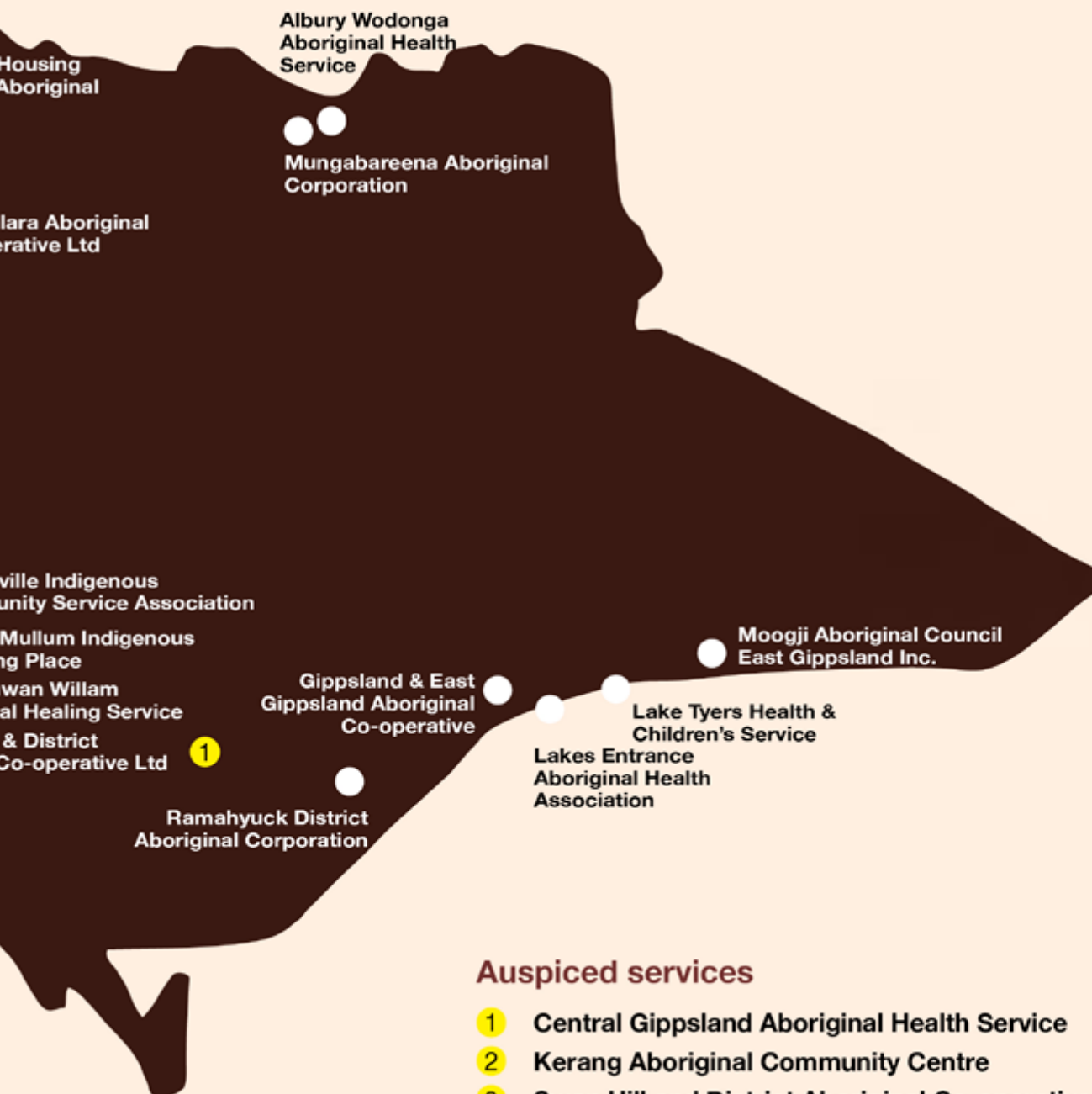
Gunditjmara  
Aboriginal  
Co-operative  
Ltd



# VACCHO

## Member organisations

- Aboriginal Community Elders Services
- Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service
- Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Early Learning Child and Family Centre
- Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sports and Recreation Co-operative
- Ngwala Willumbong Co-operative
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
- Weenthunga Health Network Inc.



# OUR LEADERSHIP



**KAREN HEAP**

CHAIRPERSON

I am a proud Yorta Yorta woman, current CEO of Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BADAC) - a role I've held for the past 16 years. I have a passion improving outcomes for Aboriginal children and families, serving as first Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance, which brought decisions about Aboriginal children back into Aboriginal hands. As BADAC CEO, it's my resolve to work toward Aboriginal self-determination, to Close the Gap and see Aboriginal people have improved health, quality of life and equitable access to services.



**MICHAEL GRAHAM**

CURRENT ACTING  
CHAIRPERSON

I am a proud Wiradjuri, Dja Dja Wurrung and Waywurru man and CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service. The health service is constantly experiencing change, but always keeps its focus on ensuring the health of our people remains our priority, and that positive improvements are always made. I've been involved in Aboriginal affairs within the ACCO sector for a long time. I have been raised by a proud, politically active family, which has inspired me to make positive changes through empowering our mob.



**KELLI BARTLETT**

BOARD MEMBER

I am a Yorta Yorta woman from Echuca, where I have lived all my life. I have been at Njernda Aboriginal Corporation for 16 years, and am currently employed as the Health Services Team Leader, and am also the Chair of the Board. I have several university degrees in Aboriginal health, an area in which I'm passionate about and enjoy working for my Community.



**MICHAEL BELL**

(aka: Mookeye)

BOARD MEMBER

I am a Gunditjmara man living in Heywood on Gunditjmara Country. I was elected to the VACCHO Board in 2019 as a representative from Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation where

I was the CEO from 2010 to December 2019. I enjoy being a member of the VACCHO Board as this peak Victorian Aboriginal organisation connects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who deliver Aboriginal Health Services.





## JOE DAY

BOARD MEMBER

I am a proud Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba man, and I'm passionate about improving the rights and welfare of our Indigenous communities. I'm currently employed as Community Pastor of the Njernda Aboriginal Corporation in Echuca. Currently, I'm serving as the Chairperson of Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation, Executive Board Member Victoria Aboriginal Community Justice Panel, current Board Member Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, and current Board Member of the Traditional Owners Land Management Group. I am also a Respected Person on both the County Court of Victoria and Shepperton's Koori Court Victoria.



## JOHN GORTON

BOARD MEMBER

I am a Wotjobaluk man living in Horsham and I have been working at Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative for 17 years. I have two roles at Goolum, my first being my work role which is Community Services Manager. I started out as a Property Maintenance Worker, progressing my way up to my current managerial role. My second role is as the Chairperson of Goolum, which I have done for about eight years now.



## SUZIE SQUIRES

BOARD MEMBER

I am a Yuin woman, born and raised on Gunai Kurnai Country and current CEO of Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services

I have been the Chairperson of the Gippsland Aboriginal Alliance and Vicechair of Yoowinna Wurnalung Healing Service.

I'm passionate about improving health outcomes for my Community, which stem from my younger days witnessing loved ones being overburdened with health conditions.



## JILL GALLAGHER AO

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

(April - June 2020)

Jill Gallagher is a proud Gunditjmara woman from western Victoria. Jill has spent the past 20 years advancing Aboriginal health and wellbeing through her work leading VACCHO.

In late 2017, Jill seconded from her role as VACCHO's CEO to take up the position as Victoria's first Treaty Advancement Commissioner. As Treaty Advancement Commissioner, Jill led the establishment of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria – an organisation tasked with setting the 'ground rules' for treaties between mob and Victorian state government. The Assembly is an independent, democratically elected voice for Aboriginal people in the ongoing treaties process. Jill returned to VACCHO in early 2020 to continue her work as CEO.

Jill is a respected Aboriginal leader who has dedicated her life to advocating for Victorian Aboriginal communities. Jill was inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2009, awarded the Order of Australia in 2013, and inducted into the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll in 2015.



## TREVOR PEARCE

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

(July 2019 - March 2020)

Trevor is a proud Kamilaroi man. His mother's Country is in north-western NSW from Coonabarabran to Moree and he was born and raised in Sydney.

Trevor first moved to Victoria in 1988 and has family ties with Aboriginal communities in NSW and VIC. He comes from a strong Aboriginal family that has always contributed to the development and strengthening of Aboriginal society in South-Eastern Australia.

Trevor has over 35 years experience working with First Nations communities at local, state and national levels. He has practical, first-hand experience in the public and private sector with a primary focus on community capacity building and management.

In 2006 Trevor received the Victorian Indigenous Leadership Fellowship, Emerging Leader Award (previously the Sir Douglas Nichols Fellowship) for outstanding contribution to Indigenous community capacity building within Victorian Aboriginal communities.

In past lives, Trevor has worked in the areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage, environmental protection and management, health, economic capacity building and social and emotional wellbeing.



## HELEN KENNEDY

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

Helen Kennedy is a proud descendant of the Trawlwoolway and Plairmairrener clans from North East Tasmania, with strong extended Aboriginal kin and family networks across Victoria.

Helen has worked in Aboriginal Affairs for over 25 years in senior capacities across the Aboriginal community controlled sector as well as government, in health, mental health, and education and community services.

She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology as well as postgraduate qualifications in Community Development and a Master's Degree in Education.

Helen is a well-known advocate for addressing underlying trauma and increasing investment to support integrated and wrap around service models. She also advocates for cultural healing and culturally responsive therapeutic approaches. In 2019, her previous policy and service delivery experience lead to her being asked to represent VACCHO as an expert witness as part of the Royal Commission into Victoria's mental health system.





## DEAN DUNCAN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING

Dean Duncan is a proud Kamilaroi man from Moree in the north west of New South Wales.

