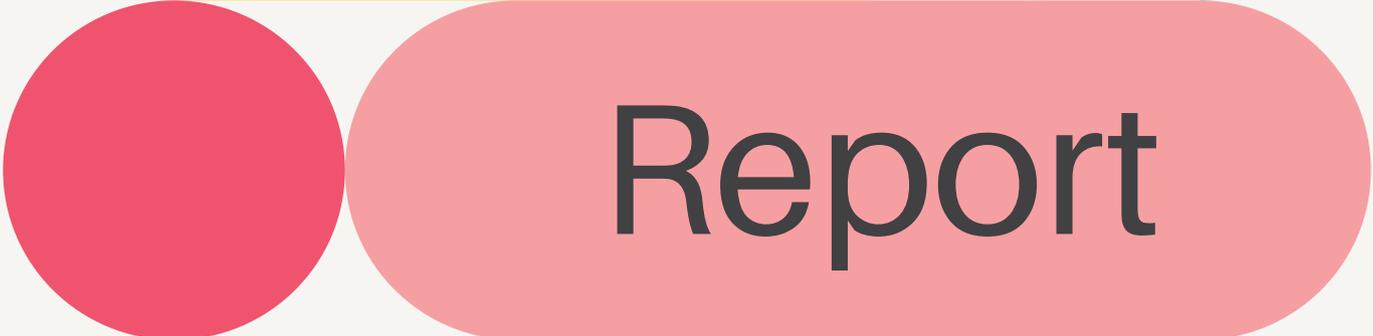




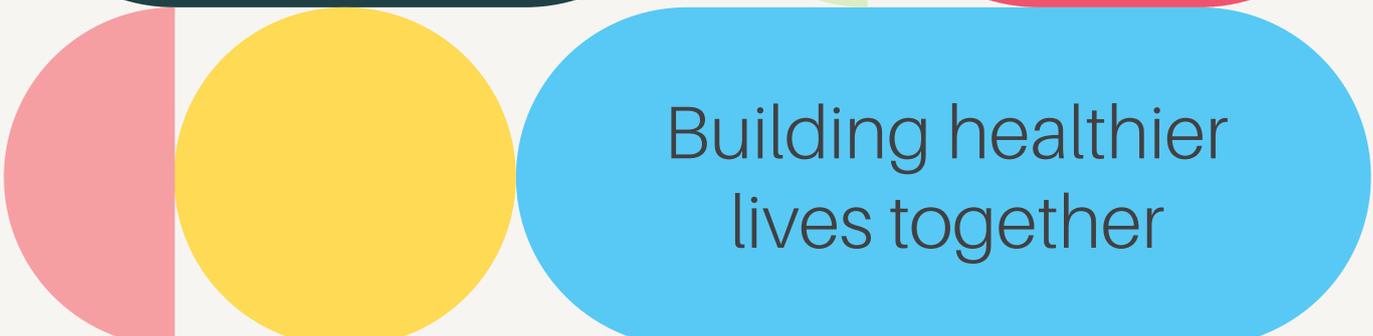
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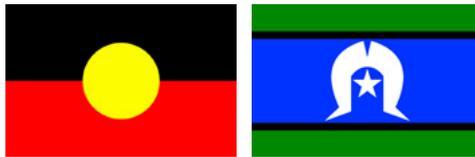


2023 – 2024



Building healthier
lives together

Acknowledgement of Country



Access Health and Community acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, who are the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways on which we work. We pay our respects to Wurundjeri Elders past and present and future, and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

Acknowledgement of Lived / Living Experience

Access Health and Community values the unique and important contribution of people with lived/living experience as consumers, family or carers to the development, delivery and improvement of health services. We recognise the wisdom and strength of these voices, and celebrate the rich diversity of the community, our workforce, and the people we provide services to.

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Purpose and Values

Purpose Statement

Building healthier lives together

Our Values

Equity

We believe everyone is entitled to good health.

Collaboration

We work together to achieve our goals.

Respect

We work with courtesy and include others.

Innovation

We drive innovation for better care.

Quality

We strive to be the best at what we do.



