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# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** OF COUNTRY

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands we live and work on.

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nation and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and pay respect to all our community members, patients, Board and staff, and to everyone who has contributed to our organisation.





## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**



#### Acknowledgment

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands on which we live and work. I pay my deep respect to Elders, past and present and extend my recognition to the emerging young Aboriginal leaders who are shaping our shared future.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I am honoured to present the Chairperson's Report for First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing for 2022-2023. This year has been marked by extraordinary achievements and significant milestones that reflect our ongoing commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities.

#### **Historic Opportunity: The Referendum** for the Voice

Our achievements this year occurred against the backdrop of an historic opportunity for positive change—the upcoming referendum for the Voice. Later this year, all Australians will be asked to vote on a proposed law to alter the Constitution and recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. We proudly stand in support of a "ves" vote.

Change has not happened quickly enough; however, embedded within this proposed alteration is the potential for transformative change. It empowers Aboriginal communities to have a direct say in policies and decisions that affect their lives, drawing from their lived experiences. As the Uluru Statement from the Heart eloquently states, this is an opportunity to ensure that decisions are made in partnership and with respect to Indigenous voices.

#### **Uluru Statement Video**

In our journey towards advocating for a "Yes" vote, both our dedicated staff and board members joined together to create a video, reading parts of the Uluru Statement from the Heart (available on our website). This video is not just a symbol of our support for a "Yes" vote; it's a powerful metaphor for the collective cultural strength

that defines everyone associated with First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing. It embodies the unity, resilience and vision of our organisation.

#### Strategic Planning and Constitutional **Amendment**

Our journey this year began with the development of a new strategic plan, a comprehensive roadmap that sets the course for our organisation's future. This plan, shaped by the collective wisdom of our team and the needs of our communities, will quide our actions in the years to come.

In parallel, we took the important step of amending our constitution. This change represents our commitment to transparency, inclusivity, and aligning our governance with our mission. It is a cornerstone of our ongoing efforts to better serve our communities.

## Thomastown Clinic Rebuild and Opening

One of the highlights of this year was the successful completion and opening of our Thomastown clinic. This modern, state-of-the-art facility is a testament to our dedication to providing highquality healthcare to our community. It symbolises our commitment to accessibility and excellence in healthcare

## Federal Government Commitment -Frankston Clinic

We were pleased to announce that the Federal Government has pledged its support by committing to the purchase of our new Frankston clinic. This commitment reflects the trust and belief in our organisation's ability to provide vital healthcare services to Aboriginal communities. It is a significant step toward expanding our reach and impact.

## **Victorian State Government Funding**

Furthermore, we acknowledge the support of the Victorian State Government, which has granted funding for the establishment of the first Aboriginal-led Early Parenting Centre. This initiative will have a profound

impact on the early development and wellbeing of our children and families. reinforcing our commitment to holistic

#### Progressing Forward and Thank you

As we forge ahead, our course remains steered by a well-considered strategic plan, fortified by constitutional amendments, and invigorated by the historic opportunity presented by the upcoming referendum. Guided under the exceptional leadership of our CEO, Karinda Taylor, our organisation continues to excel, with the overarching goal of delivering exceptional, compassionate, and culturally safe care to our diverse communities. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Karinda and her family for their unwavering dedication to the organisation's success.

I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Board of Directors for their invaluable expertise. unwavering support, and wise counsel. I hold in high regard our shared commitment to achieving Indigenous health equity, upholding integrity, fostering positivity, and engaging in robust yet respectful discussions, all geared toward optimising outcomes for our organisation and, ultimately, enhancing the health of the communities we serve. Our shared vision unites us. and the bonds of trust and respect strengthen our collective efforts.

Furthermore, my gratitude extends to the Senior Leadership Team, our diligent Site Managers, and all the staff who work tirelessly and together to provide the highest quality care to our community.

Thank you all for your unwavering support, trust, and partnership. Together, we can and will continue to make a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities.



Sincerely,

Chairperson of the Board First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing

Colleen Kelly



## MEET OUR BOARD 2022-23



COLLEEN KELLY | Yamatji

Chairperson

RN, BN, MClinNurs, PgCertEdLead, GDipNP(Emerg), Cert1V TAE, PhD Candidate

Colleen Kelly is from the Yamatji nation of Western Australia. She is a Senior Lecturer in the Gukwonderuk Indigenous unit of Monash University, Melbourne. Her professional and academic focus revolves around Indigenous health equity and anti-racism. Colleen has extensive qualifications as a Registered Nurse, postgraduate and masters credentials in emergency nursing, Indigenous health, and Indigenous leadership. Colleen is particularly interested in reshaping the Australian health system, advocating for the prioritisation of Indigenous Australian perspectives and elevating the voices of Indigenous communities within the broader healthcare landscape. Colleen is a current PhD student considering the narratives and experiences of Indigenous health students.

Colleen's involvement in the Board of FPHW commenced in 2019. She views the chance to collaborate with such an exceptional team of Indigenous and non Indigenous individuals as a privilege. This group shares a unified vision: the delivery of exemplary, culturally sensitive healthcare for our communities.



AUNTY LORRAINE PARSONS | Alyawarr

Secretary

Qualifications: BA, BSW, GradCertMgt

Aunty Lorraine is an Aboriginal woman, born on Wurundjeri country, who honours her mother's Alyawarr country in the Northern Territory. Aunty Lorraine brings together her Aboriginal identity and her extensive experience in health. Aunty Lorraine has worked in clinical social work, management and executive roles in the acute and community health sectors, and in government managing Aboriginal health programs.

Aunty Lorraine is a sessional academic at the University of Melbourne and currently coordinates an Indigenous Peoples subject in the Master of Social Work course.

"I am proud to be a Board Director of First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing which I see as a positive contemporary example of self-determination where the voices of the community can be translated into a practice that responds to community needs and which recognises the resilience of Aboriginal people and communities".





JIMI PETERS | Yorta Yorta

Jimi Peters is a proud Yorta Yorta man from Shepparton and is a descendant of the Briggs and Cooper Clans. Jimi has worked in Aboriginal Health in many levels for over 30 years, working at VACCHO for over 15 years in roles including Aboriginal Eye Health State-wide Coordinator, Cultural Awareness Trainer, Medicare Enhancement Officer, Corporate Services, Indigenous Health Project Officer and the Manager of Public Health and Research.