After a career in the military (Army) Dean embarked on a career change to follow his passion for education. Dean commenced a long career as a teacher – from primary, to secondary and then on to tertiary levels - eventually progressing to Senior Lecturer Level C and Academic Coordinator with Weemala Indigenous Higher Education Unit at the Australian Catholic University. Dean took a brief break from the education sector to work in the human services sector looking after a national portfolio centred on Diversity and Inclusion. Dean holds several qualifications from Education, Government Management, and Social Work. In 2019, Dean was awarded National NAIDOC Person of the Year in recognition of his tireless work and advocacy for improving the lives of Aboriginal peoples through education.



## CHRIS HALACAS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
POPULATION  
HEALTH AND SECTOR  
DEVELOPMENT

Chris Halacas has had 22 years in the not-for-profit, public health, community services and primary care workforce, including 8 and a half years at VACCHO.

In his role as Executive Director he led change management during a two year restructure and COVID-19 response, among a new Executive team in leadership roles spanning most of the health and human services portfolios.

His key portfolios include:

- Public health, health promotion, preventative health
- Mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, alcohol and other drugs
- Systemic Health, Disability, Governance, Accreditation support across all health and human services.

Chris has a MA Public Health, Graduate Diploma Arts and BA Business.



## CAROLINE KELL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
POLICY AND RESEARCH

Caroline is a proud descendant of the Mbarbrum (Bar-brum) peoples. A sovereign nation, West of the Atherton Tableland Regions in Far North Queensland. She was born and raised on Kulin Nations with her mum and five siblings in Preston.

Caroline has a deep passion and commitment to help re-write historical wrongs, to see her family and Community live happy and health lives and see improved outcomes for all Aboriginal communities. She majored in Counselling and holds a BA of Social Sciences.

Over the last five years, Caroline has held many senior Aboriginal Affairs positions in the Victorian state government working alongside Victorian Aboriginal communities to deliver Community led outcomes. She oversaw stakeholder and community engagement to support the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria election.

Since joining VACCHO she has had a key role in the COVID-19 response and Black Lives Matter movement.



## JIM O'SHEA

BBFA, LLB, CPA, MBA,  
FGIA, MAICD, MFIA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
CORPORATE SERVICES  
Company Secretary

Jim O'Shea is a proud Gumbaynggirr man and VACCHO's Executive Director, Corporate Services and our Company Secretary.

Jim is responsible for the VACCHO's Finances, Investments, Innovation and Development, Audit, Information Communication and Technology, Administration, Operations, Human Resources, Quality Risk, Compliance and Safety, Legal and Regulatory, and Corporate Governance.

With over 35 years' experience as a financial and business manager holding several key senior executive positions with private sector companies and not-for-profit organisations both nationally and internationally, Jim brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to these roles at VACCHO.



# OUR YEAR





**Facing some extraordinary circumstances and immense challenges, the 2019/20 financial year is full of inspiring stories of leadership, resilience and success. Aboriginal Communities have never been short on leadership and resilience – they're traits that help define us as Aboriginal peoples thriving throughout Victoria. Our adaptability shone through as VACCHO and our Members transitioned to remote working and where possible, service delivery to respond to Community needs and drive down infection rates. While this isn't our usual way of doing business, both VACCHO and our Membership adapted rapidly and creatively to new ways of working with our Communities.**

Over the past year VACCHO has played a key and crucial role in supporting our Members across metro, regional and rural Victoria to respond to unprecedented emergency events, first the bushfires in 19/20 affecting the Gippsland region and then worldwide COVID-19 pandemic that shortly followed. As we have seen across the world, natural disaster and health pandemics disproportionately affects vulnerable communities and has ripple effects for years to come- but we have rallied together to provide rapid emergency response and coordinated preventative care.

We have kept our Cultures and Communities strong during these times, initiating the nation's first Aboriginal dedicated social and emotional wellbeing hotline, *Yarning Strong*, currently being run by the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service. We brought diverse Aboriginal Communities together the celebrate our culture in a NAIDOC online concert.

Business has also continued as usual, and as Victoria's peak for Aboriginal health and wellbeing, our advocacy and partnership with other Aboriginal peaks has seen the repeal of public drunkenness laws- and justice for the Tanya Day Family. We played a role in the Closing the Gap refresh- for the first time ever governments have committed to working with Aboriginal organisations- and were successful in seeing Aboriginal voices, experiences and expertise play a central role in redesigning Victoria's mental health system through our lobbying of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

In a COVID-19 world of uncertainty we have been the sure and steady bedrock for Aboriginal Communities, providing Aboriginal-specific vital public health information which has proved instrumental to keeping community-transition low in our Communities. We have

provided laptops to Community, so they can stay connected and assisted our members to transition to phone and online service delivery. In rapidly changing business environments, we have supported our 32 Members, providing critical business support to keep our Member organisations operating and their workforces employed so that they can focus on the one-the ground needs of their Communities.

VACCHO continues to move from strength to strength and our workforce grows to respond to the needs of our Members and Communities. We have doubled our policy and research team to take the voices, expertise, needs and aspirations to the highest levels of government to ensure reform and equitable investments. We have employed a highly skilled project management team to design and deliver innovative, culturally informed, and effective projects and our training unit continues to grow and upskill Aboriginal workforces.

In the context of such a heavy back half of 2019/20 year, it is important to recognise and celebrate all our successes in the year that has been. We are proud to share these stories through our strategic pillars:

## LEADERSHIP

## EVIDENCE AND COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

## STRONG SERVICE SYSTEM

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Leadership

VACCHO has played a pivotal role in supporting our Members in helping their Communities get through the summer bushfires, which impacted hardest in the Gippsland and North East regions of the state in December 2019 through February 2020. VACCHO continues to support the leadership and resilience of our Members in these regions who continue to support the recovery and strengthening of our mob's physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.

The global Black Lives Matter movement hit home in Australia, bring to a head the 434 Aboriginal deaths in custody since 1991, including the death



**PENNY ARMYTAGE, CHAIR ROYAL COMMISSION INTO VICTORIA'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM AND TREVOR PEARCE, VACCHO ACTING CEO AT LAUNCH OF RCMHS INTERIM REPORT**



**VACCHO STAFF PREPARE TO HAND OUT PPE TO BLACK LIVES MATTER RALLY ATTENDEES**

**HON KEN WYATT AM, MP, JULIE HAWKE, GENERAL MANAGER PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICES - RAMAHYUCK DISTRICT ABORIGINAL CORPORATION AND HELEN KENNEDY, VACCHO COO AT THE LAUNCH OF THE AGED CARE DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN**



**KAREN HEAP, CEO BALLARAT AND DISTRICT ABORIGINAL COOPERATIVE WITH THE HON. DANIEL ANDREWS, THE HON. MICHAELA SETTLE MP, THE HON. JULIANA ADDISON MP AND STAFF AT THE LAUNCH OF BDAC'S NEW MEDICAL CLINIC**





of Victorian Yorta Yorta woman Auntie Tanya Day. As the Victorian Coroner recommended that Victoria Police officers tasked with Auntie Tanya Day's care while incarcerated for public drunkenness be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions for investigation, our Communities and allies wanted to join the peaceful rallies across Victoria.

Due to the COVID-19, VACCHO worked with BLM organisers and the State Government to adopt a harm minimisation approach to ensure that Community and ally voices were heard, while keeping people as safe as possible. VACCHO supplied thousands of face masks, boxes of hand sanitiser, and gloves which were distributed from our office garage on the Friday before the rally. The remaining personal protective equipment was handed over to the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), who distributed them on the day. A number of national, state and international media outlets visited our office to broadcast the leading role that VACCHO took with WAR to ensure that the rally could be held safely. Testament to the harm minimisation approach employed by both VACCHO and WAR, the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) found no evidence of any Community transmission at the rally.

## Evidence and Community experience

VACCHO continues to put Community voice and Aboriginal expertise at the heart of everything we do. This is a cornerstone of our practice and in addition to continuing business as usual, representing Aboriginal voices and expertise at high level government meetings and coordinating forums we endeavour to endeavour to put cultural and community values at the heart of our program design.

Under the leadership of Helen Kennedy VACCHO started the year strongly through tireless advocacy to have Victorian Aboriginal voices embedded in the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (RCVMHS Commission). This resulted in an Aboriginal-specific public hearing taking place before the full bench of Commissioners at the Aborigines' Advancement League in Thornbury on 16 July, 2019. VACCHO's advocacy did not stop at insisting on a hearing just for our Community, VACCHO ensured that high calibre expert witnesses – both experts in their fields and people with lived experience navigating Victoria's mental health system – were heard.

Building on having our own RCVMHS hearing at the League, VACCHO successfully advocated for

12 Aboriginal- specific Community consultations to be conducted throughout the state to ensure Aboriginal voices and experiences inform the RCVMHS's final report resulting in *Balit Durn Durn Strong Brain, Mind, Intellect and Sense of Self* to be handed to the Commissioners for input into the final report.

VACCHO's advocacy in the mental health space has paid significant dividends, seeing that trauma and Aboriginal definitions of social and emotional wellbeing be included in scope for the Commissions. The Commission's interim report calls for the establishment of an Aboriginal-led Centre of Excellence in Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Further, the Commission recognised the ACCO sector is leading the way on mental health and SEWB best practice service models. With our holistic approach to mental health and SEWB at the fore, VACCHO and Victorian Aboriginal communities are well placed to have a profound impact on the final report and future direction of mental health funding and service model development in Victoria for many years to come.

## Strong service system

Ensuring that Aboriginal people in Victoria are supported by a strong ACCO service system to lead their best lives is fundamental to the work we do here at VACCHO. This aspect helps to form the foundations from which ACCOs can develop and implement the services that their Communities need.

