

VACCHO Annual Report 2021-22



We are the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the peak body for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Victoria.

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*Pictured:
Bunurong Country*



Acknowledgment of Country

The Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) acknowledges the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the lands on which we live and work, and the power and resilience that is shared as members of the world's oldest living culture.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples who have never ceded their sovereignty. We acknowledge this report was developed on Wurundjeri Country and acknowledge the richness and diversity of all Traditional Owners across Victoria.

We pay our deepest respect and gratitude to Ancestors, Elders, and leaders – past, present, and emerging. They have paved the way, with strength and fortitude, for our future generations.



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Board Chair report

My name is Michael Graham. I am an incredibly proud Dja Dja Wurrung and Wiradjuri man. I wish to pay my respects to the traditional custodians of the land we are on. I pay my respects to the Elders past and present. Sovereignty has never been ceded.

Before I begin, I would like to pay tribute to outgoing VACCHO Chairperson Suzie Squires. I sincerely thank Suzie for her staunch leadership and guidance throughout her time as VACCHO Chair.

I was seventeen years old when I started working in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing space. In the decades that have followed I do not recall a more challenging time, from a professional standpoint, than what I have seen in the last two years.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic dominated much of the operations and planning of VACCHO and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCOs) across the state.

Despite the scale of the pandemic and being presented with many complex challenges, VACCHO and the 32 Members across Victoria never lost sight of their core purpose, vision and principles. I feel everyone played their part in fulfilling our Strategic Plan's vision for creating vibrant, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Members and the incredibly dedicated workforce for their commitment and strength during what has been a deeply challenging time for all. The teams working at all the ACCOs across the state are healers, life savers and life extenders. They empower the

Community with knowledge of healthier living, including parenting skills, financial skills and more. These very people prepare our babies through their most important developmental stages, so they are ready for school. Schooling that can lead to employment, employment that can lead to home building and house owning.

There are times when the work is challenging – but we all know just how incredibly important the work is. At the recent Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Forum I spoke about the importance of breaking the cycles. Cycles which have devastated the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community since colonisation. We cannot close the health and wellbeing gap unless we break the cycles.

I believe that ACCOs are unique in that we are one big family. As soon as you walk through the doors of any ACCO you are treated like a family member. Everything we do for Community who come to visit us is the same we'd do for our own family members in our own homes. There's respect, care, and love.

As a workforce nationally, we should all be proud of our collective efforts in continuing to fight to break the cycles and close the gap.



Michael Graham



“

I believe that ACCOs are unique in that we are one big family. As soon as you walk through the doors of any ACCO you are treated like a family member. Everything we do for Community who come to visit us is the same we'd do for our own family members in our own homes. There's respect, care, and love.

”

Ngatta (which means hello in my traditional Gunditjmara language).

It has been a dynamic twelve months, with the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to present unique and unprecedented challenges for the ACCO sector in Victoria and the Communities that they serve.

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognise the leadership, dedication, and hard work of VACCHO's 32 Aboriginal Community-controlled Member organisations throughout a highly complex and demanding period. Despite major challenges, Member organisations have been proactive and innovative in carrying out inspiring work to protect the health and wellbeing of Community. I am incredibly proud of the way our 32 Members grew and adapted according to the evolving needs of communities and stakeholders to provide culturally safe services across Victoria.

One of the key outcomes of the last financial year was the ACCO Mobile Vaccination program. VACCHO worked in close partnership with Members, cohealth, Star Health and the Victorian Department of Health to launch two dedicated ACCO COVID-19 Vaccine Vans. The vans saw incredible Community engagement and an increase in vaccination rates, across both first and second dose percentages. The program delivered over 2000 vaccines to Aboriginal communities state-wide through 45 localised 'pop-up' clinics.

As the focus shifted beyond the pandemic, it was incredible to be part of several special in-person events which gave Members the opportunity to connect, reflect, share learnings and experiences, and lay the foundations for the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Victoria.

We have seen some incredible events take place over the last twelve months, including VACCHO's first Members' Meeting in two years on Wadawurrung Country in Torquay, Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co operative's 21st Anniversary Gala Dinner, the inaugural VACCHO Statewide GP Gathering on Yorta Yorta country, the 2022 Statewide Koori Maternity Services Forum, and the launch of the Balit Durn Durn Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing at Federation Square.

The importance of leadership and key partnerships has never been more apparent than throughout the last twelve months. I'd like to personally pay tribute to the VACCHO board and Chairperson Michael Graham for their staunch leadership, knowledge, and advocacy that played a vital role in supporting vibrant, healthy, self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. I'd also like to sincerely thank the Victorian Department of Health whose support and partnership throughout the year has been pivotal.

I will finish by saying a sincere thank you to our Communities once again for their inspiring work championing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, knowledge and understanding for the betterment of the health and wellbeing of the Community. Let's continue to be bold. Let's continue to be brave.

Stay deadly and look after one another.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Gallagher AO



Our Members



VACCHO's membership represents the foundational principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control and holistic health care. This principle is simple: it means that giving Community the power to make decisions for themselves and their communities is the best way to meet their needs and improve the outcomes for those communities, be it in education, justice, employment, health, or any other part of their lives.

When VACCHO was established in 1996, it was because of the need identified by the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) for a peak body to advocate for them with the united voice of the Victorian Community-controlled health sector. There was a need to influence the policy agenda around Aboriginal health and ensure that we had a say in the decisions being made about our Community: it needed to be Aboriginal health in Aboriginal hands.

Twenty-six years later, VACCHO's members have grown up. From Community organisations with a handful of staff, our Members are now large, high performing organisations, employing large numbers of staff and providing a complex variety of services.

Our full Members are vibrant and diverse organisations that deliver culturally appropriate primary health care, as well

as childcare, 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 and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria, according to the Aboriginal definition of health. To ensure their sustainability long into the future, all of our Members are now positioning themselves as businesses, and VACCHO has responded to this growth of their members, so that we can continue to provide our Members with the support that they need to carry on that trajectory of growth.

We have expanded our capacity in the areas of training and development, advocacy, health research and evidence, health promotion, engagement with Community, government, and stakeholders, and in business support.

Today, VACCHO has 24 Full Members and 8 Associate Members. These Members operate in metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria, and provide our Community with access to high quality, culturally appropriate services.

We have seen our Membership grow, with the addition of two associate members this financial year, which is a demonstration of the value that VACCHO provides our Members.



Our Board

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.



Michael Graham
Chairperson

Michael Graham is a proud Dja Dja Wurrung and Wiradjuri man who is passionate about improving the outcomes of his people and for the last 20 years has contributed to the wellbeing of the Community through his work at various Community organisations. He is currently the Chief Executive Officer at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS).

He has been a Board Member at the Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative and a former Board Chairperson at VAHS and the Fitzroy Stars Aboriginal Community Youth Club/Gymnasium.



Dallas Widdicombe
Deputy Chairperson

Dallas is a proud Dharug man who holds a Bachelor of Social Work and an Advanced Diploma of Business (Governance). Dallas previously worked in the remote Western Australian community of Balgo where he held various positions including the Chief Executive Officer of the Wirrimanu Aboriginal Community.

Dallas works for the Bendigo & District Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC) as the Director of Operations overseeing the BDAC Medical Clinic and Family and Community Services teams. During his time, he has significantly increased the income of the organisation's medical clinic.

Dallas' passions are focused on the future of improved health for his people and believes self-determination plays an integral part in achieving this goal.



Felicia Dean
Director

Felicia Dean is a proud Yorta Yorta woman, and the Chief Executive Officer of Rumbalara. She is a mother of two and grandmother to three.

Felicia has a strong background in Aboriginal Affairs and the Community-controlled sector, and supports the Empowered Communities model based on self-determination, and flexibility as the way forward for addressing the disparity across Australia for Aboriginal communities.



John Gorton
Director

John Gorton is a proud Wotjobaluk man living in Horsham. He has worked at Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative for 18 years.

John currently holds two roles at Goolum, the first as Community Services Manager, and the second as Chairperson of the Board, a role he has been in for over eight years.