He currently works at Oxfam as their National Partnership Leader. Jimi is a strong believer in Aboriginal Community Control and believes that Aboriginal health is best achieved by Aboriginal people being empowered to address their own health needs at a local level.



DR JUSTIN TROUNSON | Dharug

PHD Clinical Psychology | Justin was Co-opted to the FPHW Board 1 May 2023.

Dr Justin Trounson is proud Dharug man, a practicing clinical psychologist, board approved supervisor and adjunct research fellow with Swinburne University of Technology. He is also the co-founder and Director of Connected Minds Psychology and the Wellbeing and Community Programs Psychologist for the Korin Gamadji Institute and Bachar Houli Foundation at Richmond Football Club.

Justin has worked as an academic with the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science (CFBS) and as a clinician within public and private sector roles and within the criminal justice system. He is passionate in relation to supporting the Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and understands the critical role of culture in supporting community mental health and wellbeing. He also understands the importance of self-determination and the need for culturally safe health services run by community, for community.

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing would like to thank past Directors Daniel Carter, Jacynta Krakouer and Samanthan Paxton.



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands where we deliver health and wellbeing services to First Peoples across greater Melbourne and pay my deepest respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge young and emerging Aboriginal leaders setting new standards, accountabilities and creating pathways for our communities. As Aboriginal people we honour, and are responsible to, our ancestors, while being true to ourselves in the present, and investing in our future.

I'd like to convey my deepest respect and gratitude to our Chair, Ms Colleen Kelly for the vision and commitment she provides to the organisation and her support and encouragement of me as the Chief Executive Officer. Colleen is supported by a wonderful Board of Directors whose leadership, guidance and cultural knowledge and wisdom is a source of great strength to our staff.

2022-23 has been another year of significant growth and change across our services and I'm so proud of all that the staff and Board have achieved.

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## THIS YEAR, WE:

- Moved our Thomastown Clinic into a new building, that with the support of the Victorian State Government, we now own. I would like to thank Kate Brocker, Executive Officer, for her hard work and dedication that has seen creation of the most warm, welcoming and professional clinical environment – that our patients are absolutely loving. Under the experienced and capable leadership of Site Manager, Stevie-Lee Ryan, the Clinic not only relocated but achieved successful AGPAL accreditation in the space of a few months.
- Purchased a new building in Frankston, enabled by the Commonwealth Government, that will allow for future expansion of our Frankston
- Secured Victorian State Government funding to build and deliver Victoria's first Aboriginal Early Parenting Centre, co-located at our Frankston
- Grew our workforce across the organisation by 40 per cent in the 12 months to January 2023; most significantly in our social and emotional wellbeing service where we recruited two additional Psychologists to the Frankston Clinic and an additional Psychologist and Senior Community Nurse Practitioner to Thomastown.

- Expanded our Senior Leadership Team with new roles including a Director of Corporate Services and Manager of Quality Assurance and Communications. These roles will ensure we have the systems and processes in place to deliver safe, high-quality care and offer a workplace culture and environment that enables our staff to thrive.
- Implemented an organisational policy that enables staff to access 18 weeks paid parental
- Strengthened our Aboriginal workforce strategy to ensure professional development opportunities underpin both continuous quality improvement and staff's professional/career ambitions.
- Established new programs for babies and children including the Birthing on Country and Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health programs, with a focus on delivery in an urban setting.
- Held our second annual staff conference and gala dinner with the many partners who make our work possible.
- Established an Aboriginal-led Employee Assistance Program in partnership with Connected Minds.



The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant impacts on our personal and professional lives these past few years. We are incredibly proud of the way FPHW responded to the pandemic and how we continue to provide a health response to seasonal illnesses like COVID and the flu. Even when we are required to flexibly respond to changing health demands, the key factors that underpin the organisation remain to:

- Deliver high quality, trauma-informed primary health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in calm, cultural and healing safe spaces.
- Maintain and continue to build strong partnerships with other Aboriginal-led organisations and mainstream health and social services across greater Melbourne;
- Support and strengthen our staff's skills and experience with an emphasis on self-care and wellbeing.

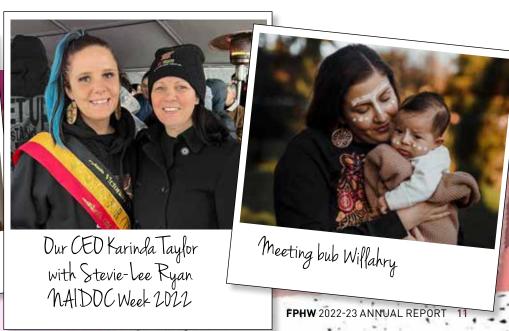
I would like to thank all our staff members for the incredible work they do. FPHW is providing exceptional care to meet the health, social and emotional wellbeing needs our patients, clients and communities. I am so proud of and grateful for the staunch leadership and professionalism demonstrated by our Senior Leadership Team and our clinical and non-clinical staff across both sites. Their passion, expertise and dedication, together with the support and the commitment of our patients, clients and communities, are what make us great.

At FPHW, our services are founded on the principles of inclusivity, access and equity. Our expertise in these areas is how we create and support culturally responsive and safe environments, founded in First Nations' cultural knowledge and wisdom. We're proud that FPHW was selected to have a formalised agreement in place with the Yoorrook Justice Commission, to provide social and emotional wellbeing services to people providing their stories and witness evidence to Yoorrook. Listening to the voices of our patients and clients and adjusting care in response to their needs is part of our every day practice. Self-determination enables us to deliver care that we know truly meets the needs of our people. It is the model of care that wraps around patients and ensures they are seen and they are heard. We are more energised than ever by our return to the comprehensive and holistic care we are known for.



Karinda Taylor CEO, First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing





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## FPHW STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-28

COMMITMENTS

CULTURAL PRINCIPLES

Within the frameworks provided by the Cultural Principles, FPHW make the following direct commitments. These statements of commitment underpin and drive our strategies.

#### **SELF-DETERMINATION**

First Peoples' health and wellbeing belongs in First Peoples' hands.

#### DYNAMIC APPROACH

We are responsive, flexible, and agile - we continue to evolve and innovate.