DHHS funded VACCHO with \$5.4 million to run a grants program for our Membership to provide funds for capital works, technology and equipment upgrades. All grants were awarded equitably, with all funds having been paid out to successful applicants by mid-February 2020. The grants program received very positive feedback from all Members awarded funding. The projects undertaken by our Members, which includes building improvements and extensions, information technology upgrades and the like will only serve to strengthen our Member's position, while empowering them to focus on providing the deadly services that they do for their Communities.

VACCHO continues to lead the roll out of the State-funded alcohol and other drug (AOD) workforce expansion, with all funding allocations having been made. VACCHO continues to work with our Members to support their data reporting obligations through the Victoria Alcohol and Drug Collection (VADC), bringing more Members on board the VACCHO-led client management

system with our partners at Infoxchange. While reporting data is a normal part of government funding agreements, VACCHO and our Members have long recognised the importance of data sovereignty. Community owning our data, as we do with AOD, is integral to advancing self-determination in the digital age. With the AOD expansion almost complete, our mob will have more choice to access AOD services at ACCOs in regions which previously were not serviced if they choose to. Recognising that recruitment can be a challenge, VACCHO successfully advocated to DHHS for funding to develop and launch an AOD workforce attraction campaign. Having consulted with a range of stakeholders to understand the barriers to recruitment, VACCHO developed a campaign to attract new workers to the sector. The campaign was set for launch at the state-wide SEWB Gathering to be held in Melbourne in May 2020, though COVID-19 put a stop to those plans as the Gathering was postponed.

## Sustainability

The financial security and sustainability of our Members plays a crucial and foundational role in the advancement of Aboriginal self-determination across Victoria. As is often repeated at Members meetings, our organisations often operate “off the smell of an oily rag.” It is time for this to change, and VACCHO is committed to creating pathways so that our Members and their Communities can move from a position of surviving to that of thriving. To do this VACCHO is critically looking at the ways ACCOs receive funding with a view to decolonise current funding practices which create arduous barriers and impossible hoops to jump through. We are also looking at diversifying funding bases through philanthropic support. Over the next year we will be creating better relationships with philanthropic bodies centred on the principles of self-determination to attract impact investments and funding for innovation of our Members. We will be looking to implement streamlined funding processes for joint funding applications, reducing the load on members to identify, apply and receive grants.

Over the past financial year, VACCHO has provided intensive business and governance support to achieve the organisational health of our members. This included supporting Members to get the JobKeeper payment to support their workforce over COVID-19.

In house, we are building a people-centred Customer Relationship Management database and recruiting project managers to design and deliver

Culturally-informed best practice in our business and organisational practices. We also want to encourage government to adopt best practice in their ways of working with us and our Members.

After several decades of lobbying government, VACCHO has secured an in-principle agreement to become a pilot for a five-year outcome-based funding agreement. Our vision is big, we want to create transformational change, and we will demonstrate that when ACCOs are funded to best meet the needs of Community and to do things our way we will achieve leaps and bounds for our mob.

Long-term sustainability is our destination, and we are committed to bringing our Members along the way.

## The year ahead

As we continue to adapt and recover from the impacts that COVID-19 has had on our Communities, we are preparing for recovery and the year ahead. In addition to embedding Community voice in the RCVMHS’s process, VACCHO will continue its active role in amplifying the voices of our mob in the national Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, and the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. VACCHO, in conjunction with the Dhelk Dja Working Group, will lead the design and development of practice tools and training to support workforce participants who respond to the disclosure of sexual abuse. Our Education Services Unit will continue its incredible work, with the reworked Cultural Safety Training proving a hit, while VACCHO is committed to the development of a Dual Diagnosis (Mental Health and AOD) Diploma to support our workforces to increase their skills and knowledge to help support our mob. VACCHO will continue our tireless work assisting mob to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme, having been funded via the National Disability Insurance Agency’s ‘Information, Linkages and Capacity Building’ fund to employ Koori NDIS Access Workers across the state to break down barriers and ensure more Culturally safe and responsive pathways into the NDIS for Aboriginal Communities.



**LAUNCH OF LOOKING DEADLY ONLINE LEARNING  
MODULE FOR HEALTH WORKERS AND STUDENTS  
AND OUR NEW QUARTERLY EYE-HEALTH STATE-  
WIDE COMMUNIQUE WITH NICOLE MCCARTNEY -  
CHIEF ABORIGINAL HEALTH ADVISER, DHHS.**



**NEW LOOK COVID-19  
MEMBERS MEETING**

**VACCHO SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING  
STATEWIDE GATHERING IN MILDURA**



**TREVOR PEARCE, VACCHO ACTING CEO WITH  
GAVIN JENNINGS MLC AND OTHER ACCO LEADERS  
AT THE VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS  
FRAMEWORK RELAUNCH**





# BALIT DURN DURN ABORIGINAL MENTAL HEALTH

THIS IS THE BEAUTIFUL ARTWORK CREATED BY KENITA-LEE MCCARTNEY FOR BALIT DURN DURN CALLED BRIGHT FUTURE (DIGITAL RENDERING)

**For the first time in history, Aboriginal leaders, organisations, people, families, carers, and communities were given the opportunity to ensure their voices and experiences are included in the redesign of the mental health system through the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (the Commission).**

The result of these consultations is *Balit Durn Durn*, a ground-breaking report.

*Balit Durn Durn* is drawn from Woiwurrung language of the Wurundjeri people and means **Strong Brain, Mind, Intellect and Sense of Self.**

*Balit Durn Durn* is built upon the words, expertise, and aspirations of Aboriginal people in Victoria who have a lived experience with the mental health system, or are looking after a family member of someone who has. It also captures the on-the-ground experiences of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people who deliver front line mental health services.

Overwhelmingly, all cohorts have called for the opportunity to direct their own healing in support services. A connection to Country, Culture and Kinship came up time and time again as a protective factor fundamental to supporting improved Aboriginal social emotional wellbeing outcomes.

Almost 100 people responded to two separate online surveys – one Community and one workforce – with a further 20 people generously partaking in a series of face-to-face interviews where they shared their personal and professional experiences.

Many interviewees spoke about the prevalence of poor mental health being directly related to the loss of land, Culture, identity, self-worth, and the breakdown of traditional Kinship structures and roles within our Communities.

Despite increased levels of loss, grief, health anxieties and racism, many were incredibly passionate about their work, optimistic about the future, and deeply committed to their own, and their family's healing and their social and emotional wellbeing.

*Balit Durn Durn* builds upon the collective voice of Aboriginal peoples across Country who have consistently reinforced that solutions lie in Aboriginal hands, and respect for Aboriginal Culture must be at the forefront.

Five solutions were put forward that will dramatically transform the Victorian mental health system to better meet the needs of the Aboriginal Communities.

We are asking that by 2025 government work with the Aboriginal Sector to:

**SOLUTION 1: Establish five on-Country healing centres (or camps) to support resilience, healing, and trauma recovery through fostering connection to Country, Kinship, and Culture.**

**SOLUTION 2: Ensure long-term, sustainable, and flexible investment in Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing to create generational change.**

**SOLUTION 3: Invest in recurrent funding arrangements into multidisciplinary social and emotional wellbeing teams in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to secure long-term state-wide coverage.**

**SOLUTION 4: Critically invest in Aboriginal-led solutions to prevent suicide and self-harm.**

**Solution 5: Appropriately invest in Aboriginal leadership and culturally safe service delivery, across mainstream primary, secondary and tertiary health services.**

The call to action to anyone reading this is a simple one: listen to people's stories in this report, and invest long-term in Aboriginal Community-led, trauma-informed solutions. Solutions outlined in this report that are based on connection to Aboriginal Culture, Country, Community, and Kin.

VACCHO offers its deepest thanks to the many Aboriginal people who showed enormous courage in re-telling their personal and professional stories. VACCHO further thanks and acknowledges the valuable input of the many non-Aboriginal people, who very generously contributed along the way.

VACCHO acknowledges the Victorian government's commitment and investment, as well as the Commission's leadership in making recommendations in the Interim Report which drew directly upon Aboriginal expert advice and will lead to wide-sweeping reform.

We trust that our expertise and advice will be heeded again, and that the recommendations outlined in this report will be clearly reflected in those tabled in the Final Report to the Victorian Parliament in February 2021.



# COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION DURING COVID-19

**8000+**

ACCOs run  
**telehealth**  
sessions since  
March

MBS Claims for  
**Mental health**  
**care plans**  
have more than  
**DOUBLED**

**24hrs**  
**7 days**  
**counselling**  
service at VAHS  
*Yarning Safe N  
Strong*

VACCHO  
distributed  
**22**  
ZOOM licenses

**6**  
iPads

**80**  
laptops  
(to be released)  
to ACCOs

**Of 32**  
**ACCOs**  
**24**

provide testing  
support to  
Communities

**Of 32**  
**ACCOs**  
**1**

is now a  
respiratory clinic



**VACCHO would like to acknowledge the enduring strength and resilience shown by ACCOs since the onset of COVID-19, and the many innovative and impactful ways the workforce has come together to support their Communities. Our ACCOs have, and continue to, conduct outreach services—often unfunded- to check in on Community members and our Elders, provide up-to-date and clear information on COVID-19, deliver care packages and food, and offer in-home COVID-19 testing.**

Across regional Victorian, our Members have travelled well out of their catchment zones to deliver vital COVID-19 public health messages to Communities. They have door knocked when necessary to ensure our Elders are provided for, and our Communities are looked after and understand the importance of following public health directions.