Jacki Turfrey
Director

Jacki Turfrey is a proud Palawa woman who has lived and worked in Victoria for over 30 years. She is the proud mother of three children and lives in Mildura with her family.

Jacki worked as a solicitor, commercial lawyer, barrister and company secretary, and became the Director of the Koori Justice Unit (2013). She was a Director with Aboriginal Housing Victoria (2003 – 2014) and became the Director of Treaty at Aboriginal Victoria in 2016 to start the critical work that led to the establishment of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria.

She was appointed the CEO of Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) in 2020.

Artwork by Tammy Chatfield

Our leadership



Jill Gallagher, AO
Chief Executive Officer

Jill Gallagher is a proud Gunditjmara woman from Western Victoria. Jill has spent more than 20 years advancing Aboriginal health and wellbeing through her work with VACCHO.

Jill has been instrumental in helping VACCHO grow a team of over 100, providing support to 32 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across the state.

As a respected Aboriginal leader who has dedicated her life to advocating for Community, Jill has been inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women (2009), awarded the Order of Australia (2013), and inducted into the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll (2015). From 2016 to 2019, Jill served as Victoria's first Treaty Advancement Commissioner.



Michelle Chiller
Executive Director
Health Information and
Technology

Michelle Chiller is a passionate Community ally who has worked in the Victorian Aboriginal health and wellbeing sector for over 20 years across a range of project, policy and planning roles.

Michelle was in the role of Executive Director for Health Information and Technology until November 2021.



Sheree Lowe
Executive Director
Social and Emotional Wellbeing
Unit

Sheree Lowe is a Djab Wurrung and Gunditjmara woman with a strong connection to South West Victoria, she has lived most her life on Wadawurrung Country in Ballarat.

Sheree has been advocating within the Aboriginal Community in Victoria for over 20 years. She previously worked as a management consultant at PwC on projects related to organisation transformation through an Aboriginal lens and cultural safety program design.

At VACCHO, Sheree is leading the establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing.



Masita Maher
Executive Director
Policy and Research

Masita Maher is a Noongar/Yamatji woman from Western Australia and has worked extensively across Australia in a number of jurisdictions, and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Policy, post completion of a number of legal studies qualifications. She has led statewide strategies and developed a range of implementation plans to support increased engagement of programs across the Aboriginal population and has a keen interest in driving research that will enhance the lives of Aboriginal people, through culturally safe pathways that enable increased outcomes.



Peter Mitchell
Executive Director
Education and Training Unit

Peter Mitchell is a highly agile, innovative and dynamic executive with more than 30 years of experience in commercial, financial and corporate services.

Peter has track record of delivering and improving organisational outcomes, building high-performing teams and developing smart business processes.



Jim O'Shea
Executive Director
Corporate Services Unit

Jim O'Shea is a proud Gumbaynggirr man. He moved to Melbourne four years ago from Sydney.

Jim brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to his role. He has over 36 years' experience as a financial and business manager across private sector companies and not-for-profit organisations both nationally and internationally.



Abe Ropitini
Executive Director (Acting)
Population Health Unit

Abe Ropitini is a proud Māori man of Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Maniapoto iwi, with ancestral links to Palawa Country, Tasmania.

He has a background in medical anthropology and international development and has managed projects across health, disability and aged care, digital transformation, and Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing.



Troy Walsh
Executive Director
Health Information and Technology

Troy Walsh is a proud Panninher/Palawa man from Tasmania, he was born on Kurnai Country and grew up in Melbourne. He was the former Chief of Staff at VACCHO and is currently Executive Director for VACCHO's Health & Information Unit.

Troy spent 28 years at Telstra working across data, technology and automation, as well as leading initiatives within Community, such as digital media programs to lift attendance and engagement in schools.

Our committees

From July 2021 to June 2022, the following committees supported VACCHO and the Board. These committees met a total of eight times across the financial year. Their time and expertise are much appreciated.

Finance Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Assistance and guidance in monitoring and ensuring the integrity of our financial reporting.
- Compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, internal standards (including code of conduct), policies and expectations of key stakeholders.
- Assistance with monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of our internal and external audit functions

Remuneration Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Review and assess the alignment of the CEO, Executive Leadership Group and staff remuneration and benefits to VACCHO's Strategic Plan.
- Review annually, and more often if required, the key performance areas of the CEO and the Executive Leadership Group.
- Review and make recommendations to the Board on the remuneration and benefit strategies for the CEO and the Executive Leadership Group.
- Review and assess the remuneration and benefit strategies for staff as recommended by the CEO and the Executive Leadership Group, to satisfy itself that these are appropriate for the position, are fair, reflect the contribution made to the business by the staff member and enhance a business culture that supports accountability and a zero-tolerance environment for unethical conduct, through appropriate compensation and employment decisions.

Quality, Risk Compliance and Safety Committee

Responsibilities include:

- Assistance in developing, delivering, and monitoring and continually improving the performance of VACCHO's quality managements system and ISO 9001 Accreditation.
- Assistance in ensuring the integrity of our QRCS frameworks, systems along with policies and procedures.
- Support with monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of our internal control and risk management framework.



Our year

Djirri Djirri perform at the launch of the Balit Durn Durn Centre.

Highlights

On Solid Ground: Strategic Plan 2021–2026

VACCHO was established as the peak body for Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Victoria 26 years ago, the length of a generation. VACCHO's *Strategic Plan (2021–26): On Solid Ground* was launched in July 2021, the same year in which we celebrated 25 years since the organisation was established.

It was an opportunity to reflect on all that VACCHO and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) sector have achieved together, and on how far we still have to go to close the gap on health and wellbeing for Community in Victoria.

VACCHO's funding model with government since 1996 has been characterised by short-term, piecemeal grants for 'body-parts' and 'disease'. This approach to funding has not adequately resourced

the culturally responsive, wrap-around model of care that VACCHO and the ACCO sector champion and deliver for Community. It has limited the sector's ability to strategically focus on achieving the long-term change needed to close the gap on Aboriginal health and wellbeing outcomes.

On Solid Ground outlines VACCHO's strategic journey towards an outcomes-based approach, focusing on the foundations: putting down our roots and strengthening our foundations to secure the sustainability, efficiency, and impact of an Aboriginal self-determining future. By focusing on our foundations first, we will have the organisational capability to influence long-term change.

Through *On Solid Ground* and the associated Outcomes Framework VACCHO is, together with our Members, developing the solutions we need, setting the outcomes we will achieve, and tracking our performance in self-determined ways. There are three priority areas in the Strategic Plan:

- 1. Our Foundations:** to ensure VACCHO is a vibrant and strong organisation, that uses this strength to support its members and workforce.
- 2. Strong Voice:** to foster and promote Aboriginal aspirations, experience and innovation, and to strengthen VACCHO's position as an authoritative voice on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, wellbeing and self-determination.
- 3. Health and Healing:** to help translate health and wellbeing evidence into practice to achieve health outcomes for the next generation.

On Solid Ground is the first step in our new approach to create restorative change for the next generation. It is bold, transformative and embodies the principles of self-determination. The name speaks to our need for stability and strong foundations to grow and flourish, and pays homage to our communities' vital connection to lands and waterways.