#### **RESPONSIVE**

Our communities are diverse and intersectional. This guides our cultural and clinical practice.

#### **ADVOCACY**

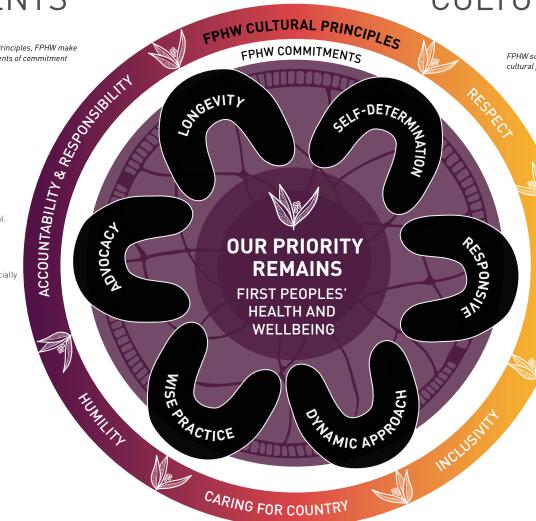
Our voice is collective and will be heard – especially where others seek to harm or decide for us.

#### **WISE PRACTICE**

We adapt and respond to community need.

#### LONGEVITY

Our Strategies reflect our long-term vision.



FPHW subscribe to these Principles, which are amongst Global First Peoples' cultural principles.

#### RESPECT

We offer respectful treatment to all and expect the same in return. Respect is a major factor in social structures, we respect the diversity and strengths of First Nations communities.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY & RESPONSIBILITY**

We remain accountable to our many stakeholders, our communities, clients, families, and Elders – as well as mainstream and government. We understand, accept, and demonstrate our shared responsibilities to these parties.

#### **CARING FOR COUNTRY**

The health and wellbeing of Country is directly related to our communities. A commitment to Caring For Country is important to achieving our goals.

#### **GENEROSITY**

We are a strong collective, with extensive and complex connections within and throughout broader First Nations communities. We exist with open arms, doors, and hearts.

#### **HUMILITY**

We are raised and influenced by leaders who have demonstrated great strength, commitment, and poise, in the face of distinct adversity. We take our role as advocates seriously, and we carry the torch passed onto us by those who came before us.

#### **INCLUSIVITY**

We reject modern toxic frameworks such as misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism.

firstpeopleshealthandwellbeing.org.au



# A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY FROM THE BOARD AND STAFF OF FIRST PEOPLES' HEALTH AND WELLBEING

When you mob walk through the doors at our clinics, we see your strength, your capability, your hope and your power first. From our reception desks to our clinical rooms – the staff at First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing deliver care and services that build on the strengths of our patients, clients, families and community. As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation – we are part of the community, and we know that strengths-based care is supportive, empowering and leads to better health and wellbeing. Strengths-based care acknowledges that people are strong and can stay strong.

As an Aboriginal health service, we are best placed to provide culturally-safe care to you – our patients and clients. Part of what makes us culturally safe is being trauma-informed – making sure people feel safe, heard and understood within clinic environments that are both calm and healing.

That's why we've been proud this year, to expand our social and emotional wellbeing services through recruitment of two additional Psychologists to the Frankston Clinic and an additional Psychologist and AoD Community Nurse Practitioner to Thomastown. As a health service, identifying the health and wellbeing needs of our community and finding ways for our services to respond to those needs is a key part of what we do. And as an ACCHO, it's why self-determination is so critical.

Self-determination is about us as a community making decisions for ourselves about how we govern our funding, grow our services and deliver care that we know truly meets the needs of our people. It's about being able to deliver holistic, wrap around care that ensures every part of a person's wellbeing is considered – the physical, emotional, cultural, social and spiritual.

For our children, self-determination is the sound of happy kids in the corridors of our clinics, starting out positive on their healthcare journey, never associating fear, racism or judgement with being a patient. It's the chats that our staff at reception have with patients every day, gently settling people when needed, building trust, informing about our services and helping mob navigate appointments and the healthcare system.

Over this past year we've thought hard as a Board and staff about what self-determination means for our organisation and spelled out our priorities in a new FPHW Strategic Plan for 2023-28. As part of this work, we reflected on what we see as the strengths of FPHW and agreed that these are:

- Our incredible staff, who are strong and capable.
- Our nurturing, inclusive and matriarchalled workplace culture where generations of Aboriginal women are creating change.
- Our welcoming and accessible, family-oriented services
- Our positioning as the only ACCHO in the Bayside-Peninsula area and one of only a few in the northern suburbs' catchment.
- Our resilience and ability to adapt and grow, both as an organisation and as professional individuals, and
- Most importantly, our wonderful community
  who drive us every day to deliver the very best
  culturally-responsive, safe and high-quality care
  that we can. We thank you for your commitment
  to our organisation and for the support and
  respect that you show to our staff. We are strong
  because of you.

We know that in 2022-23, COVID-19 continued to have significant impacts on our lives. We are incredibly proud of the way we responded to the pandemic as a community – turning up in record numbers to be tested and vaccinated. FPHW led



the way in our response to COVID-19, standing up rather than backing down to keep ourselves and our community safe. We're proud of the new skills our staff acquired in vaccine management, infection control, telehealth and remote communication.

The daily impacts of COVID-19 are on-a-whole reducing, yet COVID-19 and other seasonal illnesses continue to be a challenge for our community, particularly for people who are immunocompromised. We need to balance our health response with continuing to protect community and refocusing our efforts on providing the coordinated, holistic, family-centred care we are known for.

As a community-controlled organisation, your opinions and feedback matter to us. In 2022, a patient survey at our Thomastown Clinic showed that overall satisfaction with the clinic was at 97 per cent. Patients were most satisfied with:

- The respect, concern and warmth shown to patients.
- The ability of our staff to listen and explain things, and
- How we maintain privacy of health information and offer privacy during consultations.

Frankston will conduct its patient survey in 2023 but please share your insights, views and experiences of our services with us at any time so that we can continue to deliver patient-centred care that meets your needs.

Together we can achieve our vision of Health and Wellbeing for all First Peoples.



## PATIENT SURVEY THOMASTOWN

We are proud to share the feedback from our patient survey from our Thomastown Clinic.



We have survey results we would love to share with you!