A Year in Review

29,300+

people supported

133,500+

number of times we met with consumers



163,700+

hours of support delivered



34,766

GP appointments provided



28,300+

public dental treatments



2,300+

new people we're now helping at Adult Allied Health



600+

local community members enjoyed our ageing and social support activities



250+

programs delivered by Community Houses and Men's Shed



9,740

community information and referrals by Camcare



10,784

people cared for at the Richmond Urgent Care Clinic (previously Priority Primary Care Centre, PPCC)



3,234

number of times we supported people at North East Metro Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect



64 education providers potentially helped by the School Readiness Program with **223** sessions delivered

Prevention achievements by Health Promotion teams at AccessHC, healthAbility and Latrobe Community Health Service

Potentially helped **24,000** people across 51 different settings

306 people took part in Sunday Sessions at Neighbourhood Houses

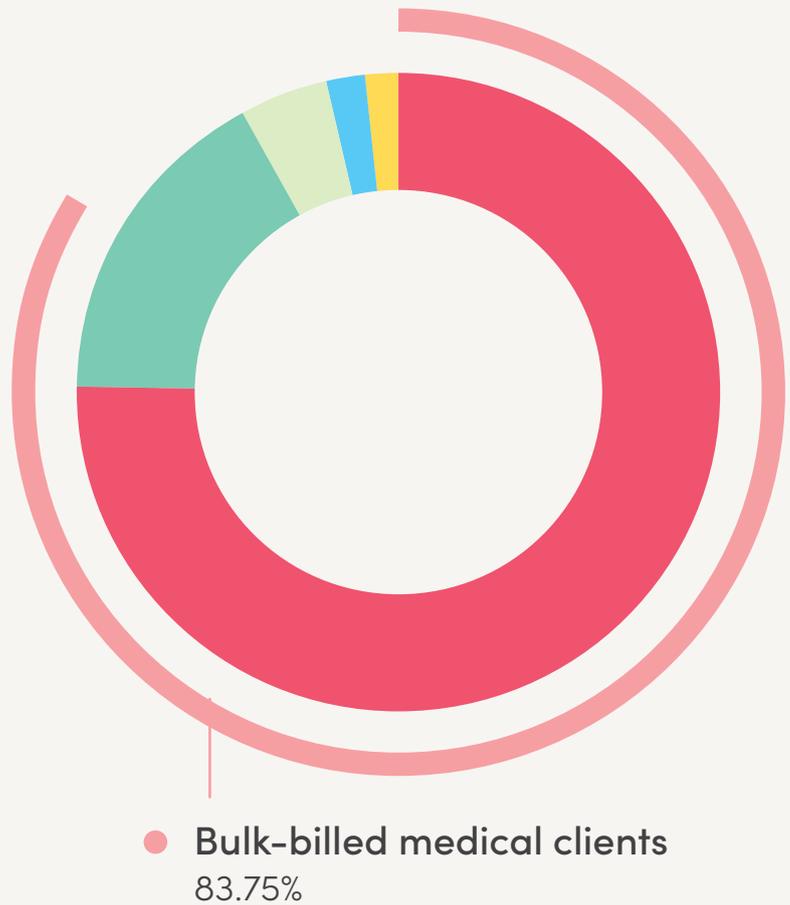
Conducted **253** baseline assessments with sporting clubs

Launched the Free to Be Me online program



Our Clients

- Culturally and linguistically diverse
2800
- NDIS participants
620
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
171
- Homeless
72
- Refugees / people seeking asylum
53