Strategy artwork by Madison Connors

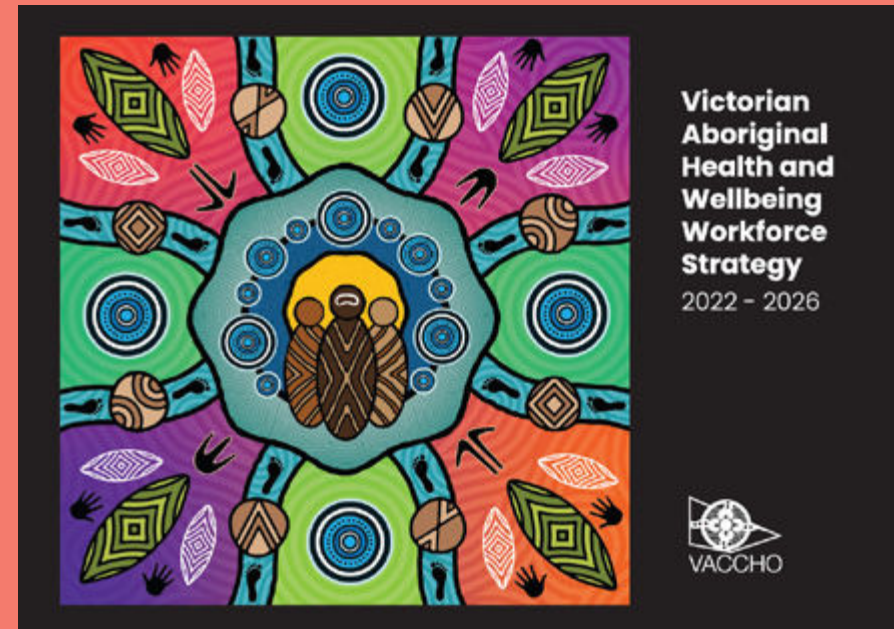
Launching the *Victorian Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy*

In collaboration with the workforce, Members and IAHA consulting, VACCHO developed and launched the *Victorian Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Workforce Strategy 2022-2026* at the July Member's meeting in Kalorama.

The Workforce Strategy provides the ACCO sector and its funders with a practical roadmap for growing and strengthening the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing Workforce in Victoria and addressing barriers to attraction, recruitment, retention, and development of workers.

It acknowledges the strong history of the ACCO sector and their role in providing culturally safe, responsive and holistic health and wellbeing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Victoria. To continue to provide services to Community, there is a fundamental need for a strong and capable Workforce, working across all levels, roles and functions.

It has been developed in a way that supports ACCOs to exercise their self-determination, recognising the diversity in culture and knowledge in Communities, and that the greatest success comes from place-based, Community-led and governed solutions.



Strategy artwork by Dixon Patten

Highlights



Mobile COVID-19 vaccination program

VACCHO worked in close partnership with Members, cohealth, Star Health and the Victorian Department of Health to launch two dedicated ACCO COVID-19 Vaccine Vans in October 2021.

The program supported Community to access the COVID-19 vaccine, helping make the vaccine available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who otherwise had difficulties accessing it. The program helped alleviate the demand on the ACCO workforce and COVID-19 clinical services.

Through the implementation of the Vaccine Vans, VACCHO saw an increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander COVID-19 vaccination rates in Victoria, across both first and second doses.

The program delivered over 2000 vaccines through 45 localised 'pop-up' clinics across Victoria. The vans successfully administered vaccinations to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community in Mildura, Shepparton, Warrnambool, Seymour, Wodonga, Benalla, Morwell, Drouin, and Warragul. Vaccine Vans set up in local parks, community centres and visited people in their homes.

We learned that taking healthcare to Community was a largely effective strategy to support protecting Mob from COVID-19. This localised approach removed barriers for Community to access vaccinations in a culturally safe setting. We also learned the best approach to busting COVID-19 vaccine myths was to build trust with Community through open and honest conversations. Community members were able to yarn with GPs and nurses, about the benefits and risks of vaccination to make informed decisions for their own health.

VACCHO sincerely thanks its Member organisations, Star Health, the Victorian Department of Health and most importantly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for their work in supporting and embracing the ACCO Vaccine Vans to protect the Community against COVID-19.

“ What an awesome job - I know everyone is tired but the work that is happening across the State is invigorating. We are getting Community vaccinated and we need to celebrate that. ”

- Member ACCO

Rainbow Tick Accreditation

The Rainbow Tick Accreditation (RTA) is a quality framework and national accreditation program, launched in 2012 by Rainbow Health Australia (RHA) in consultation with Quality Innovation Performance (QIP).

RTA assists organisations to provide safe, inclusive, and affirming workplaces and service delivery for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and other (LGBTIQA+) community.



VACCHO is committed to ensuring all our staff enjoy a safe and inclusive working environment, free from discrimination, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia to provide a more positive experience for all LGBTIQA+ people.

VACCHO has committed to ensuring all our staff enjoy a safe and inclusive working environment. This year has seen VACCHO take further important steps forward in the journey to accreditation. Our self-assessment via QIP is has a target date of July 2023 with the final accreditation date of January 2024.

VACCHO's RTA achievements in 2022:

- RTA working group (17 members) established
- awareness of LGBTIQ+ days of significance raised via social media posts and events
- VACCHO policies and procedures and the Code of Conduct reviewed and updated
 - survey results indicated approximately **20% of VACCHO staff identify as LGBTIQ+** and 75% of staff feel LGBTIQ+ inclusion is a priority for VACCHO
- advertised a Rainbow Mob Inclusion Officer role in conjunction with Family Safety Vic (FSV) to support LGBTIQ+ inclusion internally and with member organisations
- staff training in LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice with an intersectional lens for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ people investigated, developed and scheduled for early 2023 via Rainbow Health Australia
- joining Rainbow Mob networks and mainstream Rainbow networks underway
- building a library of LGBTIQ+ resources for VACCHO underway.

With VACCHO at the forefront of leadership for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, becoming Rainbow Tick accredited demonstrates commitment to LGBTIQ+ inclusion, rights and meeting the needs for our staff, members and Community.



Social and Emotional Wellbeing



The SEWB team at the launch of The Balit Durn Durn Centre

The Balit Durn Durn Centre of Excellence in Social and Emotional Wellbeing

VACCHO was honoured to launch the Balit Durn Durn Centre of Excellence in Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing at Federation Square in May. Balit Durn Durn means strong brain, mind, intellect and sense of self in Wurundjeri Woivurrung language.

The Balit Durn Durn Centre is an initiative designed to foster innovation and improvement in social and emotional wellbeing practice, policy and research. It coordinates a collaborative approach to the expansion of Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) services in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and mainstream mental health services.

We want to ensure there is no 'wrong door' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people seeking a culturally safe SEWB service – that culturally safe SEWB services are easily accessed at both mainstream health providers and local ACCOs.

The Centre draws on clinical, research and Community expertise to coordinate best practice across services through:

- clinical, organisational and cultural governance planning and development
- workforce development: training, professional development activities and supporting the proposed scholarship program
- guidance and practical supports to build clinical effectiveness in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment
- developing and disseminating research and evidence for social and emotional wellbeing models and for convening associated regional and local communities of practice.

The Balit Durn Durn Centre is a key outcome from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The Commission marked the first time in history that Aboriginal leaders, organisations, people, families, carers, and Communities were given the opportunity to have their voices and experiences included in a redesign of the mental health system.

The launch built on the strength and advocacy of Aboriginal communities and leaders; the vision set out in Balit Durn Durn, VACCHO's submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System; and Balit Murrup, the Victorian Government's ten-year Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework 2017–2027.

Executive Director of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre of Excellence Sheree Lowe says the launch of the Balit Durn Durn Centre is a major step forward for the health and wellbeing of Community.

*Artwork by
Kenita-Lee McCartney*

“

For too long, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria have fallen through the cracks of a fragmented and culturally unsafe mental health system ... the launch of The Balit Durn Durn Centre is an important time as it brings Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing to the forefront. The Centre will focus on strengthening mental health and the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) service system by providing Aboriginal leadership, empowerment and collaboration.

”

- Sheree Lowe

Culture + Kinship

VACCHO established the Culture + Kinship program to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Culture + Kinship focused on Culture and Community as key drivers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

The innovative program supported Communities' connection to Culture, which in turn supports health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria. The pilot program was delivered by three ACCOs and was designed to allow ACCOs self-determination and flexibility in designing programs based on local priorities. Fundamental to all programs was the opportunity to teach, learn and yarn about cultural knowledge between and within generations and the wider Community.

The Culture + Kinship project demonstrated the necessity of Aboriginal leadership in delivering health programs to Aboriginal communities. Through the program, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been able to reconnect with Community, Culture and Country, with flow-on benefits for their health and wellbeing.