A massive thank you to all of our patients wh filled out the feedback survey at our Thomast

## Patients were most satisfied with:

- the respect, concern and warmth shown to patients
- the ability of our staff to listen and explain
- how we maintain privacy of health information and offer privacy during consultations



Overall satisfaction with the clinic was at



## We recieved lots of positive comments about our service including:

"Great service, doctor and staff"

"I feel heard, and feel safe voicing my concerns"

"The doctors are so lovely and knowledgeable. The staff are very friendly and the space is warm and welcoming"

"For the first time in ages, I feel confident with the care I'm being given"



# Some concerns that were raised:

hard to get an appointment at late notice" "more doctors" "more amazing staff and a bigger clinic"

We know the new clinic (258 Settlement Road, Thomastown) and the opportunity it provides to expand our services, will go a long way to addressing the concerns you raised



# WHAT WE HEARD FROM OUR COMMUNITY

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The nurse who conducted my 3-year old's COVID test this morning was wonderful! She was professional, friendly, extremely caring and gentle. First COVID test with no tears.

Absolutely the best place to go! Nurses were the gentlest, and most caring people ever.

I felt so welcomed and taken care of.

A really big thankyou to those wonderful women that have made me feel so comfortable and relieved!

Wouldn't go anywhere else, the staff are wonderful and you're not just a number!

Quality service from start to finish!

Reception were welcoming, confirming all my details which was lovely and showed they cared!

My time there was just so easy and relaxing. Reception was the highlight, conducting themselves in a professional manner and making me feel valued as a patient!

Congratulations to the team for creating a culturally safe, affordable, and appropriate health clinic.

Great staff! if you've been putting off going to the doctors, I definitely recommend booking in. So friendly and relaxed, feels more like going to visit a friend (one who listens and doesn't do all the talking).

Such a great place, staff and Doctor are very welcoming and friendly, best place going yet. You can actually sit down and talk to the Doctor without feeling rushed or misunderstood, I finally found a place I can go to regularly.

Lovely experience with my doctor and psychologist, both very professional. I wish I had of found them sooner.

The staff are very enthusiastic, nice, and attentive.

Your doctors and nurses are so lovely!

This is a great service. I always feel so well looked after.

TO DEADLY YOU MOB! This is a Safe, Cultural & Respectful place for community.

Definitely recommend as all Staff are friendly and caring.

Excellent service by the doctor, extremely polite.

Wow, what an amazing practice. True professionals and so caring and helpful.

Great friendly doctors.

Great culturally safe service.

The staff go above and beyond and the teamwork is very noticeable and great service.

You guys run such a great service and potentially saved my daughter's life when several other doctors elsewhere missed her scarlet fever diagnosis last year.

"



## **CLINICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Hi, I'm Martin Bird, and I am very proud to be employed by First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing as Clinical Director and GP. I feel deeply privileged to live, work and play on Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung / Bunurong land and acknowledge that sovereignty of this Country has never been ceded. I pay my respects to the traditional custodians of these lands and waters and to elders past, present and emerging.

I commenced working for First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing in February and was immediately impressed by the engagement and motivation of all the staff. The care and quality of medicine provided to our patients by all staff is of the highest standard. This includes an exceptional level of empathy and trauma informed, professional care for patients throughout their journey through our services, from reception staff, Clinical Aboriginal Health Practitioners, nurses, doctors and allied health.

From the very start of my time here, the support I have received from senior management, Stevie-Lee Ryan, Keilara Briggs, Sharyn Margheriti, Tanya Laker, assisted by Emily Mannix, Michelle Gurry, Kate Brocker and Karinda Taylor has been incredible, and so very much appreciated. I have been made feel very welcome and valued. I feel fortunate to work for our board of directors who have inspired and challenged me and been generous with their time.

I take over the role of Clinical Director from Dr Cicily Nesbit, who is truly a hard act to follow. During her time, she has faced enormous challenges of Covid-19 and the rapid growth of First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing. I appreciate that she has remained with First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing in a part time capacity to provide continued support, particularly with policy development. Her experience and wisdom are invaluable.

Before and since I arrived, First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing has continued to grow, with Thomastown relocating to a new clinic in October and a number of new staff employed at both Thomastown and Frankston. In the past year we have been fortunate to welcome Dr Louisa Ennis and Dr Helen Steele to the team at Thomastown and Dr Ai-Lee Heng and

Dr Sushanthi Vasuthathan at Frankston. Along with the ongoing dedicated care provided by Dr Mark Daley, Dr Katie Gault, Dr Naren Morris and Dr Susan Boucher, and our physiotherapist, Eddie Atkin, I feel we have a balanced team that brings a broad range of skills and experience and offers a very high standard of trauma informed, professional care to all of our patients. I know that our Board and Executive are very proud of the work they do.

We have sadly farewelled Dr Shiraz Akbar, Dr Bronwyn Keeley, Dr Deepal Rai and Dr Maria Mitrokli. We sincerely thank you for your efforts and contributions and wish you all the best with your new endeavors.

I am thrilled to again be working with an Aboriginal Health Practitioner, Tarlee Atkinson at Thomastown and we have added experience and knowledge to our expert nursing team with Adam Burns (Community Outreach Nurse) at Thomastown, and Tracey Stephens (Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Worker, Midwife and Registered Nurse) and Jessica Mercer (Registered Nurse) at Frankston. They join Sharyn Margheriti, Kasey Shortall, Alison Rowland, and Tkea Lakeman in continuing what has become the norm at FPHW of hard work, dedication, thoroughness and, of course, unequaled compassion.

Our team has also been boosted in the past 12 months with the employment of very capable psychologists in Jillian Richards at Thomastown and Jacqueline Duffee and Shashi Prakash at Frankston. They join the very experienced Dr Jo Grimwade at Thomastown and Rhianna Brickle, our Play Therapist at Frankston. As a GP it is so wonderful to be able to confidently refer patients to these experts who have been able to see patients in a timely fashion and who, again, provide expert trauma informed and compassionate care to our people.