VACCHO is proud to support our Members in this work. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, VACCHO engaged in one-on-one consultations with our Membership to determine their needs and to better understand key issues faced by their workforces and their Communities. Issues felt by one organisation were often evident across the state, and VACCHO has driven successful advocacy to:

- Ensure our Member organisations were classified as essential services and established as testing sites,
- Protect our ACCO workforce from contracting the virus with the provision of personal protective equipment
- Transition the vital health and social services our Members provide to telehealth services for their Communities
- Initiated the Aboriginal state-wide telephone crisis helpline: *Yarning Safe 'N' Strong*, which is being operated by the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service. This is the first of its kind in Australia.
- Codesigned, supported and promoted the online Vic NAIDOC 2020 Concert: *Always Was, Always Will Be*, broadcast on Saturday 11 July to celebrate Aboriginal artists and Culture, and provide an opportunity for Communities to celebrate and foster resilience and pride.

VACCHO and our Members have expanded on their open channels for communication, from the ground to the highest levels of government to deliver quick solutions for Communities during crisis. We created a fortnightly Aboriginal Health Sector Forum (HSF) which brings together representatives from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Department of Health (DoH), the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA), and Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to hear and find solutions for our workforces and Communities.

VACCHO and our Members have advocated for equity and flexibility of funding and reporting requirements, the creation of a Mental Health Working Group to address the critical mental health needs of Communities, and additional ACCO involvement in the COVID-19 response process (including testing and contact tracing)—among a range of other issues.

Communication with our Membership and their Communities is the other key aspect of VACCHO's work during the pandemic. VACCHO created a COVID-19 information hub on our website, providing relevant and up-to-date information for the sector and for Communities. We have translated often complex and convoluted health advice and jargon into messaging that is clear, accessible, and Culturally safe. We develop and disseminate a regular communique on COVID-19, as well as information on a range of available supports—including mental health, family violence, disability supports, and supports for children, young people and Elders. Our communiques are shared across ACCO networks – they help to consolidate, and clearly articulate relevant information related to the pandemic for a broad audience.

We are a trusted voice in Community, and we harness this voice to deliver vital health and wellbeing messages to Community via social media. We were innovative and used our strong networks across Victorian Aboriginal Communities to create videos of trusted Aboriginal leaders, youth, and our workforce to deliver vital public health messaging in our voice, and in our way. Like all preventative measures, it is hard to truly measure the impact of this messaging, but Victorian government has credited us as playing a crucial, and perhaps lifesaving role in keeping Community transmission low.

VACCHO continues to adapt support provided by governments to meet Members' evolving needs. While the issues faced by VACCHO's Members at the start of the pandemic were largely related to PPE supply, changes to service operation, testing needs, and working from home arrangements, there are now new and emerging issues faced by the workforce and Communities. Mental health, housing and crisis accommodation, and long-term service viability are some of the considerable issues that VACCHO is working hard to address and remedy.

We understand that Communities and workforces are feeling fatigued, stressed and, at times, anxious; VACCHO will continue to work with our Members to support them during the current COVID-19 response and throughout the recovery period, and will continue to advocate for equitable, enduring solutions that will allow ACCOs to prosper and Communities to receive the ongoing and targeted care that they need.





# BUSHFIRE RELIEF

VACCHO STAFF AND ACTING VACCHO CEO TREVOR PEARCE PREPARE TO LOAD UP AIR MASKS AND BOTTLED WATER HEADED UP TO FIRE AFFECTED ACCOS IN GIPPSLAND



**The summer bushfires of 2019-20 impacted Aboriginal Communities living in Gippsland and North Eastern Victoria in both a physical and emotional way.**

Community members were displaced, having lost property, they faced food shortages, experienced unemployment, but perhaps the greatest concern was the deep effect the fires had on these Communities mental health and wellbeing. The combination of bushfires and COVID-19 added to the already detrimental impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma, racism, discrimination, marginalisation and disadvantage.

VACCHO has provided ongoing support to the bushfire affected ACCOs over the past six months. The ACCOs impacted by the bushfires were from the Gippsland and North East Victoria areas as follows:

**Gippsland:**

- Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland
- Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation
- Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association
- Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Corporation
- Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services

**North East Victoria**

- Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation
- Albury and Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service

**ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY VACCHO TO SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS INCLUDED SOME OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- Organised and supported Ngangkari Healers (Traditional Healers from the APY Lands) to visit VACCHO and Gippsland to provide social and emotional well-being to Community members and ACCO staff. VACCHO staff accompanied the Ngangkari Healers to when they travelled to Gippsland. The Healers were well received and accepted by Communities that other ACCOs then engaged them to stay on to continue helping with their healing. The Ngangkari Healers ended up staying several weeks in Victoria.
- Two VACCHO staff travelled to the Gippsland area for two weeks to deliver Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid to the Community.
- Delivered pallets of air masks and bottled water.
- Visited ACCOs to provide debriefing sessions with staff in the weeks following the bushfires.
- Supported GP recruitment and retention as this was put under further pressure following the fires.
- Established and promoted a bushfire fund platform to assist with coordinating donations.
- Sought short and long-term funding opportunities and provided a coordination role in helping to distribute these.

# THE BEAUTIFUL SHAWL PROJECT



THE BEAUTIFUL SHAWL PROJECT DOCUMENTARY STILL COURTESY KATE ARNOTT



## Supporting our women to engage in breast screening safely.

In partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and BreastScreen Victoria, VACCHO engaged with Aboriginal Communities to understand why fewer women were accessing free, potentially life-saving breast screening. It was from this engagement that the Beautiful Shawl project was born, with the aim of enhancing cultural safety of breast screening while increasing the number of women participating in screens.

The Beautiful Shawl project aimed to improve Aboriginal women's experiences with breast screening by providing a Culturally safe and responsive alternative to traditional screening.

The shawls- designed by local Aboriginal artists- were trialled at Melbourne's St Vincent's BreastScreen in 2018, with Aboriginal women reporting positive experiences, and pride in undergoing breast screening. One client said of the shawl: *"Felt good. Made me proud of who I am. Visible."*

Since then, the Beautiful Shawl project, along with BreastScreen Victoria's Mobile Screening Service, has visited seven VACCHO Member sites in October and November 2019. The service screened 160 Aboriginal women, with 82 per cent of women agreeing that the shawl made them feel Culturally safe.

The screening shawls, featuring local artwork, were developed at each site by Aboriginal artists, including Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta artist Lynette Briggs, who was inspired by the many stories of women and their personal journeys shared in yarning circles.

At the close of 2019, the Beautiful Shawl project won a prestigious award for 'Improving Health Equity' at the VicHealth Awards, which celebrate innovation in health promotion, recognising the Community-led, collaborative and self-determining work. We are seeking to partner with more ACCOs in 2020 and beyond.

VACCHO would like to acknowledge and thank all of our partners who have contributed to the Beautiful Shawl project. They are:

- Our local Aboriginal artists
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (Melbopurne)
- Dhauwurd-Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service (Portland)
- Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation (Heywood/Hamilton)
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative (Warrnambool)
- Kirrae Health Service (Framlingham),
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Geelong)
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative (Shepparton)
- Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation (Sale)
- BreastScreen Victoria
- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services
- Deakin University
- Cancer Council Victoria
- St Vincent's Hospital BreastScreen clinic
- Western Health

# ABORIGINAL VOICES INFORM REFRESHED CLOSING THE GAP



BROMLEY SEE KEE KEEPS FIRE FOR THE SMOKING CEREMONY FOR KOORIE PRIDE NETWORK AT THE 2020 MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL PRIDE MARCH



**Over the past year Aboriginal Communities and peaks across the country have worked on a refreshed Closing the Gap Framework, which for the first time ever puts partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities at the centre of driving systemic change.**

VACCHO has played an important role in this work, participating in Victoria's representation through the Aboriginal Executive Council to ensure the refreshed Closing the Gap Framework strengthens Aboriginal Community control organisations to deliver Closing the Gap services.

The new National Agreement on Closing the Gap will commit all Australian governments to change the way they work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through four priority reforms which will reduce structural racism and give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples more control over the way services are delivered.

The agreement commits governments to new partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities across the country; strengthen Community-controlled organisations to deliver Closing the Gap services; address structural racism within government agencies and organisations; and improve sharing of data and information with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support shared decision making.

VACCHO's CEO, Jill Gallagher, was elected as the Aboriginal Executive Council's representative on the Joint Council on Closing the Gap in March 2020, putting her at the forefront of negotiations with the Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments. VACCHO, along with our partners, will continue to push for self-determination and holistic, Community-led decision-making.



**VACCHO FACILITATES THE VICTORIAN ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR KOORI HEALTH GP WORKFORCE WORKING GROUP, WHO RECONVENED IN 2019 TO EXPAND ON THE WORK THAT WAS UNDERTAKEN IN 2018.**

Members are from Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative, Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Rural Workforce Agency Victoria, RACGP, Rural Doctors Workforce Agency, Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association, Murray City Country Coast GP Training, The University of Melbourne, Monash University, Deakin University, DHHS, DOH, Murray PHN, Remote Vocational Training Scheme, Rural Doctors Association of Victoria.



**VICTORIAN COMMITTEE FOR ABORIGINAL AGED CARE AND DISABILITY (AUSPICED BY VACCHO) LAUNCHED EIGHT ELDER'S COMMUNITY AGED CARE VIDEOS.**



# DECRIMINALISATION OF PUBLIC DRUNKENNESS

BEAUTIFUL BARMAH LAKES AFTER A HEAVY RAIN ON YORTA YORTA COUNTRY



**The December 5, 2017 arrest, incarceration, and subsequent death of Yorta Yorta woman Aunty Tanya Day 17 days later in Melbourne's St Vincent Hospital, demonstrates the devastating impacts of the criminalisation of Aboriginal people, and the entrenched systemic racism that underpins public drunkenness laws in Victoria.**

Coroner Caitlin English found that unconscious bias played a role in the “completely inadequate” treatment Aunty Tanya received that afternoon in Castlemaine. Further highlighting systemic racism is Ms English’s assertion that Aunty Tanya was “vulnerable in custody owing to her Aboriginal heritage” - a direct rebuke of the systemic racism present in Victoria’s justice system. The fact that, in a Coroner’s Inquest report, Ms English finding that Aunty Tanya was at risk of harm due to her Aboriginality is deeply confronting.