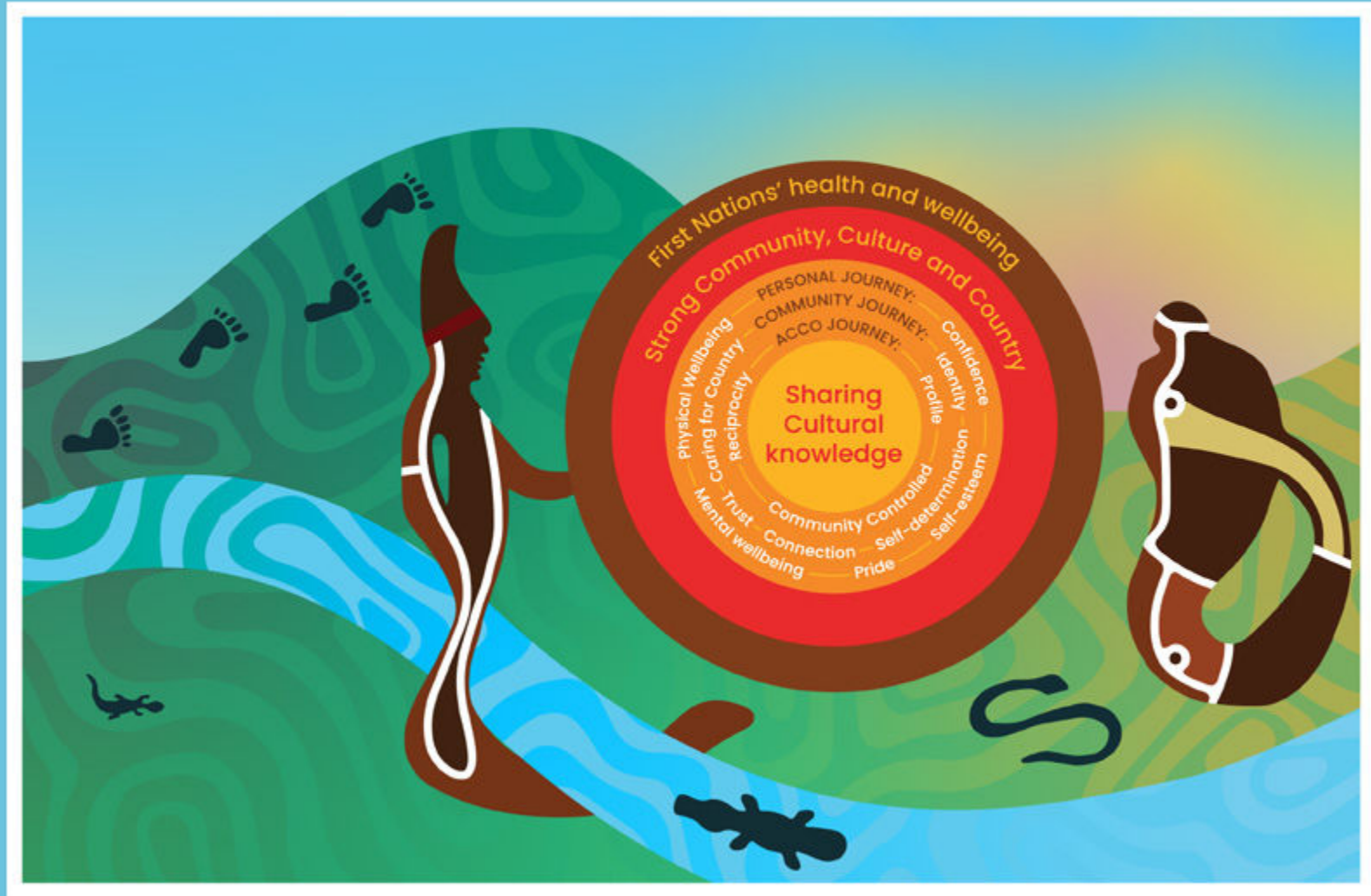
“ To see everyone connecting together through something so culturally important ... we don't see enough of this kind of thing. ”
- Workshop participant

Participants reported:

- ✓ Improvements to their mental wellbeing
- ✓ Increased knowledge of healthy lifestyle choices
- ✓ Increased confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ Increased connection and trust with other community members
- ✓ Enhanced pride in Aboriginal culture

Member ACCOs reported:

- ✓ Increased visibility of organisation in the Community
- ✓ Increased reciprocity and accountability to Community



Culture + Kinship Theory of Change

The Theory of Change was created by ACCOs and represents their vision for the Healthy Communities project. The concentric circles represent people coming together to connect about Community, Culture and Country. The yellow, orange and red represent fire - the circles symbolise a campfire as a meeting point for Community. Brown represents the connection between Country and Aboriginal health and wellbeing.



The Beautiful Shawl Project

The Beautiful Shawl Project went back on the road in 2022, using art, culture, and yarns to deliver incredible health outcomes. The Beautiful Shawl Project is a Community-led initiative providing a culturally safe and responsive alternative to traditional breast screening for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

The Project provided customised screening shawls to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women that are culturally appropriate, familiar and beautiful to wear during their breast screen. Each Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who had a breast check-up with BreastScreen Victoria received a Beautiful Shawl unique to their Community. The 11 different shawls designs were developed by local talented Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and artists. About 580 Beautiful Shawls have been received by women around Victoria in the past 12 months.

One of the key pieces of artwork featured as part of the Beautiful Shawl Project is now proudly and permanently exhibited at the Geelong BreastScreen Clinic as a respectful display of cultural safety. Talented Arrernte artist, Jasmine-Skye Marinos, unveiled her artwork Kardeeneeyoo Toort-Barram at an official event in July with family, VACCHO and BreastScreen Victoria in attendance.

The Beautiful Shawl Project is an award-winning collaborative effort between VACCHO, BreastScreen Victoria, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and 11 ACCOs in Victoria.





2022 Koori Maternity Services Forum

For the first time in two years, Koori Maternity Service (KMS) units from all over Victoria gathered on Wadawurrung Country for the 2022 Statewide KMS Forum.

The forum was a collaboration between VACCHO and the Maternity Services Education Program (MSEP) at the Royal Women's Hospital. The MSEP is funded to deliver professional development workshops to the KMS workforce which is made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous members.

It was an excellent opportunity for KMS staff to share knowledge, learn from sector peers and discover new development and training opportunities to further enhance their skills.

Coinciding with International Women's Day on March 8, the two-day forum commenced with a Welcome to Country on the picturesque shores of Jan Juc beach led by proud Wadawurrung woman, Corrina Eccles.

KMS staff made their way to the Narana Aboriginal Cultural Centre in Charlemont where they participated in a number of workshops and listened to presentations from VACCHO, HealthAbility, Safer Care Victoria, the Victorian Government's Department of Health, Maternity Connect, Victorian HIV Service and Sexual Health Victoria.

Over the two-day forum there were meaningful yarns recognising the vital role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander midwives and

health practitioners have in ensuring healthy pregnancies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their babies. How to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for KMS healthcare workers was also discussed, as well as sexual health and providing holistic and cultural support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women throughout their pregnancy right through to birth.

KMS staff from VACCHO Member organisations such as Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-Operative, Mallee District Aboriginal Services, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation and Njernda were joined by their KMS peers from the Royal Women's Hospital, Northern Health and Peninsula Health.

VACCHO would like to give special thanks to the Maternity Services Education Program team at the Royal Women's Hospital for all their effort and support in the lead up to and throughout the forum.



Statewide GP Gathering

The Inaugural VACCHO Statewide GP Gathering took place in Echuca on Yorta Yorta country in June, delivering a unique blend of cultural and clinical education, peer support and professional development.

The gathering was a special event that provided Member ACCO GPs the opportunity to come together with their peers – in many cases for the very first time.

VACCHO were thrilled to see GPs and their families having a great time sharing their valuable knowledge and stories at the Dungula Events Centre.

Powerful and inspiring words shared by Aunty Faye Lynam and Aunty Nellie Flagg proved to be one of the highlights of the gathering. Another was the 'You Can't Ask That' session panelled by Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS) CEO Michael Graham, Executive Director, SEWB Centre of Excellence Sheree Lowe, and Wemba Wemba Elder Aunty Nellie Flagg.