Of course, our reception teams are our front line and absolutely vital to the work we do. Whilst I know they have been acknowledged in the Site Manager's reports, I would like to further highlight their professionalism and the truly extraordinary respect, compassion and patience they show to all who call or walk through our doors. Managing the 'front of house' with complex, traumatised and



often very unwell patients, as well as meeting the requirements of our clinicians on top of day-to-day administrative work is difficult and complex. My admiration goes out to our office managers Keilara Briggs and Nakita Kelly, who has recently taken maternity leave with Taylah Stephens ably stepping up to the role and our extraordinary Medical Administration Officers in Holly Stephens, Tristan Howard, Tara Eldridge, Chloe Shanahan, Aden Noble-Neal and Nicole Smith-Walker.

I have learned much from our team, and as you read through my report you will have noticed that there are words that are repeated several times: professional, compassionate and trauma informed. These are the focus of this team and it's inspiring.

A big challenge in my time here has been attempting to improve engagement with and accountability of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Some small steps have been taken and it has been a rather frustrating process trying to work with this large Department to start to address some of the appalling statistics regarding children in out of home care. I would particularly like to thank Sharyn Margheriti for bringing specific issues to my attention and Kiara Davis for her work in helping to navigate the system and legislation. Working with early parents to address the enormous need is a strong focus of First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing as we work to establish the first Early Parenting Centre specifically focused on the needs of First Peoples when the new premises in Frankston is complete.

Of course, we continue to face challenges every day and in addition to the work we already do some of the clinical team's goals for the next 12 months include:

- Enhancing our Medicare billing and Practice Incentive Program income to better reflect the work that we are doing.
- Further tweaking documentation of patient encounters to help to further improve the quality and efficiency of our medical practice.
- Assisting with updating and development of policies and procedures.
- Adding of new services such as spirometry, ambulatory BP monitoring.
- Responding to incidents and near misses in a way that enhances our service.

Finally, from the people who use our services, I hear wonderful things almost every day from you. Our commitment is to always be here for you and to continue to focus on trauma informed, collaborative care to achieve the best we can for your health and wellbeing. Our clinics are your safe places, so come on in and have a health check or a yarn about any concerns you have.



**Dr Martin Bird**Clinical Director and GP
First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing



## WHAT A YEAR

## A NEW CLINIC FOR THOMASTOWN

With great pride and a lot of excitement, staff at the Thomastown Clinic were able to move into a new clinic at 258 Settlement Road, Thomastown in October 2022. The newly refurbished space not only provides a wonderful environment for our patients and staff, but much-needed room for expansion of our services.

At the official opening, Bunjil sent the sunshine as our Board, staff and attendees stood outside for a beautiful Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Ringo Terrick. Local Member of Parliament, Bronwyn Halfpenny was there to cut the ribbon. It is with thanks to the Victorian Labor Government that FPHW owns the Clinic building outright – a significant step in our journey to self-determination.

Relaxing in the sunshine didn't last long as the team quickly turned their minds to preparing for AGPAL accreditation. In February 2023, following a site visit from two surveyors, our Thomastown Clinic was fully accredited for another three years. Not only were we fully compliant with all the standards of General Practice but the surveyors were impressed by the clinic environment, our services and communication between staff and with patients. This helps us know we're providing safe, high-quality care to our patients and clients. Something that is also reflected in Thomastown's outstanding patient survey results where overall satisfaction with the Clinic was at 97 per cent.



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## NAIDOC AWARD RECIPIENT STEVIE-LEE RYAN

For the first time in 10 years, Naarm (Melbourne) was the focus city for National NAIDOC week in 2022. We are proud and honoured that Thomastown Site Manager and Senior Aboriginal Health Practitioner, Stevie-Lee Ryan was the recipient of one of only five Victorian NAIDOC Awards. Stevie-Lee was the inaugural winner of the new NAIDOC Care for Country Award in recognition of her hard work and contributions made to Victorian Aboriginal communities.

The nomination for Stevie-Lee said it best, that she goes above and beyond for the clinic and our community, always advocating for mob and caring for Country. She truly embodies what our ancestors would've wanted our generation to become'.

The Award was presented to Stevie-Lee at the Victorian NAIDOC Ball in celebration of the year's theme, 'Get up! Stand up! Show up!'. We congratulate Stevie-Lee on this incredible achievement and thank her for the way she shows up every day for staff and community.





## SITE MANAGER'S REPORT -

## THOMASTOWN

I would like to Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land across Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung countries of the Kulin Nation that I am forever grateful to be a visitor to. I appreciate being able to work and live on the lands. I strive to always ensure that I am caring for all parts of country from the rivers to the trees, with my utmost respect and care. I pay my respects to Elders, past, and present, always acknowledging our ancestors fight for what we have today, and I am so proud to be guided to continue leading in their footsteps.

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing (FPHW) Thomastown have had an incredible year with lots of exciting news to share. First up, the purchase of our very own building which saw our clinic relocating to a new, bigger, and better space in Thomastown. We relocated in September 2022 and in this time, we have been able to expand our services to community seeing the onboarding of 3 new doctors - Dr Louisa Ennis. Dr Helen Steele & Dr Martin Bird. We have been able to expand our Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) team welcoming Psychologist Jilly Richards and Senior Community Nurse Practitioner Adam Burns. We haven't stopped there, we filled the new position of Office Manager welcoming Keilara Briggs, Medical Administration Officers Aden Nobel-Neal and Nicole Smith-Walker. We were able to welcome Tarlee Atkinson into an Aboriginal Health Practitioner role moving from her administration role. Michelle Gurry also joined FPHW in a Quality Assurance & Communications Manager role. The relocation and expansion of our services has opened more access for our patients. with Allied Health Services at the forefront of our minds. We have space for Dental services which is currently in the early days of conversations.

COVID-19 is still very prevalent in our community. While we are all learning to live with it, we continue to do a lot of work in this space and have processes in place to support community with testing. vaccinations, medications, and support. With the move we made sure we could continue to respond to COVID-19 by having an isolation room in the clinic with direct outside access, to provide services needed.



In February we achieved our accreditation with AGPAL for another 3 years, with no areas of noncompliance, meaning we met all the standards of general practice. This helps us know that we're providing safe, high-quality services to our patients and clients. The surveyors were super impressed by our services, the clinic environment and great communication between staff and patients. The teams effort in the process of accreditation was really impressive. Everyone contributed to the end result by continuing to provide safe, high quality health care. I am really proud of all of the staff for their contributions, their work ethic and support.