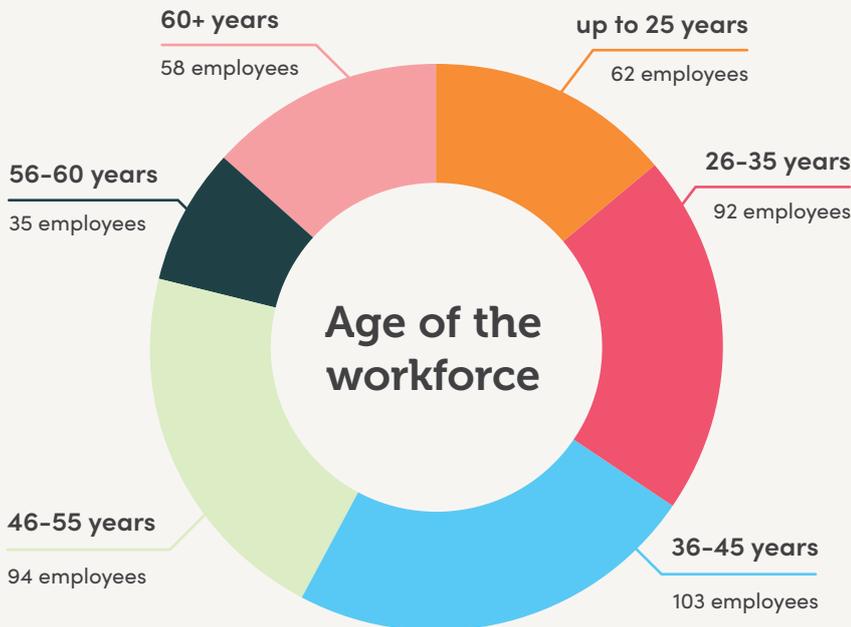
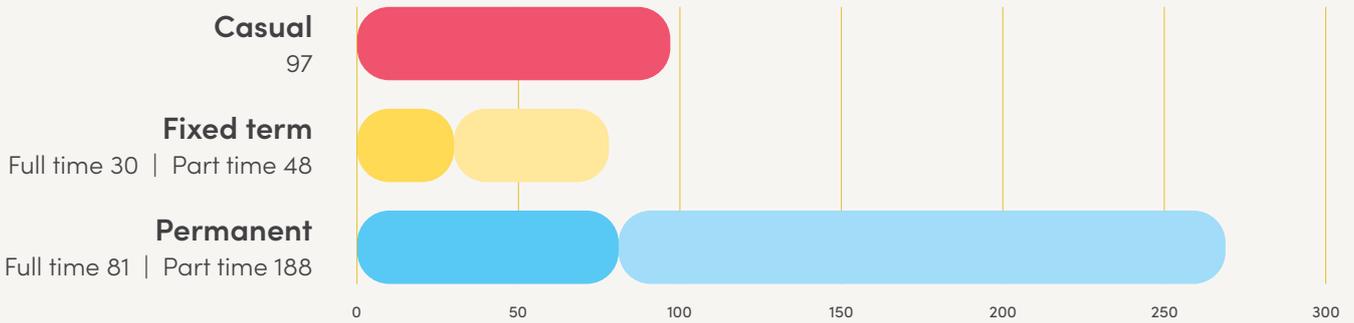
Top 13 countries consumers were born in

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Australia |  Sri Lanka |
|  China |  Thailand |
|  India |  Egypt |
|  Malaysia |  Hong Kong |
|  Vietnam |  Somalia |
|  New Zealand |  Uruguay |
|  Iran | |

Our People

444 total staff members

 **191** volunteers




Women as a % of the workforce

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Non managers | 358 91.3% |
| Managers | 30 81% |
| Executive Managers | 4 66% |
| Board Members | 3 33% |

Years of employment



Chairperson and CEO Address



The past year has been a challenging time for our communities, and one in which Access Health and Community (AccessHC), along with most of the community health sector, has had to be bold and resilient to ensure we could continue to play our critical role in keeping our communities healthy.

In a complex and dynamic operating environment, we chose to pursue growth, embracing opportunities to expand our impact, better serve our community and make the sector stronger.

The momentum we built has continued into the current year, as we deliver on the bold vision set out in our 2022-26 Strategic Plan.

This could only be achieved by simultaneously building the resilience of our people. We have invested in our team and adapted the way we work, to respond effectively to a changing world.

Fuelled by this resilience and drive, our Board, Executive and people have taken on the challenges and opportunities of FY24, and AccessHC is stronger because of it.

Expanding our impact

In April 2024, we announced that AccessHC and Inspiro were exploring a merger of our two community health organisations. This is a significant and positive step for the delivery of services to our communities across the East, North and Northeast of Melbourne and the Yarra Ranges.

Our organisations have a long track-record of partnering together to improve health and wellbeing for our communities and we share a common purpose and values that provide a foundation for any merger.

Our collective expertise and reach have the potential to deliver greater impact and innovation for our clients and communities, enabling us to expand our services and respond strongly and sustainably to a rapidly changing policy, funding and competitive environment.

The proactive pursuit of the merger demonstrates that AccessHC and Inspiro are willing to undertake a significant deepening and strengthening of our partnership for the good of our organisations and communities.

The merger design and transition are a key priority for the next financial year.

New and modern facilities for the future

This year we set out on a significant change agenda, with several large-scale property developments and relocations underway. It's a significant step that is seeing us transform not just where we work but how we work and what we can offer our communities.

During the year, we prepared to say farewell to Church Street, Richmond, where our organisation has been providing vital health and community services since 1869. We commenced construction of our new hub in Richmond at 21-31 Goodwood Street, moving into the accessible, modern premises just after the year end.

At the same time, we secured and began community consultations on a site for our new Doncaster Hub, which will see our Doncaster East, Manningham City Square (MC2), Templestowe and Box Hill services and teams come together.