Presentations from Bunurong Health Service's Dr Hung The Nguyen and Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's Dr Ed Poliness were extremely well received by attendees.

VACCHO would like to sincerely thank those who attended the event and pays tribute to outgoing GP Workforce Strategy Coordinator Stephanie May for her incredible work and vision bringing the event to life.



Aboriginal Medical Cadetship Program

VACCHO established a new and innovative Medical Cadetship Program in 2021 to support Aboriginal medical students obtaining casual employment in Victorian ACCOs, in line with our GP Workforce Strategy.



A first for VACCHO, the specialised program offered a life-changing opportunity through the two-year Medical Cadetship for a number of medical students from Victoria. The program attracted considerable interest and VACCHO successfully placed five Aboriginal medical students in cadetship roles in participating ACCOs across regional and rural areas.

The program saw cadets develop their skills and knowledge by gaining hands-on experience in a real-life setting working as highly valued contributing members of an ACCO. It provided cadets the opportunity to experience the rich programs and holistic care provided through ACCOs including health promotion, family services, child-care centres, aged care and social emotional wellbeing.

These roles have varied depending on the need identified by each ACCO, and the program has demonstrated early success in establishing and developing long-term relationships between emerging Aboriginal doctors and ACCOs.

As a result of the program's early success, VACCHO is working with Monash University to identify opportunities for ACCOs to provide GP placement opportunities to trainee doctors.

We thank the Department of Families Fairness and Housing and the Aboriginal Workforce Fund for their support of this program.

Improving Care for Aboriginal Patients (ICAP) forum

The Improving Care for Aboriginal Patients (ICAP) workforce came together on Wadawurrung Country in May 2022 for the first ICAP Forum since 2019.

Together with the wonderful team at Barwon Health, VACCHO organised two days of activities and discussion centred on the work of Aboriginal Health Liaison Officers (AHLOs) and Koori Mental Health Liaison Officers (KMHLOs).

More than 50 delegates attended the ICAP Forum, including VACCHO staff, AHLOs and KMHLOs from across Victoria, representatives from the Victorian Department of Health, and special guest speaker Dr Glenn Harrison, a Wotjobaluk man from Western Victoria who works as a doctor and emergency specialist at Royal Melbourne Hospital and Epworth Private Hospital in Geelong.

Delegates heard about an exciting AHLO history project, learned from the Barwon Health team about their data collection method, health justice partnerships and online Aboriginal family violence training, before a site visit to University Hospital Geelong. Dr Glenn presented insights and observations from his experience as a doctor, including growing the Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander workforce within hospitals, the need for better data collection, and increasing pathways to study medicine. He also noted the special contribution of Aunty Joan Vickery AO, the very first AHLO who worked at St Vincent's Hospital.

The screening of DJÄKAMIRR – CARETAKER OF PREGNANCY AND BIRTH was a heart-warming highlight from the second day. The film offered a privileged insight into the aspirations of remote Communities to reclaim their birthing culture from the stronghold of Western medicine and be part of the solutions to improve health.

There are still many gaps to close in the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients receive care in hospitals and primary health settings, from data collection and reporting to peer support for AHLOs and strong partnerships between ACCOs and hospitals. We will continue working closely with our Members, the ICAP workforce, government and primary health networks to ensure health and wellbeing services are accessible and equitable for everyone in our communities.



FoodPATH Community workshops

VACCHO's Nutrition team, in partnership with the Murnong Health Research Mob from Deakin University, held workshops with Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative, Moogji Aboriginal Council and VACCHO as part of the FoodPATH (Food policies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health) project. The FoodPATH project aims to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Victoria to identify what actions are needed to improve food and nutrition choices in their local community.

With each ACCO, Aboriginal facilitators guide workshop participants through a series of activities based around the question: What has contributed to food choices in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in recent years? This includes factors that have helped people eat healthy and factors that make it harder to eat healthy. Deakin University's custom software program, called STICKE, is used to build a systems map of all the interrelated factors that participants suggested had contributed to food choices in their community.

For more about the FoodPATH project, visit: www.vaccho.org.au/foodpath



Aboriginal Data and Action on Prevention Together (ADAPT) study

VACCHO's Nutrition team continued to build the evidence base for the Aboriginal Data and Action on Prevention Together (ADAPT) Study, in partnership with the Murnong Health Research Mob from Deakin University. Data from 300 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in the Goulburn Valley Ovens Murray region (12 local government areas) and the Great South Coast region (6 local government areas) was analysed to understand trends in height, weight, food and drink intake, physical activity, and wellbeing. The ADAPT Report aligns with **Focus Area 2.2: Research and Evidence** from VACCHO's Strategic Plan *On Solid Ground*.

To view and download the full version of the Aboriginal Data and Action on Prevention Together (ADAPT) Report, head to our website: vaccho.org.au/adapt

Food environments cultural animation

VACCHO's Nutrition team developed a cultural animation, in collaboration with Madison Connors and Jacob Komesaroff, which tells the story of a young Aboriginal boy and his Uncle as they navigate their food environment and how this environment has changed since colonisation. The animation is used as an engagement tool during the FoodPATH Community workshops.



Artwork by
Shakara Montalto

Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Forums

The Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership Forums are a strategic collaboration between the Aboriginal Community-controlled health sector, the mainstream health sector and the Victorian Department of Health.

VACCHO is proud to foster this collaboration between our 32 Member organisations and our health partners in Government and in the sector. The Forum runs twice a year, bringing Aboriginal organisations, State Government, and mainstream partnerships together to set priorities, track progress, and hold each other to account.



Through building strong and sincere relationships, the Forum works to determine and action Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector priorities and advance health strategies to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria.

The 2022 Forums brought together key stakeholders from across the Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing health sector to share valuable knowledge, expertise, yarns, and learnings. Over 70 attendees gathered for the first forum of the year, held in April, which saw some honest, raw, and at times heartbreaking discussions take place. The second Forum of the year, held in August, also evoked robust and honest conversations that delved into the challenges being faced by the Aboriginal health sector.

The stories and experiences shared reaffirmed the importance of placing Aboriginal health in Aboriginal hands – that personalised culturally safe care that resonates with Communities right across the state. It was inspiring to hear of some of the incredible work ACCOs do to assist the Community with their health and wellbeing twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Fourteen Member priorities were identified over the two days of the April Forum. VACCHO developed seven position papers on key Member priorities to inform the Victorian Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Agreement.

VACCHO would like to pay tribute to Members and key stakeholders for their involvement in the Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Partnership forums in Melbourne.



VACCHO Policy Network

VACCHO established a Policy Network with the VACCHO policy team and VACCHO Member orgs. Two network meetings were held in February and April with 5-7 Members and the Terms of Reference has been established.

Victorian Committee of Aboriginal Aged Care and Disability (VCAACD)

VACCHO, through our organisation of the Victorian Committee of Aboriginal Aged Care and Disability (VCAACD), facilitated three workshops with Members to influence Australian Department of Health development of an integrated model of aged and health care.

VACCHO, through VCAACD, organised a session for Members to influence drafting of the new Australian Aged Care Bill. This along with other advocacy resulted in the Government amending the Bill to exempt ACCOs from requiring a majority of independent board members, which would have weakened Community control. The advocacy has also affected DH's considerations on pre-employment screening requirements for aged care.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC)

VACCHO led the establishment of a new national peak body, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC), to support Aboriginal aged care providers and drive improvements in the care our older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community receive.

VACCHO chairs this new Council and all of its directors are proud Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people leading aged care services. In only a few months, the Council has already become chair of the Government's main advisory group on Aboriginal.

The Council persuaded the National Aged Care Alliance of not-for-profit mainstream aged care providers to make improving aged care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a strategic priority. It has become the leading voice working with the Department of Health on their programs to improve cultural safety and respond to the findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

NATSIAACC also provided the key advice to persuade the Department of Health to amend their Aged Care Bill in two areas that would have negatively affected ACCOs.