Our staff are always training and upskilling to progress in their careers. This year I would like to acknowledge the following staff, Kasey Shortall for completing her Nurse Immuniser course, T'Kea Lakeman for commencing her cervical screening course, Tarlee Atkinson for commencing her blood collection course, and I have completed my Process Oriented Executive and Systems Coaching Program. We currently have a number of staff who are studying that I would also like to acknowledge, Chloe Shanahan is studying Midwifery, Aden Noble-Neal is studying Law and Tara Eldridge is studying Nutrition. The ongoing education, dedication and commitment of our staff is really inspiring, it is such an honour watching the team follow their dreams.

Staff Wellbeing is always at the forefront of our minds and a priority for us. We have welcomed in Justin Trounson and his team to do some workshops with our team: Emotional Intelligence, Workplace Wellbeing Workshops and Individual Staff Wellbeing Sessions. This was really well received by the team, and we are looking forward to continuing to work with Justin and team in the future. As a team we always like to think of creative ideas to connect with each other in between the demand of the clinic. We acknowledge staff birthdays and anniversaries, celebrate NAIDOC, sit down with a biscuit and cuppa for R U OK day, basket weaving, yarning circles and a feed for Christmas break up, guess who the baby is challenge, steps challenge we called 'move it May' just to name a few. As a team we created food hampers for families doing it tough at Christmas, we partnered with Share the Dignity who provided us with hampers for mob. We had our second all staff conference in February where we were able to come together, yarn about our future, and do some wellness activities, and we got to create our own Thomastown possum skin cloak. Followed by a wonderful evening of reminiscing on our journey over the past year.

In amongst all of the incredible work of the team, we were able to continue our partnerships, venturing out of the clinic to be part of Sunbury Aboriginal Corporation's Healthy, Happy, Deadly day, catching up with mob at Yoorrook, and heading out to Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering's Healthy Pathway's Expo. We really enjoy catching up with mob out there, providing flu vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines, health promotion, goodies, and a good yarn.

Thank you to our Board of Directors for your invaluable knowledge, support and direction. Thank you to our deadly Senior Leadership Team where support and guidance is second to none, the incredible work you all do is inspiring. Thank you to our stakeholders and partners we appreciate your ongoing support and kindness. Thank you to the team, another big year of setting standards, evolving, and extraordinary work done with empathetic and caring hearts with community at the forefront of everyone's minds.

A special thank you to community, your feedback and kindness continues to make us flourish and we can't do this without you. Your support goes a very long way and we appreciate you all so much.

Wow this year has been incredible, so excited to see what deadly things we achieve next year.





Stevie-Lee Ryan Site Manager & Senior Aboriginal Health Practitioner

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing Thomastown



## SITE MANAGER'S REPORT -

## **FRANKSTON**

First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing would like to acknowledge the Boon Wurrung and Bunurong People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our Frankston clinic resides and provides care to community. We pay our deepest respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

On Tuesday, 29th October 2019, First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing opened its clinic doors in Frankston, becoming the first Aboriginal Health Service in the Mornington Peninsula. In our 4th year at the Frankston clinic, we continue to offer and are dedicated to providing culturally appropriate health care needs to our strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, which consists of over 4000 Mob located within Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula. The clinic's services have expanded in response to the increase in clients and to meet their needs.

Our goal is to provide culturally appropriate care for our community. Despite the continual challenge of COVID-19 and influenza cases, we have tried to keep our focus on chronic disease management and preventive healthcare. This year we have run our first diabetes prevention group, and we wish to congratulate those participants who turned up for every session. It was an honour to work with this group, to have a varn about what it means to them to be healthy, and thanks to Eddie, our Physio, who got us all moving. Seeing our community attend their annual health checks and come to our vaccine clinics is fantastic. Social and emotional wellbeing is also an enormous part of our care, and we now have two psychologists and a play therapist that support our community.

We farewell those staff who have left our clinic in the last 12 months, wish them all the best with their new adventures, and thank them for everything they have done for our clinic and our Mob. We have welcomed and embraced our new staff, including our Clinical Director, Dr Bird; our two new Psychologists, Jacqui Duffee and Shashi Prakash; our two new Doctors, Dr Heng and Dr Vasuthan, new Practice Nurse Jessica Mercer; our new Administration team Holly Stephens, Tristan Howard and Taylah Stephens, and Tracey Stephens who is our Midwife and currently completing training to become our



Maternal Child Health Nurse. We also welcomed the birth of Willahry, the beautiful daughter of our previous site manager, Izzy Howard. The team at Frankston congratulate and wish Izzy the very best and hope she enjoys motherhood's new challenges. We extend these wishes to Nakita Kelly, who is now on maternity leave awaiting the arrival of her bub.

With enormous pride, our FPHW Frankston Team continued to support several community events this year, including providing First Aid for Our Survival Day at the Briars the annual Bay Mob event, and supporting the National Indigenous Sports at Monash University FPHW. Frankston also provided outreach vaccination clinics for influenza and Covid vaccinations at Nairm Marr Djambana (Frankston), Willum Warrain (Hastings), and Derrimut Weelam (Mordialloc). Our team endeavours to attend community lunch at Nairm Marr Djamnbana on Thursdays to engage with community. Tracey is involved in Balit Booboop Narrkyarren (Baby Makes 3 Program). Balit Booboop Narrkyarren is a learning tool to work with Aboriginal families to support them around healthy relationships.

FPHW has continued to provide social and emotional wellbeing support to the Yoorrook Justice Commission. One of our Psychologists, Jacqui Duffee, has been seconded to Yoorrook at times of high demand to support community members wanting to make submissions about their experiences. Truth telling can be an important part of healing from trauma. Still, it can also take a

heavy and emotional toll on individuals, families and community. We want community members to know they can access professional support before, during and after their submission to Yoorrook.

With the challenge of staff turnover and increased workload pressures, looking after our staff's health and wellbeing has been essential. With that in mind, our Frankston team have participated in two emotional and wellbeing workshops. Team building experiences included attending a lovely dinner, watching MSO and Electric Fields perform during NAIDOC week, and attending the NAIDOC ball. We enjoyed Christmas celebrations with family at Funfields Park, and the Frankston team enjoyed a Christmas lunch at The Jetty Road Brewery and candle making at Red Hill Candle Co. In addition, staff were given time off over Christmas to have a well-deserved break, and we thank The Board of FPHW. The break was much appreciated by all. In February, our staff conference saw the entire FHPW team come together with our board to celebrate and reflect on the organisation's achievements, growth for our future, and plans for our staff and Mob. Our team worked with expert cloak maker Kerri Clark and created a Possum skin cloak.