Aunty Tanya’s death was the final straw in decades-long, sustained advocacy by the Victorian Aboriginal Community to decriminalise public drunkenness - a recommendation which came from the national Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody in 1991. Following the tragic death of Aunty Tanya, the Victorian Government announced an in-principle commitment to decriminalise public drunkenness, and with VACCHO being appointed as a member of an Expert Reference Group (ERG) for decriminalising public drunkenness in Victoria. The ERG primary purpose was to provide advice and Community voice to the Victorian State Government regarding the adoption of a public health approach to public drunkenness.

Members of the ERG included Helen Kennedy (VACCHO), Nerita Waight (VALS), Tony Nicholson (Brotherhood of St Laurence), and Jack Blayney (Victoria Police). The ERG provided high-level advice on papers drafted by Department of Health and Human Services, and Department of Justice and Community Safety in order to ensure that the group had access to strong evidence and research to inform the ERG’s final report to government.

VACCHO played a key role in capturing best practice for the alternatives to arrest and incarceration, bringing ACCO’s stories of success in sobering up centres to the attention of core group. VACCHO, alongside ACCOs advocated for increased funding for existing sobering up centres and highlighting the need to additional sobering up centres across the State. Sobering up centres were determined to be a crucial, Culturally safe and responsive service delivery model for Aboriginal people.

The ERG, along with the report writer, Ben Schokman, developed a comprehensive report to Government that outlines key recommendations related to the decriminalisation of public drunkenness, and the need for a strong service system to meet demand that was once met using police cells. The principles of self-determination and Community control are embedded in the report, and are understood as essential factors for ensuring that Aboriginal people are supported and protected across the service system. The report has been finalised by the ERG and will be shared with key government stakeholders before being made publicly available.



# BLACK LIVES MATTER



VACCHO CEO JILL BALLAGHER SPOKE WITH COUNTLESS MEDIA OUTLETS TO PROMOTE HEALTH PREVENTION AS KEY TO KEEPING MOB AND THEIR ALLIES SAFE DURING THE BLACK LIVES MATTER RALLY, AFTER ANNOUNCING VACCHO, AND VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE, WOULD BE DISTRIBUTING MASKS AND HAND SANITISER TO RALLY ATTENDEES.



**Published June 28, 2020**

**VACCHO took a harm minimisation approach the Black Lives Matter and our CEO Jill Gallagher wrote this article for NITV asking all Australians for real change.**

Black Lives Matter needs to be more than just a social movement. It is an opportunity for real change. Unless we as a Nation, are prepared to address racism head on, then we will never see improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

### **Let's change history together**

In the same week Australia was set to celebrate its Aboriginal reconciliation achievements, the world was devastated that George Floyd was racially targeted and killed by Minnesota police.

This violent act had reverberations at home. It spoke to our own colonial injustice. A story we know too well.

As much as this has become a global story and sparked global unrest amongst the broader community, for those of us with lived experience of racial abuse, it's a deeply personal story.

We saw our sons, our uncles, our brothers, our cousins in George's eyes.

I witnessed my own mother being asked to leave a shop when I was a very little girl in rural Victoria. My son is reluctant to display the Aboriginal flag on his car for fear of being pulled over by police.

Just two weeks ago, during a local supermarket trip the morning of the Black Lives Matter rally in Melbourne, I was wearing my Aboriginal t-shirt and carrying an Aboriginal bag. Once I had finished my shopping, I went through the self-check-out when the person who monitors that section stopped me and asked if she could search my bags. I said no assertively and asked her why she had targeted me, and not the other people just walking through. She advised 'because it's policy.'

Unless you have experienced this kind of blatant racism daily, it can be hard to appreciate the cumulative impact of this behaviour on an individual's emotional, mental, and ultimately physical wellbeing.

But the BLM response is a wake-up call that we can no longer ignore - a stark reminder of the violence and racism that plagues our own society. It is time for Australians to truly understand that racism exists here on all levels, and it is killing our people.

This is much deeper than a social movement. It is our current, lived reality. For this generation, and - if we do not step forward to change - it will be the reality for our next generation.

### **Our current and lived reality needs to change**

In June 2020, our people are more likely to go to prison, than go to University - and not for serious crimes either, for unpaid fines or petty crimes like shoplifting.

Our people are more likely to be locked up and die in custody. We are more likely to die or be seriously injured in family violence incidents. We are also more likely to die as a result of the burden of chronic disease.

We are more likely to live in places that have poor air and food quality too. Appallingly, 95 per cent of us have experienced some form of racism, which carries the same health impact equivalent as smoking. And we are more likely to experience high levels of psychological distress rooted in intergenerational grief, loss, and trauma.

The pandemic has taught VACCHO and our Member organisations many things. But in most cases, it has reaffirmed the inequality around the globe when it comes to health care access.

In the US, the [latest data](#) shows African Americans have died from COVID-19 at almost three times the rate of white people. In the UK, black men and women are [four times](#) more likely to die from coronavirus than white people.

During the pandemic, we heard abhorrent stories of remote Aboriginal communities being sent body bags, instead of adequate supplies and support. We've heard of Aboriginal organisations in Victoria, almost shutting down or being forced to make their own personal protective equipment, as they were not seen as an 'essential service'.

Federally, we continue to see an abundance of investment being prioritised to non-Aboriginal health organisations who do not always deliver outcomes for our Communities. Of the [\\$2.4 billion dollars](#) invested in a COVID-19 health plan, only \$123 million was provided to Aboriginal Communities and \$57.8 million went to remote Aboriginal Communities. In Victoria, the flow-down of that funding was minimal.

### **Our history is a story of achievement**

Whilst the challenges we have faced and continue to face as First Nations peoples speak of injustice

and heartache. That is not the whole story.

Ours is also a story of courage, resilience, and achievement. This history is also a powerful reality. A story that is seldom told. Starting from today and working backward.

COVID-19 was predicted to have devastating impacts on our Communities. To date, the Victorian Aboriginal Community has had just over 70 confirmed cases. Nationally, that total is 60. We have forged a path in working together for health and wellbeing.

This way of working has stopped the outbreak and saved lives.

That said, even with the low incidence of COVID-19 cases in our Communities, this pandemic has placed us in a situation that might take years to recover from.

But alas, Aboriginal people, Communities and organisations, right across the Country, have shown tremendous strength, fortitude, and adaptability. In some ways, this should not be a surprise. Resilience is in our DNA.

Aboriginal peoples have inhabited Australia for over 80,000 years, though we believe this to be longer. In this time, we survived the end of the last Ice Age, watching as glaciers retreated, isolating us from the rest of the world. We faced massive changes to the land, to animals, to flora, and food sources. And even still our populations flourished.

It is believed by the time Captain Cook crashed into the Great Barrier Reef in 1770; our population was in the middle of a three-century growth spurt.

We developed knowledge and relationships with the land and each other. These complex relationships enabled us to thrive, to adapt and excel, in some of the harshest environments known to man. Yet, what was to come was one of the biggest threats - colonisation.

When that occurred, we fought to survive massacres and genocide. We fought to survive attempts at assimilation.

Being forced off our traditional lands and herded on missions like cattle. Our families and customs ripped apart. That happened to my family, it happened to me.

We fought to survive newly introduced diseases like smallpox. We fought and survived them, nonetheless. We have not been recognised as First Nations of this Country, or for those injustices.

And we certainly have not been celebrated for our resilience, and our achievements.

And in 2020, I ask Australians this. Should we be expected to keep fighting for justice and equality?

Fighting to be valued in a world that chooses not to see black or brown people is a heavy burden to bear. And I would argue it is, in fact, not our burden at all. Isn't it time now for our fellow Australians to finally stand up to alleviate some of this weight? If not now, when?

### **What it truly means to be #InThisTogether**

Black Lives Matter is not just a hashtag or a movement. It is an opportunity for real change.

Unless we as a nation, are prepared to address racism head on then we will never see improved health and wellbeing outcomes. Long after COVID-19 vanishes.

This point in history is the point in which choices need to be made. We must move beyond mere words of support and into full action.

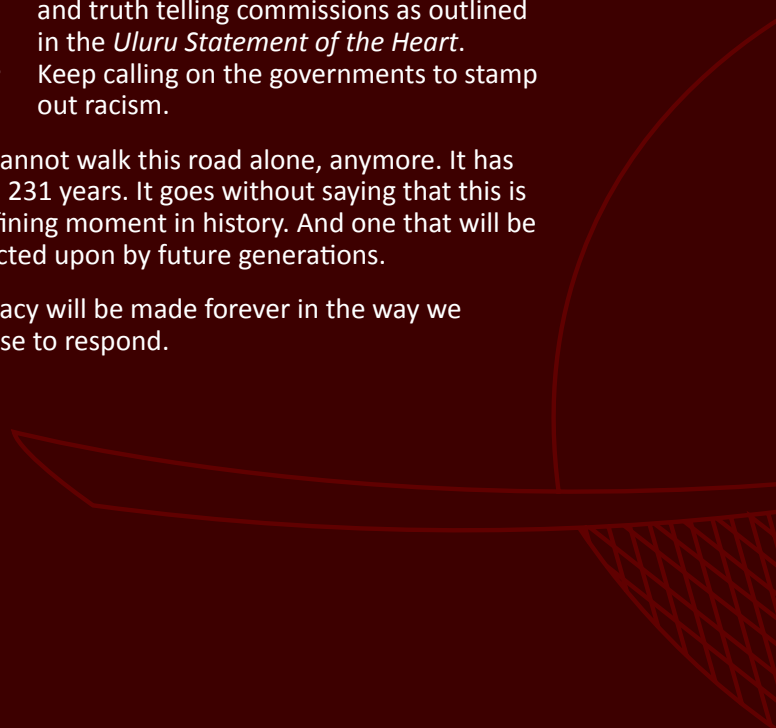
Being in this together is a slogan made popular during the COVID-19 pandemic. But it is more than a slogan. It is time that we understood what that would look like if we accepted that challenge.