Introduction to Aboriginal Cultural Safety training

Over the past year, the Cultural Safety Services team delivered two Cultural Safety Audits and over 200 sessions of Introduction to Aboriginal Cultural Safety training online to 41 organisations and 2348 participants. VACCHO's CSS team received over 1500 completed evaluation forms outlining participant feedback, showing participants found the training useful and would recommend the training to colleagues and/or networks, with an overall 99% satisfaction and referral rate reported.

Smoking ceremonies now available for Mob in Palliative Care

Embedding cultural ways into healthcare is necessary for the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Thanks to VACCHO's Cultural Safety Services' ongoing advocacy, consultation, and education work, the Centre for Palliative Care at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne successfully worked with the local fire brigade to enable smoking ceremonies to take place within two designated rooms at Caristas Christi Hospice in Kew for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receiving palliative care.

Creating space for smoking ceremonies to occur at end-of-life care, and within a hospice setting, is a significant step to improving cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at a pivotal life phase. It ensures people can access both medical and cultural care, when and where they need it.

This initiative is a continuation of the legacy of Aunty Cherie Waight, whose brilliant and enduring work in the palliative care space sought to ensure the best care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Communities.

OUR STRONG VOICES

with Jill Gallagher



Introducing *Our Strong Voices*

VACCHO were proud to launch our first ever cultural safety podcast, *Our Strong Voices*. The podcast explores key issues that impact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community via yarning and robust, highly informative, no-nonsense conversations featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, thinkers, and trailblazers.

Each episode showcases unique insights that delve into the critical links between cultural safety and the holistic health and wellbeing of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. *Our Strong Voices* is an implementation and extension of the crucial teachings provided by the VACCHO Cultural Safety team.

Episode 1: Cultural Safety and Leadership' features VACCHO's deadly CEO Jill reflecting on her childhood, the need for more Aboriginal history and culture taught in schools and what cultural safety means to her and her leadership style.

CONTENT WARNING: This podcast contains discussions of the Stolen Generations and other topics that maybe triggering to Community and the general public. VACCHO would like to advise Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander peoples that this program may contain images, voices, and discussions of those who have returned to the Dreaming.

“ To me, cultural safety is about making the workplace – any workplace – culturally safe for our people, free of racism and discrimination. ”

- Jill Gallagher on Episode 1 of *Our Strong Voices*

Education and Training Unit

VACCHO has been a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) since 2000, after our Member organisations agreed that VACCHO should lead the delivery of vocational education and training to the sector in response to a 1999 analysis of Aboriginal Health Worker training needs.

VACCHO's Education and Training Unit (ETU) continues to play a key role in achieving the short- and long-term goals of VACCHO's Membership, as well as the development of a highly skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce and Aboriginal community-controlled health sector in Victoria.

The ETU continues to be agile and responsive to the training needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait community health and wellbeing sector, addressing the required skills and knowledge demanded for the expanding Aboriginal Health Workforce.



This year, VACCHO's RTO had 143 students and supported 36 trainees. Students studied certificates and diplomas in:

- Leadership and Management
- Counselling
- Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Mental Health
- Community Services
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care and Practice.

Of these students, 62 are studying an Aboriginal Health Worker Training Course and approximately 18 are accessing traineeships, supporting Members with workforce capacity.

VACCHO successfully placed five Aboriginal Medical Students in cadetship roles in participating ACCOs in regional and rural areas. There has been early success in establishing and developing long-term relationships between emerging Aboriginal doctors and ACCOs. The Balit Durn Durn Centre awarded 13 higher education scholarships to Aboriginal students undertaking tertiary studies in a discipline related to Aboriginal SEWB.

VACCHO is also busily expanding the RTO's current scope so we can offer further opportunities for education within Victoria. We have also been asked to provide delivery into Queensland and Tasmania, which is exciting and great to be recognised in those jurisdictions for the quality of trainers and educational delivery.



Pictured: VACCHO's 2022 graduation ceremony

Communications and Digital Services

Before May 2021, VACCHO did not have a dedicated team or function to support the organisation's broad range of communications needs. The Communications and Digital Services (CDS) team was established this year, increasing our function across our core streams: social media and digital, design and branding, editorial and publications, media and speaking engagements, internal and Member communications, planning and strategy, multimedia, and campaigns.

The newly formed team played a critical role in strengthening VACCHO's communications. Over the last year, the team worked to increase the reach, engagement and trust of stakeholders, Communities and audiences, and to strengthen the voice and profile of VACCHO.

Increasing the team's capacity enabled the organisation to move away from ad-hoc outsourcing of design and other communications collateral to bring it under the CDS purview, allowing for strategic, consistent and streamlined approaches to strengthen VACCHO's brand and voice. VACCHO's branding was also refreshed and made more cohesive thanks to increased design capacity in the team.

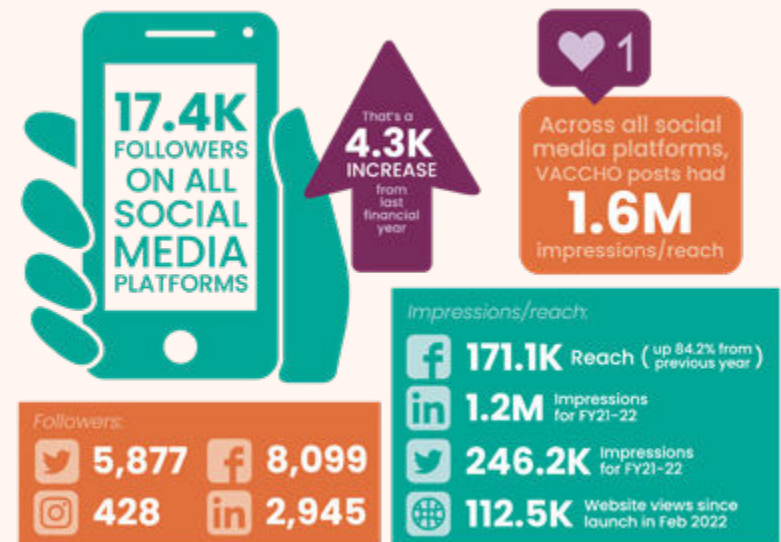
CDS also supported work across the organisation, working collaboratively with different teams on speaking engagements, dinner events, Member meetings, and more. The team provided advice and recommendations around talking points for VACCHO's new podcast, Our Strong Voices, as well as filming, editing, packaging and distributing it across our media channels.

New VACCHO website

Working with teams across the organisation, the CDS team managed the creation of VACCHO's new website, launched in February 2022. The new website is compatible with Google Analytics, allowing for greater monitoring and evaluation. The new website was designed to improve hosting of best practice resources for the sector, increase functionality, useability and accessibility for our audience, and strengthen VACCHO's voice in the sector. VACCHO utilised the news function on the website to publish 19 sector-relevant news and op-eds between 2021-22, strengthening our advocacy and political voice.

Social media

VACCHO increased its reach and engagements across our existing social media platforms over the last year, and launched the new VACCHO Instagram account in December 2021. National research suggests social media use is higher among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than the general Australian population, making it a useful metric for VACCHO to track its reach and engagement.



Reach (Facebook) = The number of people who saw any content from your page or about your page, including posts, stories, ads, social information from people who interact with your page.
Impression (LinkedIn/Twitter) = Number of views or clicks on an update/post.



Looking ahead

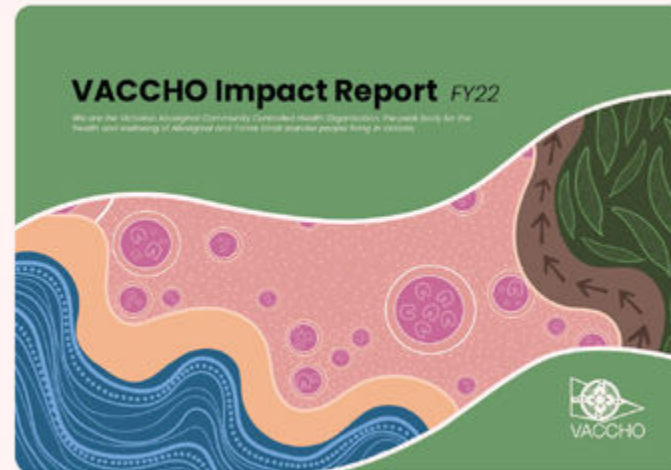
The Victorian Aboriginal Health Research Accord

To address issues with the way research in Victoria that impacts Aboriginal communities is conducted, VACCHO have embarked on designing the Victorian Aboriginal Health Research Accord (the Accord) in partnership with Communities.