By this time next year, AccessHC will look markedly different, with the majority of our services and people operating out of new locations. It will allow us to expand our service offering at a time when our population is growing, and the needs of our communities have never been higher.

We are looking forward to welcoming everyone to a new and improved experience at our new sites.

Supporting our people through change

With significant momentum for transformation underway, and in recognition of the fact that change isn't always easy, we have had a strong focus this year on supporting our people and their wellbeing.

To do so, we have built the change management capabilities of our leadership team through dedicated change leadership programs for the Executive Team and Leaders. We have also continued to develop and fine-tune our two-way communication channels, to ensure that everyone has a voice that is listened to, as we navigate change.

Supporting our people and building the capability of our leaders in managing change remains a key focus into the next financial year.

Advancing reconciliation

During the year, we took a significant step in our reconciliation journey by officially launching our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and advancing our actions towards reconciliation.

We marked the significant milestone with a special event, featuring a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Yorta-Yorta Elder Auntie Zeta Thomson, music by Gunai Yorta-Yorta musician Paul Patten and the incredible reveal of our RAP artwork by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Traditional Owner artist, Simone Thomson.

Simone's beautiful artwork is now proudly displayed at our sites and will be incorporated into the design of our new property developments. We continue to work closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to deliver on our RAP commitments to advance reconciliation.

Raising voices of those with lived and living experience

In 2023-24, we took the next step in this incredibly important journey. We strengthened our commitment to listening and working with those with lived and living experience and demonstrated our commitment with the launch of our Lived and Living Experience Framework.

AccessHC has a long 155-year history of deeply engaging with our communities and partnering with them to deliver services that meet their needs. After a decade of strengthening engagement with those who have lived and living experience, we have a thriving workforce of peer workers across mental health, AOD (Alcohol and Other Drugs) and community services. They bring unique specialist skills to support clients and are vital in the delivery of our purpose.

Our organisations have a long track-record of partnering together to improve health and wellbeing for our communities and we share a common purpose and values that provide a foundation for any merger.

The Framework guides best practice, supports culture, and ensures that people with lived/living experience are recognised and supported to thrive at all levels of our organisation, across all areas of AccessHC.

Our hard-working Board

We would like to thank our Board Directors for their commitment, dedication and willingness to make bold decisions in 2023-24. Thank you to Directors Annette Mercuri (current Deputy Chair), David Benady, Ross Goeman, David Lau, Penny Lovett (retiring Deputy Chair), Mike Morgan, Alan Studley and Peter Turner.

Our extraordinary leaders and people

We are proud of our executive, senior leadership and management teams, who have demonstrated exceptional leadership throughout this period of change and transformation.

Their committed and caring leadership continues to support our people through change and guide the organisation towards achieving its strategic goals.

We would also like to acknowledge our funders for continuing to support AccessHC and for making our work supporting communities possible.

Most importantly, thank you to our workforce of staff and volunteers who make AccessHC truly great. Their expertise, passion and commitment are unwavering and make a life-changing difference for so many in the community.

We have an exciting period ahead and the future is looking bright as we continue to deliver our mission - building healthier lives together.

— Gayle Austen, Board Chair and Anna Robinson, Chief Executive Officer



We enable
our people
to grow and
thrive

People

Investing in our valued volunteers

Volunteers make up a third of the workforce at AccessHC and we could not do all that we do without them.

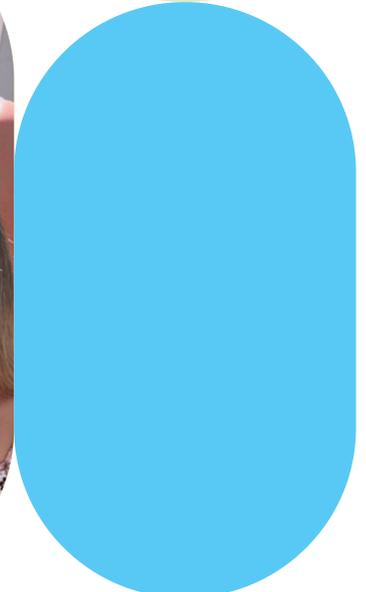
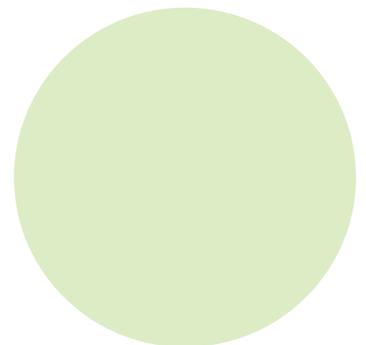
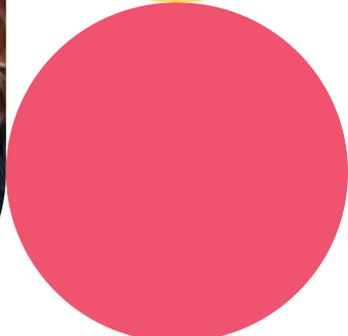
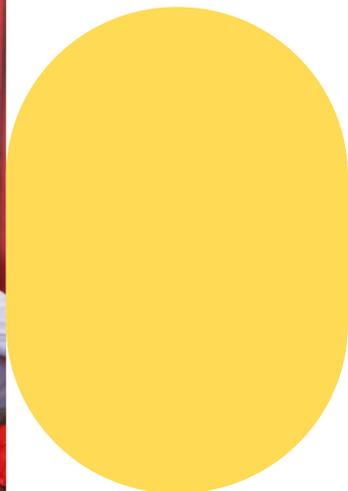
This year we made our volunteer experience even better, strengthening our programs and providing more support, recognition and training.