To those who are not from our Communities, being in this together means this.

- Keep marching alongside us. We make up 3 per cent of Australia's population only. To the other 97 per cent, this is your fight for a better future, too.
- Keep amplifying our voice.
- Keep demanding justice. Support treaty and truth telling commissions as outlined in the *Uluru Statement of the Heart*.
- Keep calling on the governments to stamp out racism.

We cannot walk this road alone, anymore. It has been 231 years. It goes without saying that this is a defining moment in history. And one that will be reflected upon by future generations.

A legacy will be made forever in the way we choose to respond.







CAROLINE KELL, VACCHO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POLICY AND RESEARCH, SPEAKS WITH AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION ON THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE



# AUSPICING AGENCY



## KOORIE PRIDE NETWORK

Koorie Pride Network has devoted most of this year to streamlining operational processes and developing partnership and stakeholder networks. All of this work has brought us to the final stage of becoming an incorporated not-for profit organisation. A result of this process was the changing of our name to Koorie Pride Victoria.

We were part of Global Pride 2020 and also Pride-solation online events that were a huge hit, where we engaged with rural and global audiences promoting and creating awareness of our LGBTIQ+ Communities.

Due to the overwhelming impacts of COVID-19, we placed all further Community engagements and events on hold.

We are looking forward to the lifting of state-wide restrictions, that will enable us to connect more deeply with Communities and help us further promote LGBTIQ+ visibility and offer more meaningful support.

That's all from us at Koorie Pride Victoria.



## VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE

The Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance, 15 ACCOs delivering child and family services, continues to be auspiced by VACCHO. As a signatory to *Wungurilwil Gapgapduir* the Alliance, in partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, sets the agenda for the quarterly Aboriginal Children's Forums and drives action through various working groups and steering committees.

A deeper understanding and a genuine reflection of Alliance member voices, issues and solutions in Alliance advice and advocacy resulted in:

- The development of a framework for the Support and Development of the Child and Family Services Workforce in ACCOs
- Submission of case studies and ACCO-led solutions to the *State of Victoria's Children Report 2019* (for release early 2021)
- Strong advocacy on the intersections of child protection and mental health systems hosting a roundtable with the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System (the Commission), advocacy accepted and evident in the Commission's Interim Report
- Greater accountability and funding to support the development of cultural plans for Aboriginal children
- Alliance advocacy adopted by Aboriginal Caucus for greater self-determination to be embedded in the new Youth Justice Act.
- Alliance advocacy included in Legal and Social Affairs Committee report and media for a Spent Convictions Scheme
- Increase uptake of culturally safe training for carers of Aboriginal children through advice provided to Carer Kafe

The Alliance also advocated for the unique needs of the child and family service sector in responding to COVID-19. Including, but not limited to:

- Establishment of DHHS ACCO child and family services COVID-19 Forum
- Establishment of ACCO child and family services workforce COVID-19 working group

The Alliance will be undertaking a comprehensive review and future directions project in FY2021.

## VICTORIAN COMMITTEE FOR ABORIGINAL AGED CARE AND DISABILITY

Elders are the bedrock of our Communities. On the 12 November, the Victorian Committee for Aboriginal Aged Care and Disability (VCAACD), a program auspiced by VACCHO, held the launch for their Elder's Community Aged Care Videos. VCAACD provided the video topics, while Aboriginal elderly Community 'actors' in consultation with Health Issues Victoria developed scripts to produce the videos. About 75 people attended the launch to celebrate the eight Elders Community Aged Care videos.

## WOTHA DABORRA

Holistic supports for Aboriginal Communities to live drug and alcohol free

Wotha Daborra, Yorta Yorta language for *Strengthening and Healing*, is a consortium of Aboriginal organisations and Elders, led by Uncle Bobby Nicholls and auspiced by VACCHO. Wotha Daborra captures culturally informed best practice and advocates for increased investment in integrated alcohol, drug and mental health services for Aboriginal Communities in Victoria.

The consortium is chaired by Uncle Bobby Nicholls, and comprises membership from Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Njernda Aboriginal Corporation, Juliet Frizzell and Helen Kennedy from VACCHO.

Over the past year Wotha Daborra has met with ACCOs, State Government Ministers, senior public servants, and health service providers to build partnerships to advance the vision of Wotha Daborra: Aboriginal communities inspired and empowered to live free of the harmful effects of drug and alcohol.

The consortia would like to thank Craig Holloway for his work as the initial Project Manager, and VACCHO for its ongoing support as auspice.



# OUR ORGANISATION



OUR BEAUTIFUL SACKVILLE STREET OFFICES IN COLLINGWOOD



**The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation is the peak body for Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Victoria, with Membership from 32 ACCOs.**

VACCHO champions Community control and health equity for Aboriginal Communities. Our ACCO Members have a proud history as community-driven, grassroots organisations that support and strengthen Community capacity for self-determination and are committed to supporting and empowering Aboriginal peoples to realise their full potential as individuals and as members of their Community.

VACCHO believes that each Aboriginal Community needs its own locally based, community owned, culturally strong -and adequately resourced- holistic health and wellbeing service.

## OUR VISION

Vibrant, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal Communities.

## OUR CULTURAL VALUES

VACCHO is at heart, and by constitution, an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation. Our Aboriginality is intrinsic to our identity, essential to our Communities' and our world view. Aboriginal Culture is ancient and contemporary, dynamic, strong, vulnerable and valuable. Our Members' cultural identities are an important source of strength and they inform our ways of working and our integrity. Underpinning VACCHO is an absolute commitment to promoting the recognition and continuation of Aboriginal Cultures.

As a Member-driven peak body representing and supporting Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, VACCHO's fundamental priorities are to advocate for Aboriginal self-determination and be a voice for Aboriginal peoples in maintaining strong Cultural identity and connection.

Respect for Aboriginal cultures is fundamental to our purpose and is woven into all aspects of our activities and professional practice.

## OUR PRINCIPLES

- Empowerment
- Respect
- Confidentiality
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Compassion
- Optimism

## OUR PURPOSE

To courageously lead changes to create a representative and holistic understanding of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. By doing so we will improve the planning, advocacy, consultation, delivery and evaluation of health and wellbeing outcomes of Aboriginal peoples living in Victoria.

## OUR ROLE

To lead and support the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector by:

- fortifying the future growth and economic independence of ACCOs to enable the strengthening of local families and Communities
- promoting a collaborative and holistic approach to achieving positive outcomes in Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Victoria
- engaging with a wide range of stakeholders to influence the development and implementation of policy and planning across the sector
- Advocating for Aboriginal self-determination and a strong voice for Aboriginal peoples, enabling a resilient Cultural identity and connection.

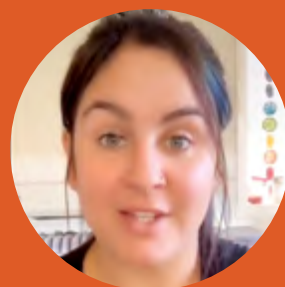
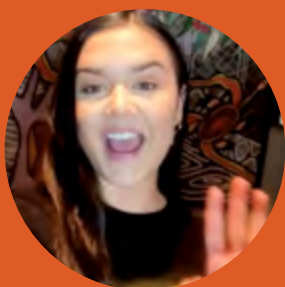
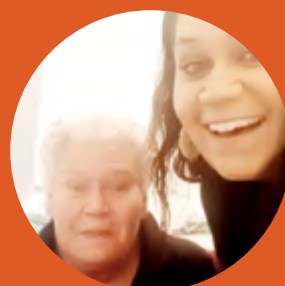
# OUR BOARD AND COMMITTEES

Our Board comprises highly qualified individuals who each bring unique expertise and experience relevant to their governance role. Ensuring that our Board continues to have necessary skills, experience and diversity, we welcomed three new directors – Kelli Bartlett, Joe Day and John Gorton.

## IN 2020, THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES SUPPORTED THE BOARD.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** which assists in monitoring and ensuring the integrity of our financial reporting and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, internal standards (including code of conduct), policies and expectations of key stakeholders. This committee also assists with monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of our internal and external audit functions. This committee met 6 times in 2020. Suzie Squires is the Chair of this committee.

**QUALITY, RISK COMPLIANCE AND SAFETY COMMITTEE:** which assists in developing, delivering and monitoring and continually improving the performance of VACCHO's quality managements system. This committee also assists in ensuring the integrity of our QRCS frameworks, systems along with policies and procedures, monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of our internal control and risk management framework. This committee met 2 times in 2020. Michael Graham is the Chair of this committee.



HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE DEADLY VACCHO MEMBER ACCO STAFF, COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND ACCO STAFF WHO VOLUNTEERED THEIR TIME TO BE IN OUR 22 WELLBEING SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEOS. THESE VIDEOS WERE CREATED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND INFORMATION TO VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

THESE VIDEOS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE.



# OUR PEOPLE ARE THE HEART OF OUR ORGANISATION

**We are only as good and as strong as the people who work for us and VACCHO is committed to building and continuing a supportive, collaborative and innovative workplace culture.**

We want to build a trusting, respectful and inclusive culture, where employees are proud of their work and empowered to succeed. We want a workplace that is culturally safe and strong- one where employees' wellbeing is supported, and their human rights are respected.

Responding to feedback from our employees, we have increased our focus on equality, diversity and inclusion. We created an overall framework to pull together activity streams, proactively increasing awareness, understanding and interest in inclusivity in the workplace.