With the increasing demands on services and staff, the Frankston clinic is also outgrowing the facility we currently work from. In 2022, First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing purchased a new building to relocate our Frankston clinic. These premises reside in Frankston and will offer more services to cater for our community's needs. We are pleased to be in the planning stages to provide the first

Aboriginal Early Parenting Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within Victoria. The new centre is an exciting development for FPHW.

Finally, a big thank you to the community for your ongoing support of our work. I'd also like to thank our Frankston Team, who have worked tirelessly through the challenges and changes that have come our way. We stand as a united front and come together to support each other to deliver the quality care our Mob deserves. Thank you to our sister clinic in Thomastown for all their support in the last 12 months. Our appreciation extends to the Senior Leadership Team and our Board of Directors, whose dedication ensures the best for our clinic and organisation. We are all looking forward to the next exciting twelve months, the challenges, the changes, the progress and the achievements we will make.



Rachael Gallagher Site Manger First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing Frankston



## **OUR TEAM**



1224, Kate, Karinda and Stevie-Lee NAIDOC 2022



Christmas Celebrations



Bay Mob Expo 2023 - Taylah and Holly



Thomastown team out with Community



Dur team connecting for end of year celebrations

NAMAY/ADV/A

# **HUMAN RESOURCES** AT A GLANCE



75%
Aboriginal Leadership
(excluding GP's)



61%
Aboriginal Staff (excluding GP's)



Aboriginal Staff completing higher education



18%

Male workers



82%

Female workers

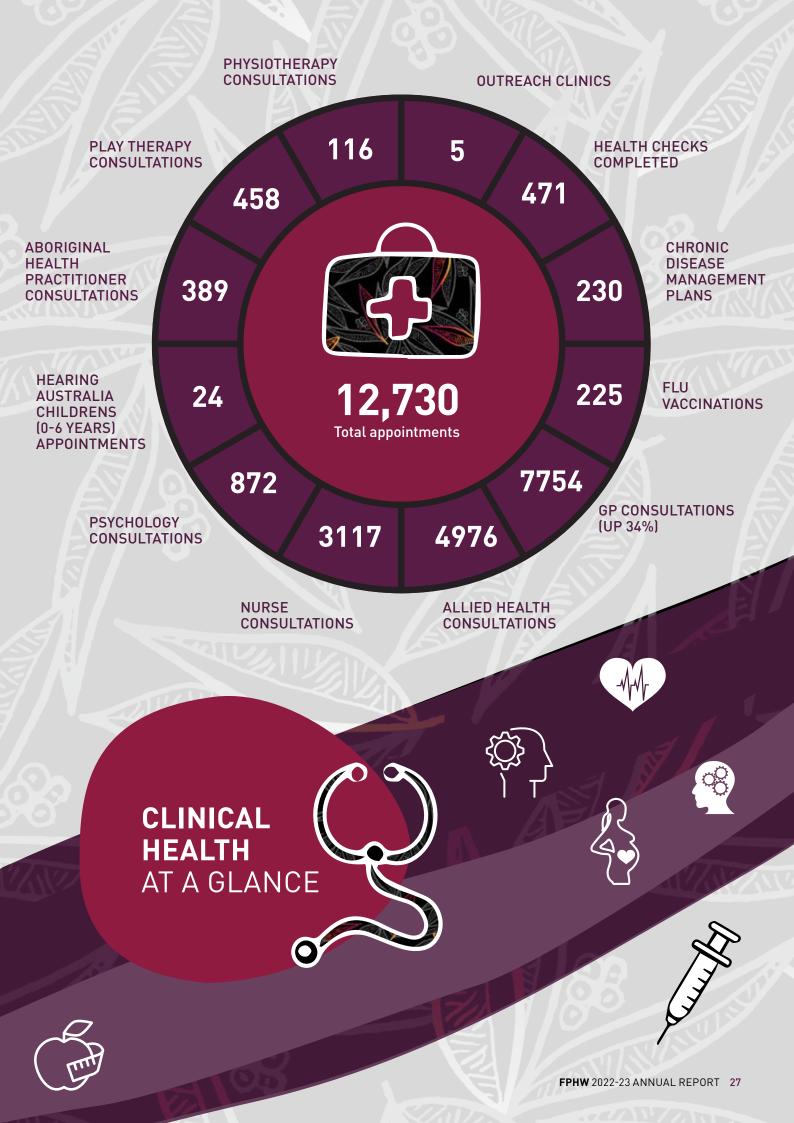
#### ABORIGINAL STAFF COMPLETED/COMMENCED STUDY

## COMPLETED:

- 1 x Internationally accredited coach
- 1 x Nurse Immuniser Course

## COMMENCED:

- 1 X Bachelor of Midwifery
- 1 x Bachelor of Food and Nutrition
- 2 x Perform Venous Blood Collection Course
- 1 x Cervical Screen Provider Certification
- 1 x Master of Health
- 1 x Bachelor of Nursing





22 - 23 FEBRUARY 2022

## SECOND ANNUAL WORKFORCE **DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE** AND DINNER

## STAFF WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

The First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing workforce conference is one of the most significant events in the organisation's calendar. It's a chance for our Board and staff to come together as one, to connect, reflect on the year, plan the next steps for our health service and participate in some much-needed selfcare activities. The conference is an investment in our staff – our most valuable asset – and a chance to give back to them for the incredible work they do every day to deliver safe, high-quality healthcare to our patients, clients and communities.

The second annual conference was held in February 2022, facilitated by proud Quandamooka man, Nathan Leitch and attended by over 45 FPHW staff and the Board. Over the course of two days, we:

- Participated in small work stream discussions to reflect on operational strengths and opportunities and came together as a large group for many open-ended reflective discussions.
- Reviewed and finalised the work undertaken to date by the Board and facilitator Nathan Leitch of Kitchen Table Projects on the 2023-28 FPHW Strategic Plan (see the final product on page 9).
- Were immersed in a creative movement and embodiment workshop led by Thaedra Frangos, Wayapa Wuurk Practitioner. Wayapa is an Earth connection practice that is based on ancient Indigenous wisdom that focuses on taking care of the Earth as the starting point for creating Earth, Mind, Body, and Spirit well-being.