Our volunteers work in roles that span our programs and services. Many of the volunteers are highly qualified and dedicate hours of their time to our programs each week.

At AccessHC volunteers give their time providing:

- community engagement
- administration, IT and marketing support
- pro bono counselling
- lived and living experience expertise
- support services for families, children and older people
- transport
- activities at Community Houses and Men's Sheds.

Our volunteers have expressed that "they get back what they put in and more" by seeing the difference their work makes to others' lives and through the rewarding experiences and connections they make.



Improving the experience

In 2023-24 we introduced a volunteer management system called Better Impact which is helping to improve the volunteer experience.

The new program delivers better ways for us to communicate with volunteers, provides them with easier access to learning and development and simplifies rostering and reporting, which saves valuable time.

Our volunteers' work contributed over \$500,000 over the 2023-24 financial year. But their emotional support, care, time and dedication to people and communities is invaluable.

Our volunteers' work contributed over \$500,000 over the 2023-24 financial year. But their emotional support, care, time and dedication to people and communities is invaluable.



Case Study

Drop-In lunch at Hawthorn Community House

Every Wednesday a team of enthusiastic volunteers cook a three-course meal for local people experiencing social isolation or homelessness at the Hawthorn Community House Drop-In lunch.

After lunch, many volunteers and participants stay on to play cards, take part in art and craft activities or to simply chat and enjoy the company.

AccessHC Senior Manager Community Kate Clampett said Drop-In has become an opportunity to connect participants with other health and community services.

"It was wonderful to see the confidence that people can gain from a regular meal and the company of others. It helped many people have assurance to reach out to get access to other programs or services that were right for them," said Kate.

Around 20 people attend Drop-In each week and this would not be possible without volunteers.

Drop-In is delivered by AccessHC Hawthorn Community House, in partnership with the YMCA, AccessHC AOD Peer Support workers and with the help of student volunteers from Carey Grammar Baptist School.

Case Study

Social prescription for loneliness

The Access to Community (A2C) program helps lonely and socially isolated people make connections with others to improve their health, social and wellbeing outcomes.

The program works by connecting participants with a Volunteer Community Connector who spends time getting to know the participant, and then works with them to find suitable groups, clubs and classes in their community.

Meet a Volunteer Community Connector

International Student Studying Master of Public Health

This volunteer was attracted to AccessHC because of its meaningful A2C social prescription program to support health outcomes through social connection. She was aware of the training and support provided to volunteers at AccessHC and interested in interacting with new people and developing her communication skills.

The Community Connector was matched with Jerry*, a rooming house resident who was experiencing ongoing health struggles and was being supported by the AccessHC Outreach team.

Jerry and the Community Connector began their relationship with weekly phone calls which grew in duration over time.

Jerry said:

"I know her a bit more each time we speak and it's good, I like meeting with someone. She has mentioned that she can hear I'm getting better, she can 'hear it in my voice,' she said."

After six months, Jerry's health and confidence improved significantly. The pair decided to meet in person at the Hawthorn Community House drop-in lunch, which is also supported by volunteers.

The Community Connector still contacts Jerry regularly and can see how much the social connection has helped him. Jerry continued to attend the community lunches on his own, supported by his NDIS package and the new friends he has made.

**Name has been changed.*

The Access to Community team continues to increase its reach, visibility and impact. The number of referrals is increasing, volunteers have doubled and the reach of the program, which started in the City of Boroondara, has broadened to Manningham and the City of Yarra.