The Victorian Aboriginal Health Research Accord, once adopted, would be an agreement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Victoria, the Victorian Government, universities, medical research institutes and health services. The Accord will act as a quality assurance mechanism to strengthen ethical health and wellbeing research impacting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. When institutions become signatories to the Accord, they would commit to and be accountable for adopting the principles, protocols, and processes of the Accord within their research policies, practices, actions plans and their organisational culture.

Journey to outcomes-based funding

VACCHO released its inaugural *Impact Report* in October 2022. The Impact Report showcases some of the amazing work VACCHO staff have done with and for our Members and Community over the last financial year.



Artwork by Madison Connors

VACCHO will be producing these reports annually as part of our transition to an outcomes-focused approach. Reporting in this way strengthens our accountability back to Members, Community, and our funding partners. It demonstrates how we're delivering on our Strategic Plan, *On Solid Ground*, and the outcomes we set out to achieve.

It will also become a key deliverable for outcomes-based funding with the Victorian Department of Health. Through this we seek to streamline our contracts and reporting to enable greater self-determination.

FoodPATH

Over the next 12 months, we will continue the FoodPATH workshops with three more Victorian ACCOs, then begin a process to combine the insights and data collected from each ACCO. The outcome of the FoodPATH project will be a consensus statement outlining key policy priorities to improve food environments and nutrition outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Victoria. This will enable VACCHO and ACCOs to have a strong voice on food and nutrition policy – and the chance to bring about change for future generations.



Organisation

Vision, Purpose and Values

VACCHO champions Community control and health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Our 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 and Torres Strait Islander people to realise their full potential as individuals and as members of Community.

We believe that each Community needs its own locally based, Community owned, culturally strong – and adequately resourced – holistic health and wellbeing service.

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 and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our Vision

Vibrant, healthy, self-determining Communities

Our Cultural Values

VACCHO is at heart, and by constitution, a Community-controlled organisation.

Culture is intrinsic to our identity and essential to our world view.

As a Member-driven peak body representing and supporting Community-controlled organisations, VACCHO's fundamental priorities are to advocate for self-determination and be a voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in maintaining strong cultural identity and connection.





From good to great

In recognising that our employee brand and our employee experience shape us, we use the insights from both internal and external surveys to measure the business and provide an overall people-health metric as part of the new suite of strategy metrics.

We seek to ensure a trusting, respectful and inclusive culture, where employees are proud of their work, empowered to succeed and know that their wellbeing, safety and other human rights are respected.

These FY2022 surveys give direction to our focus areas as we go from good to great.

	Total	# of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff	% of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff
Executive Directors	6	4	67%
Managers	19	5	26%
All other staff	94	30	32%
Trainees	4	3	75%
Total	123	42	34%

Employee experience

A great employee experience continues to be the catalyst for building our culture of high performance to see new business practices emerging, new language embedded and a significant change in the ways we do things.

We are now commencing the next iteration of our culture-shaping work to enable our transformation to an impactful business.

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 inclusion in the workplace to build the organisational leadership capability.

We realigned our Leading Others program to focus on key areas for leaders, establish a quarterly enterprise leadership forum to drive engagement, and develop unity in the leadership cohort.

Our employees told us 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. Consequently, our focus is to ensure we support our employees to be the very best they can be.

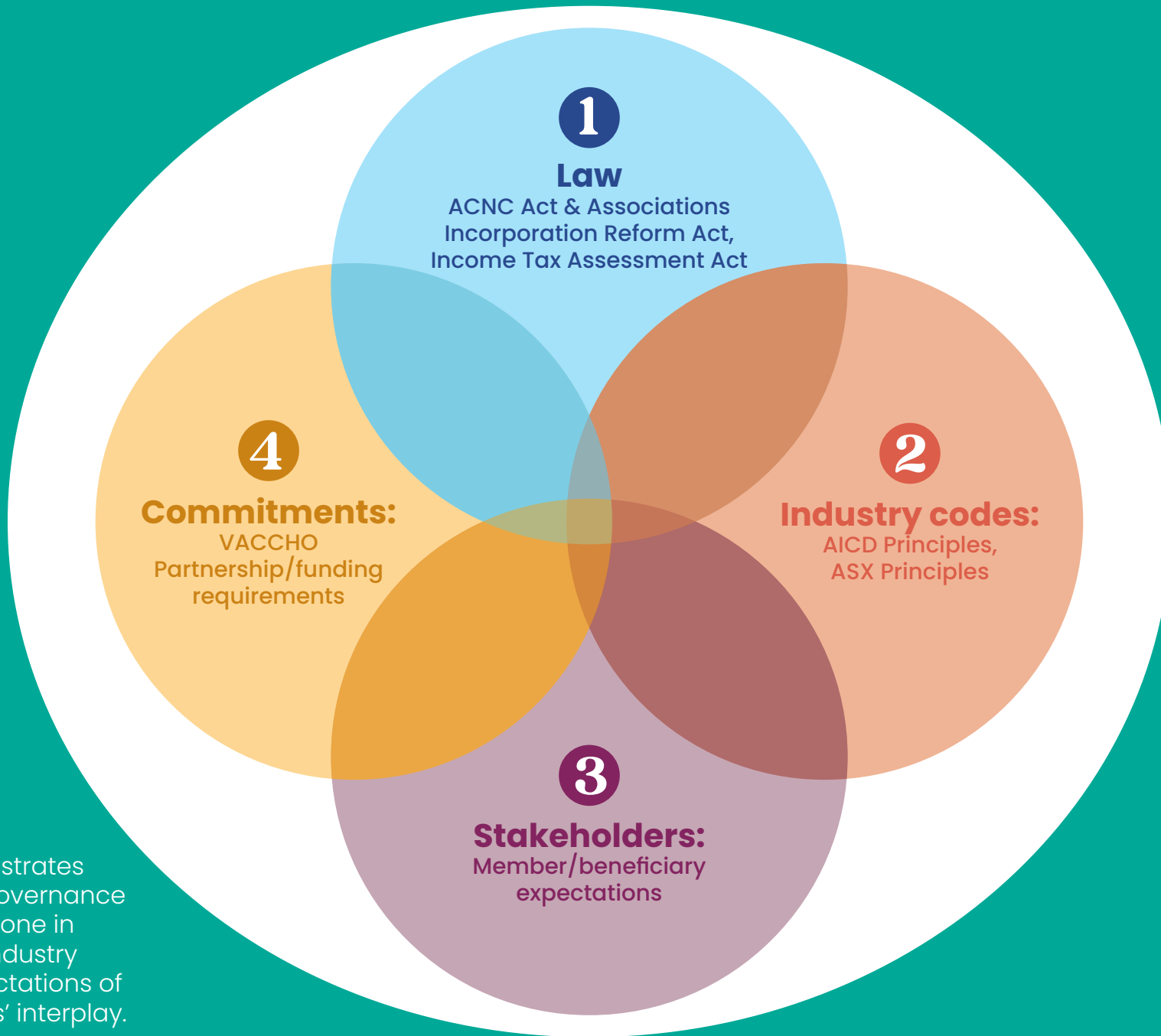
Quality, Risk Compliance and Safety

VACCHO is committed to quality and governance through building strong Quality Management Systems. This commitment to provide quality services was demonstrated by achieving ISO Accreditation 9001: 2015. This journey of continual improvement shows our commitment to embed safety, risk management and compliance measures in everything we do. VACCHO's holds a register of key resources to support our Members as part of our service delivery. Quality management is essential to providing the best possible services to our as 'quality is everyone's business'.