Were privileged to take part in a possum skin healing and art session led by Kerri Clarke and family to create two possum skin cloaks to share with our patients and communities at the Thomastown and Frankston Clinics.

The staff and Board reflected on how rewarding it is, after a number of years of responding to the pressures of the pandemic, to be returning to the foundational model of care we are known for: care that is trauma-informed, holistic and person/familycentred. At the same time it was acknowledged, that due to health and other vulnerabilities, for many people the threat of illness from COVID is as real as it was in 2020. As a health service, we continue to meet our clinical obligations, and respond to those healthcare needs with the same urgency we always have.

Staff were pleased to receive a letter of reply from the Board in recognition of their work and in agreement of the strengths, achievements, challenges and priorities they had set out in their letter to the Board in 2022. The staff's letter helped inform the Board's strategic planning process. The Board thanked the staff for the deep care and support they show one another and for the energy, professionalism and love they show our patients and communities. Their commitment to their work and to FPHW is seen, valued and appreciated.







## FINANCIAL & WORKFORCE REPORT

## **FINANCE**

I wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing Clinics and workplaces are situated and pay my respect to Aboriginal Elders past and present.

My name is Tanya Laker, Director Corporate Services.

I am proud to work alongside all the staff at FPHW since July 2022 and our external stake holders Ax3 Accounting Services and WholeIT for their IT and Communication Services.

FPHW Corporate Services have been able to continually improve their robust accounting, human resources, and Governance processes that supports FPHW vision and purpose to provide Healthcare and support for growth that meets Australia's First Peoples' health and wellbeing needs over the 22/23 period.

22/23 financial year saw a tremendous increase towards FPHW Assets and annual turnover. After securing additional funding to support existing programs and funding to increase further service delivery from State and Federal Government.

FPHW is excited to have received funding to purchase and fitout a new clinic on Nepean Highway Frankston.

The Federal capital funding has enabled FPHW to purchase a fit for purpose building that will be upgraded to support service delivery for trauma informed, culturally safe and appropriate Primary Health Care and Mental Health services.

Watch this space for the new improved home of Frankston Clinic. The new clinic is looking to open its doors in mid-2025. Thank you, Department of Health, for investing in Aboriginal Health to work towards Closing the Gap.

Thank you to Elli Jackson in Finance who assisted by working in the capacity of Finance Officer and actioning payroll each fortnight. Elli unfortunately resigned in May 2023 to move to Bendigo to be closer to her family and start a new career in Continuous Quality Improvement with an Aboriginal Organisation. Thank you, Elli, for your dedication to FPHW over the past 3 years.

Emily Mannix joined the FPHW team in Corporate Services in November 2022 as HR & Workforce Development Officer. Emily has been busy fine tuning the implementation of Employment Hero and supporting staff with change management. FPHW are using Employment Hero to onboard new staff members and as the one stop shop for all HR management processes. Emily coordinates and identifies training opportunities to support all our staff to enhance service delivery for our patients. Emily has also taken on the payroll processing and is thriving in this new area of expertise.

## WORKFORCE

At FPHW, Aboriginal workforce and leadership will always remain the focus and priority of workforce development and culture. Mob looking after Mob. 46% of the workforce identify as Aboriginal & or Torres Strait Islanders. 67% of the workforce that form the Leadership Team are Aboriginal.

FPHW have worked hard to remain an employer of choice that employs staff who are culturally safe and can support the patients journey attending our clinics.

I am looking forward to another year working with FPHW to enhance service delivery, work with government departments to increase funding and introduce additional processes to Corporate Services that assist our staff to continually provide outstanding services to First Nations People.



Tanya Laker Director Corporate Services





## FINANCE - AUDITOR'S REPORT

## STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023	2023\$	2022\$	2021\$
Revenue	12,004,783	6,523,303	4,584,195
Finance income	29,240	1,399	8,821
Other income	28,939	18,864	66,990
Employee benefits expense	(4,428,268)	(3,605,109)	(2,827,001)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(400,255)	(288,150)	(270,508)
Other expenses	(1,592,712)	(1,272,264)	(640,883)
Finance expenses	(140,280)	(18,135)	(21,393)
Surplus for the year	5,501,447	1,359,908.00	900,221
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	5,501,447	1,359,908.00	900,221



Please note, this report is an extract from the audited financial statements Access Services for Koories Ltd. T/A First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing for the year ended 30 June 2023. This extract reports are for the purpose of the annual reports and should not be used for any other purpose. Please contact info@fphw.org.au to request a full set of the audited financial statements.



ASSETS	2023\$	2022\$	2021\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6,072,541	3,365,556.00	2,421,334
Trade and other receivables	48,119	1,073,706.00	123,447
Inventories	12,963	12,963.00	-
Other assets	9,791	104,568.00	67,426
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	6,143,414	4,556,793.00	2,612,207
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and equipment	8,006,506	1,846,544.00	188,022
Right-of-use assets	21,316	341,958.00	562,259
Other assets	-	912.00	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	8,027,822	2,189,414.00	750,281
TOTAL ASSETS	14,171,236	6,746,207.00	3,362,488
LIABILITIES	2022\$	2022\$	2021\$
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	372,097	384,411.00	274,157
Borrowings	44,446	43,334.00	-
Contract liabilities-Unexpended Government Grants	4,950,959	2,829,799.00	952,470
Lease liabilities	137,400	145,321.00	215,154
Employee benefits	163,473	161,096.00	62,491
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	5,668,375	3,563,961.00	1,504,272
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	25,278	68,610.00	-
Lease liabilities	-	215,993.00	371,761
Employee benefits	200,574	122,081.00	70,801
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	225,852	406,684.00	442,562
TOTAL LIABILITIES	5,894,227	3,970,645.00	1,946,834
NET ASSETS	8,277,009	2,775,562.00	1,415,654
EQUITY	2023\$	2022\$	2021\$
Members contributions	28	28	28
Retained surplus	8,276,981	2,775,534.00	1,415,626
TOTAL EQUITY	8,277,009	2,775,562.00	1,415,654





Af Fixst Peoples' Health and Wellbeing we know that health is about balance between the physical, emotional, mental, cultural and spiritual.