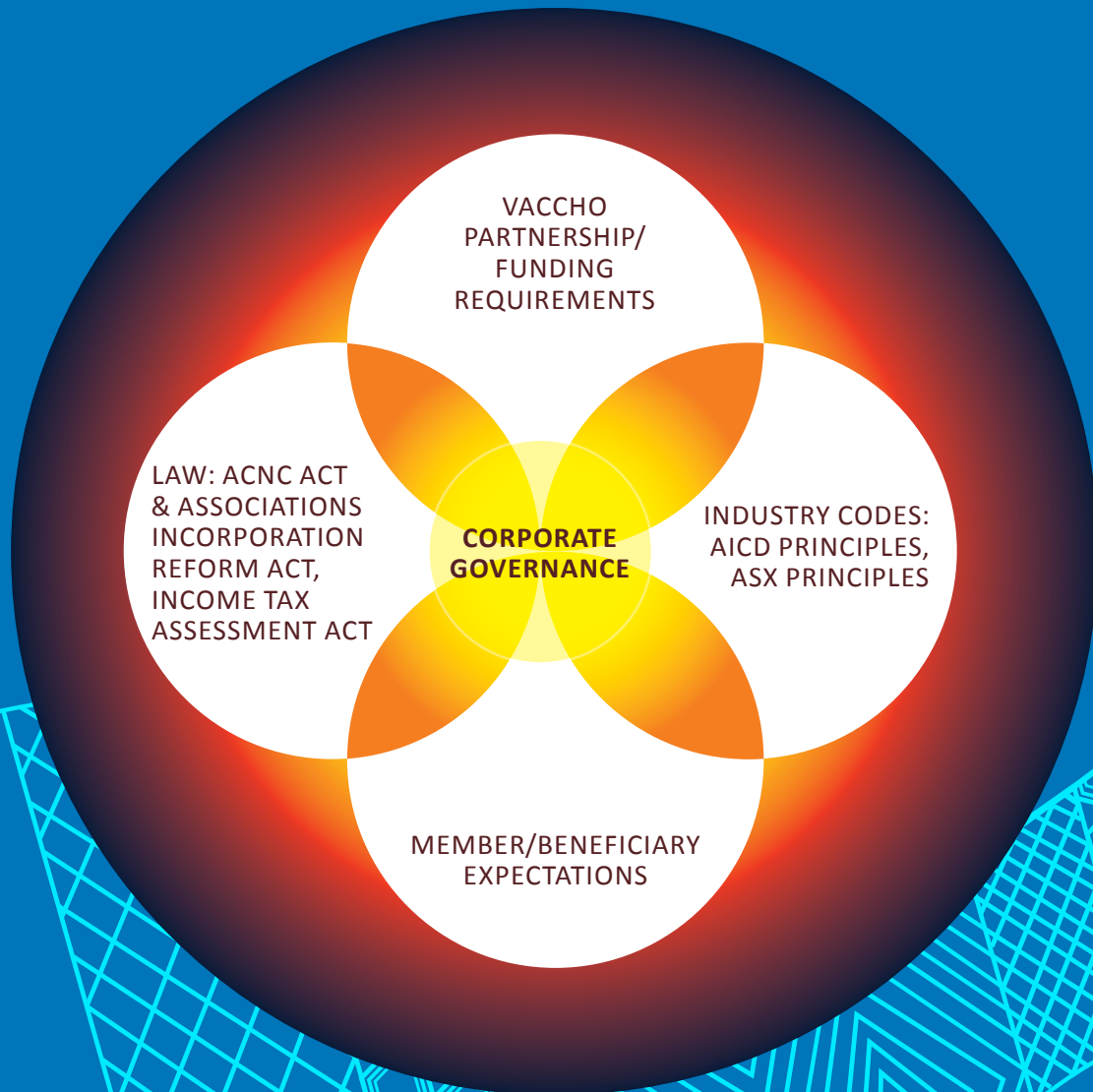
VACCHO is entering into the Great Place to Work initiative, which will measure our performance as an employer, benchmark results against the external market and identify focus areas for improvement.

We are committed to moving from a good to a great place to work and will seek accreditation to formalise this commitment in FY2021.

To build the organisational leadership capability we will realign our "Leading Others" program to focus on key areas identified by leaders and establish a quarterly enterprise leadership forum to build capacity and support camaraderie amongst the existing and emerging leadership cohort.

OUR EMPLOYEES HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY WANT TO WORK WITH US BECAUSE OF OUR PURPOSE AND THAT THEY WANT TO STAY WITH US BECAUSE OF THE LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT WE ACHIEVE, COLLECTIVELY. OUR FOCUS, THEREFORE, IS TO ENSURE OUR EMPLOYEES ARE THE VERY BEST THEY CAN BE.

# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT





**At VACCHO, we understand “corporate governance” to be the framework of systems and processes, rules and relationships, within and by which, authority in an organisation is exercised and the organisation, as a whole, is directed and controlled.**

Our aim with corporate governance is to create long-term, sustainable value for all our stakeholders (including our members, supporters and especially those we serve).

Our Board of Directors recognises its role in overseeing the determination and implementation of policies and processes that reflect good corporate governance and understands that these must, like our Core Values, inform and guide the attitudes, decisions and actions that make up the fabric of our life and work. We also recognise that this is another area in which we must continuously make improvements by considering, reviewing, testing and changing processes.

The diagram below illustrates our corporate governance environment as one in which the law, industry codes, the expectations of our stakeholders’ interplay:

Diagram layout is as follows:

Large oval with four interlocking circles inside with different colours and separate text boxes with same colour and the following content

1. Law: ACNC Act & Associations Incorporation Reform Act, Income Tax Assessment Act
2. Industry codes: AICD Principles, ASX Principles
3. Member/beneficiary expectations
4. VACCHO Partnership/funding requirements

The Governance Standards under the ACNC Act are the main requirements applying to VACCHO in relation to corporate governance. The ACNC Governance Standards are:

- **STANDARD 1** – Purposes and not-for-profit nature
- **STANDARD 2** – Accountability to members
- **STANDARD 3** – Compliance with Australian laws
- **STANDARD 4** – Suitability of responsible persons, and
- **STANDARD 5** – Duties of responsible persons.

Under ACNC Governance Standard 3, VACCHO must comply with Australian laws. VACCHO is regulated by the Associations Incorporation Reform 2012, as modified by the ACNC Act. VACCHO holds tax endorsements and concessions and is also subject to the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth) (Income Tax Act) and relevant fundraising legislation.

In addition, our Board has adopted the Australian Institute of Company Directors’ “Good Governance Principles and Guidance for Not for Profit Organisations” (AICD NFP Principles).

We have voluntarily adopted the Australian Securities Exchange’s Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations (ASX Principles) and apply them, insofar as it is sensible and realistic to do so even though we are not a listed entity, taking into account our position as a large, not-for-profit organisation and with due regard to the scope of our operations and level of donor and public interest.

The Board considers that the ASX Principles and the ACNC Governance Standards are consistent.



# FINANCIAL PROGRESS



# FINANCIAL POSITION AND PERFORMANCE

## SNAPSHOT

The table opposite/below is a snapshot of our revenue and expenditure over FY20 compared to the previous four years. You can find more detail in the extracts from our audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020 set out on pages 47 to 49.

We are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) as a “large charity” and we will be disclosing our financial performance in the 2020 Annual Information Statement, which we will lodge with the ACNC and which will be available via the ACNC’s Charity Register.

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY16</b>
	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>
Grant and funding	17.952	11.669	11.016	10.587	8.925
Other income	0.993	0.847	0.694	0.698	0.895
<b>Total income</b>	<b>18.944</b>	<b>12.516</b>	<b>11.710</b>	<b>11.285</b>	<b>9.820</b>

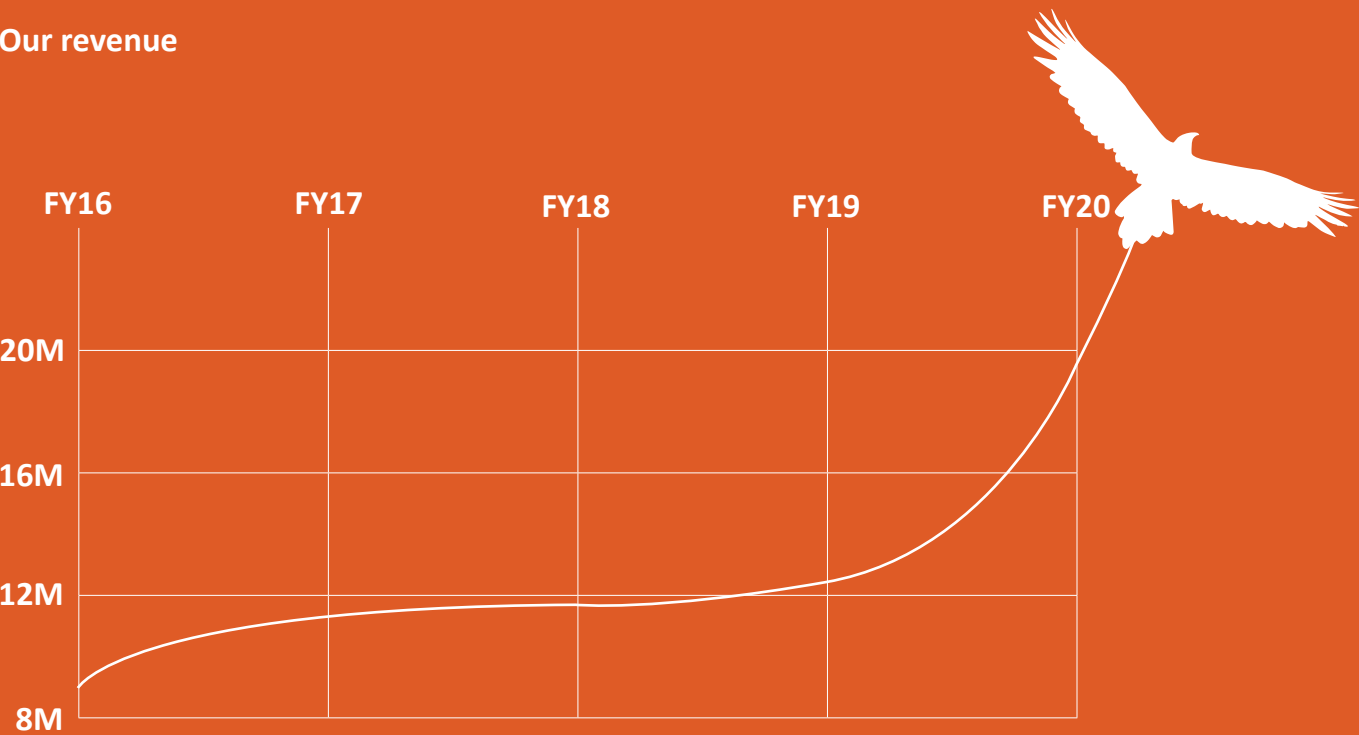
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY16</b>
	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>
Program operational expenses	8.868	3.902	3.760	3.670	1.772
Employee expenses	8.078	6.817	6.214	5.832	5.839
Depreciation expenses	0.331	0.225	0.166	0.225	0.186
Office Expenses	0.765	0.733	0.826	0.487	0.476
Other expenses	0.690	0.775	0.706	0.740	0.653
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>18.732</b>	<b>12.452</b>	<b>11.672</b>	<b>10.954</b>	<b>8.926</b>