Risk management and risk thinking is also a crucial component of our journey forward, especially for strategic and operational governance structures. Our compliance, contract management and legislative obligations are top of mind as we strengthen our foundations, through internal auditing. Knowledge management and document control measure assist in providing consistent policies and

procedural documentation to guide staff in the way we provide services. We have a robust safety committee that helps provide a safe workplace environment and continues to monitor compliance in this area.

The Quality and Governance Team have expanded to include Clinical Governance to coordinate our approach to CQI as a priority for comprehensive primary health care. We are engaging with Members and key stakeholders to build a Clinical Governance framework. This will map out the scope of where supports are needed. This engagement will populate the framework to ensure it captures best practice in clinical governance within our sector. The Clinical Governance Working Group is in place to support implementation of the framework to collaborate and share knowledge based on best practice evidence. VACCHO has invested into professional staff including medical officers, registered nurses, and clinical governance subject matter experts to provide this knowledge and expertise.



This diagram illustrates our corporate governance environment as one in which the law, industry codes, the expectations of our stakeholders' interplay.

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 controlled¹.

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 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.

¹ Governance for Good, ACNC 2013, p 3

Financial Report

Snapshot

This is a snapshot of our revenue and expenditure over FY2022 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 2022 set out on pages 66 to 68..

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 2022 Annual Information Statement, which we will lodge with the ACNC and which will be available via the ACNC's Charity Register.

Income

	FY22 \$m	FY21 \$m	FY20 \$m	FY19 \$m	FY18 \$m
Grant and funding	25.903	14.444	17.952	11.669	11.016
Other income	1.1221	2.068	0.993	0.847	0.694
Total income	27.124	16.512	18.944	12.516	11.710

Disbursements

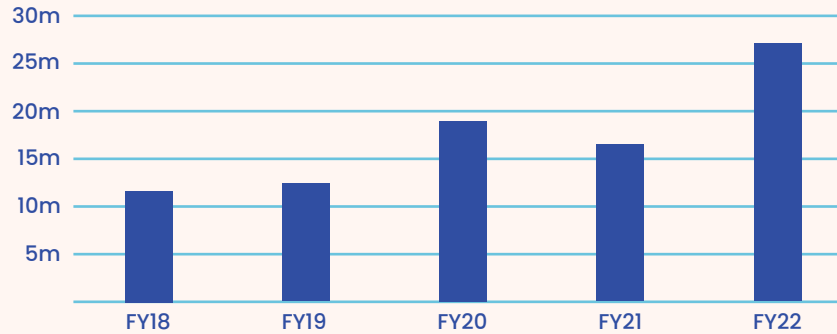
	FY22 \$m	FY21 \$m	FY20 \$m	FY19 \$m	FY18 \$m
Program operational expenses	13.105	5.557	9.423	3.902	3.760
Employee expenses	11.131	9.423	8.078	6.817	6.214
Depreciation expenses	0.395	0.401	0.331	0.225	0.166
Office expenses	1.059	0.730	0.765	0.733	0.826
Other expenses	0.258	0.348	0.135	0.775	0.706
Total income	25.948	16.459	18.732	12.452	11.672

Surplus

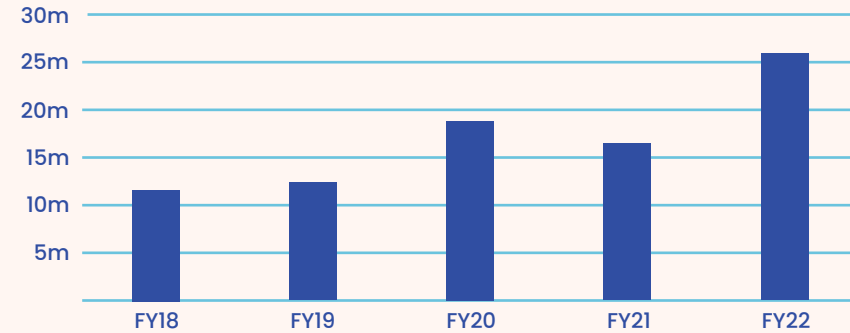
	FY22 \$m	FY21 \$m	FY20 \$m	FY19 \$m	FY18 \$m
Excess of income over expenditure	1.176	0.053	0.213	0.065	0.038
Total income	1.176	0.053	0.213	0.065	0.038

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

Income



Expenses



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 2022.

Public Officer's Statement	Page 64
Statement by Members of the Committee	Page 64
Auditor's Independence Declaration	Page 65
Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income	Page 66
Statement of Financial Position	Page 67
Statement of Changes in Equity	Page 68
Independent Auditor's Report	Page 69

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 2022 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 2022 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

Dated this 26th day of September 2022

Statement by Members of the Committee

In the opinion of the committee, the financial report as set out on pages 62 to 69:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Incorporated as at 30 June 2022 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

Dated this 26th day of September 2022



Dallas Widdicombe

Auditor's Independence Declaration



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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 2022, 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.

RSM AUSTRALIA PARTNERS

B Y CHAN
Partner

Dated: 26 September 2022
Melbourne, Victoria

THE POWER OF BEING UNDERSTOOD
AUDIT | TAX | CONSULTING

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Financial Report

Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2022

This 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 2022.

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

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Revenue		
Grant and funding	25,903,202	14,443,728
Other income	1,221,332	2,067,812
Total revenue	27,124,534	16,511,540
Expenses		
Program operational expenses	13,104,958	5,557,354
Employee expenses	11,131,486	9,423,024
Depreciation expenses	395,427	400,595
Office expenses	1,058,868	730,200
Other expenses	258,069	347,688
Total expenses	25,948,808	16,458,861
Surplus Before Income Tax for the year attributable to Members of the Entity	1,175,726	52,679
Income tax expense	-	-
Surplus for the year	1,175,726	52,679
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the year attributable to Members of the Entity	1,175,726	52,679

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2022

This 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 2022.

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

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	17,899,635	26,818,787
Trade and other receivables	871,923	407,715
Other Financial assets	10,020,000	-
Property purchase deposit	3,400,000	-
Other	105,815	86,362
Total current assets	32,297,373	27,308,864
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	6,253,025	6,141,663
Intangible asset	131,860	433,221
Total non-current assets	6,384,885	6,574,884
Total assets	38,682,258	33,883,748
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	4,852,735	2,561,124
Employee benefits	955,457	773,735
Deferred income	19,714,958	18,560,507
Total current liabilities	25,523,150	21,895,366
Non-current liabilities		
Employee benefits	75,938	80,938
Total non-current liabilities	75,938	80,938
Total liabilities	25,599,088	21,976,304
Net assets	13,083,170	11,907,444
Equity		
Retained surplus	13,083,170	11,907,444
Total equity	13,083,170	11,907,444

Statement of Changes in Equity for the Year Ended 30 June 2022

This 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 2022.

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

	Retained Surpluses \$	Total equity \$
2021		
Balance at 1 July 2020	11,854,795	11,854,765
Surplus attributable to members	52,679	52,679
Balance at 30 June 2021	11,907,444	11,907,444
2022		
Balance at 1 July 2021	11,907,444	11,907,444
Surplus attributable to members	1,175,726	1,175,726
Balance at 30 June 2022	13,083,170	13,083,170

Independent Auditor's Report



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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statement by members' of the committee.

In our opinion, the financial report of the Association has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Requirements and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Responsibilities of the Members of the Committee for the Financial Report

The members of the committee of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Requirements, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act) and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and for such internal control as the members of the committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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In preparing the financial report, the members of the committee are responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: http://www.aasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

RSM AUSTRALIA PARTNERS

B Y CHAN
Partner

Dated: 28 September 2022
Melbourne, Victoria

Acknowledgements

We would like to sincerely thank everyone involved in helping us create change for the next generation and all to come.

We would like to thank our Members and staff for their invaluable contribution to our purpose as an organisation. We appreciate all you do.

Thanks to our partners, funders and supporters, who strengthen our work and our organisation on many levels.

Finally, we thank Community and the whole Community-controlled sector, who show strength in the face of adversity, a determined spirit in the face of instability and, above all, care for each other.



Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

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