<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>FY20</b>	<b>FY19</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY16</b>
	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>	<b>\$m</b>
Excess of income over expenditure	0.213	0.065	0.038	0.331	0.894
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>0.213</b>	<b>0.065</b>	<b>0.038</b>	<b>0.331</b>	<b>0.894</b>

*Figures have been rounded. As such there may be minor discrepancies between financial reports.*

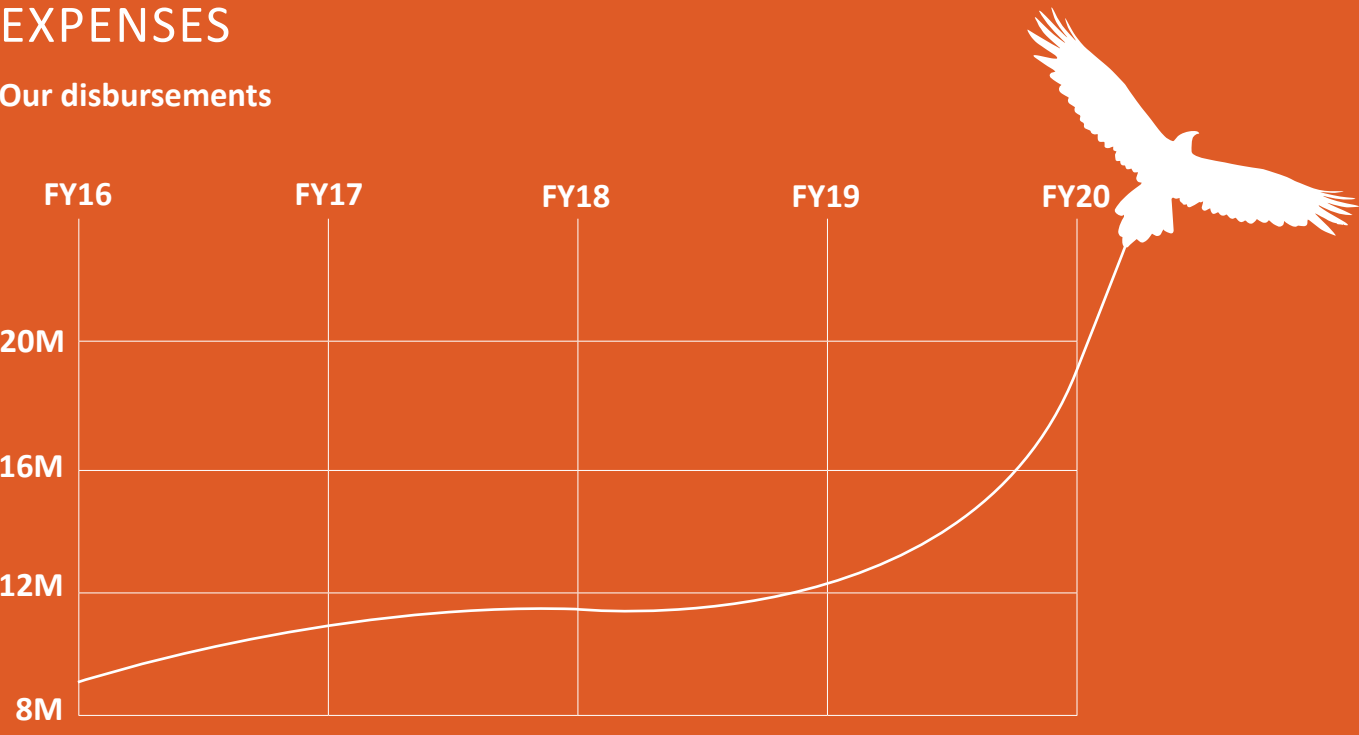
# INCOME

Our revenue



# EXPENSES

Our disbursements





# SUMMARISED FINANCIAL REPORT

## Extracts from our audited Annual Financial Statements

Set out on the following pages are the following extracted from our Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Public Officer's Statement	Page 46
Statement by Members of the Committee	Page 47
Auditor's Independence Declaration	Page 48
Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income	Page 49
Statement of Financial Position	Page 50
Statement of Changes in Equity	Page 51

All amounts are presented in Australian dollars. You can find a full version of our audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020 on our website. This will also be lodged with the ACNC.

## PUBLIC OFFICER'S STATEMENT

In the officers' opinion:

- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the incorporated association's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the incorporated association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

On behalf of the officer



**Jill Gallagher AO**  
CEO VACCHO

Dated this 22nd day of September 2020

# STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the committee, the financial report as set out on pages 49 to 51:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Incorporated as at 30 June 2020 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.
2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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



**Michael Graham**



**Suzie Squires**

Dated this 22nd day of September 2020



# AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION



## RSM Australia Partners

Level 21, 55 Collins Street Melbourne VIC 3000  
PO Box 248 Collins Street West VIC 8007

T +61(0) 3 9286 8000

F +61(0) 3 9286 8199

[www.rsm.com.au](http://www.rsm.com.au)

## AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

As lead auditor for the audit of the financial report of Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc for the year ended 30 June 2020, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been no contraventions of:

- (i) the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Professional Accounting Bodies in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

A blue ink signature of RSM Australia Partners.

**RSM AUSTRALIA PARTNERS**

A blue ink signature of B Y Chan.

**B Y CHAN**  
Partner

Dated: 22 September 2020  
Melbourne, Victoria

**THE POWER OF BEING UNDERSTOOD**  
AUDIT | TAX | CONSULTING

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# STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Grant and funding	17,952,859	11,668,908
Other Income	992,793	847,949
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>18,944,652</b>	<b>12,516,857</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program operational expenses	8,868,209	3,902,005
Employee expenses	8,077,618	6,817,181
Depreciation expenses	331,102	224,224
Office expenses	765,560	733,172
Other expenses	689,787	775,211
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>18,732,277</b>	<b>12,451,793</b>
<b>Surplus Before Income Tax for the year attributable to Members of the Entity</b>	<b>212,375</b>	<b>65,064</b>
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>212,375</b>	<b>65,064</b>
<b>Other Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the year attributable to Members of the Entity</b>	<b>212,375</b>	<b>65,064</b>

The above should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes which can be found on our website in the full version of our audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020.

*Figures have been rounded. As such there may be minor discrepancies between financial reports.*



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as at 30 June 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	14,520,570	17,231,275
Trade and other receivables	16,896	666,359
Financial assets	-	-
Other	37,253	110,795
Total current assets	14,574,719	18,008,429
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	6,747,621	6,854,166
Total non-current assets	6,747,621	6,854,166
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>21,322,340</b>	<b>24,862,595</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	1,973,833	1,779,359
Employee benefits	764,806	597,226
Deferred income	6,630,962	10,807,250
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>9,369,601</b>	<b>13,183,835</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Employee benefits	97,973	36,370
Total non-current liabilities	97,973	36,370
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>9,467,574</b>	<b>13,220,205</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>11,854,765</b>	<b>11,642,390</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained surplus	11,854,765	11,642,390
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>11,854,765</b>	<b>11,642,390</b>

The above should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes which can be found on our website in the full version of our audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020.

*Figures have been rounded. As such there may be minor discrepancies between financial reports.*

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Retained Surpluses \$	Total Equity \$
<b>2019</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2018	11,577,326	11,577,326
Surplus attributable to Members	65,064	65,064
<b>Balance at 30 June 2019</b>	<b>11,642,390</b>	<b>11,642,390</b>
.....		
<b>2020</b>		
Balance at 1 July 2019	11,642,390	11,642,390
Surplus attributable to Members	212,375	212,375
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>	<b>11,854,765</b>	<b>11,854,765</b>

The above should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes which can be found on our website in the full version of our audited Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020.

*Figures have been rounded. As such there may be minor discrepancies between financial reports.*



# Vibrant, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal communities



OVER 90 SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING ACCO WORKERS FROM ACROSS VICTORIA ATTENDED ONE OF OUR SEWB STATE-WIDE GATHERING



# VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH ORGANISATION IS THE PEAK BODY FOR THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLES LIVING IN VICTORIA.

Follow us on



17-23 Sackville Street  
PO Box 1328  
Collingwood, VIC, 3066

P 03 9411 9411 | F 03 9411 9599  
RTO No: 20739 | ABN 67 498 114 972

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