Enhancing organisational Learning and Development

The Learning and Development (L&D) program at Access Health and Community is helping our people to grow and thrive at work.

In 2023-24, the focus was on putting people front and centre with an expanded investment in development to help people deliver their best work.

A program of 38 events was offered throughout the year with 297 people attending at least one event and many participating in more.

The L&D program covered:

- CPR and First Aid training
- Courageous Conversations to help people at all levels communicate effectively
- 'Why It Matters' series which deep dived into topics of organisational importance
- Leadership Development programs.

The flexibility and variety in this year's program recognised that people want to learn and develop in different ways. For some people it was about leadership and management, for others it was about expanding their practice and work expertise.

The program was underpinned by a culture of learning, which provided formal and informal opportunities for staff and volunteers to learn on the job.

Case Study

Why it Matters series

Internal subject matter experts share their expertise for on-the-job learning

The Why it Matters series was a collection of stimulating sessions designed to deepen understanding and inspire growth and interest in matters relevant to working at AccessHC. The sessions were delivered in-house by internal subject matter experts who shared their expertise and on-the-job learning.

Topics included:

- Trauma-Informed Care
- Lived and Living Experience
- Health Literacy
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Cultural Safety.

"The Why Strength Based Development Matters session helped us all to explore the significance of our unique strengths in a conversational, fun and informative way."

"I liked that the session was so interactive. It's one thing to know your own strengths, however hearing other people's experiences, finding out their strengths and how they see themselves using them was very interesting to me – there were so many different experiences. We all learned a great deal from each other too."

- Mel, AccessHC Data and Reporting Analyst, on "Why Strength Based Development Matters"

We remove
barriers
to people
connecting
with us



Access



Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

One of the most significant milestones for AccessHC in 2023-24 was the launch of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The RAP demonstrates our commitment to advancing reconciliation and aims to address and prevent the inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our communities.

It is a working example of how we are building on our values and living our purpose to build healthier lives together.

The launch of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

The AccessHC Reflect RAP has garnered great enthusiasm and support from all levels of our organisation.

Over 80 people attended the RAP launch on 29 August 2023, with a Welcome to Country by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Yorta-Yorta Elder Aunty Zeta Thomson, music by Gunai Yorta-Yorta musician Paul Patten and the incredible reveal of our RAP artwork and presentation by Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Traditional Owner artist, Simone Thomson.

The launch of our RAP and the delivery of its actions is an important step in our reconciliation journey with community, partners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, businesses and health organisations.

Delivering our Reflect RAP Actions

We are committed to delivering on our RAP actions to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Key achievements in 2023-24 included:

Establishment of our Access Health and Community RAP Staff Action Group

A dedicated team of representatives from our workforce oversee and ensure delivery of our RAP actions.

The RAP Staff Action Group helps us make meaningful change towards equitable health outcomes including Treaty, Truth-telling and self-determination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

They are actively involved in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community issues and outcomes, and meet regularly to oversee the implementation of our RAP deliverables and ensure effective change.

Making changes for staff to work on January 26

In 2024, AccessHC committed to a recommendation to allow staff to work on January 26, if they choose to, and change the public holiday to a day that is culturally significant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

This is in recognition of the fact that January 26 marks the commencement of colonisation in Australia. As part of this process, we asked the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Traditional Owners what they call January 26 and they told us they call it "Invasion Day". We recognise that it is a challenging day for these communities, and not a cause for celebration.

Introducing Cultural Leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

We introduced Cultural Leave for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff which includes Sorry Business Leave.

The introduction of these leave types at AccessHC deliver on some of the actions in our RAP to create a culturally safe workplace and improve employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our AccessHC Reflect RAP is a significant milestone that lays the foundation for our workforce and services to move on to future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

Lived and living experience voices leading the way

At AccessHC, we recognise the unique perspectives, expertise and skills that those with lived and living experience bring in developing, delivering and leading our work to achieve better health outcomes for everyone.

In 2023-24, we strengthened our commitment to listening and working with those with lived and living experience and built on our practice through the launch of our Lived and Living Experience Framework.

We have a long 155-year history of deeply engaging with our communities and partnering with them to deliver services that meet their needs.

Over the last decade, AccessHC has employed a Lived and Living Experience workforce across Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) and community services. We are proud of the important role that peer support workers have played in our approach to caring for the community and in delivering on our purpose to build healthier lives together.

Today, we have a workforce of exceptional peer support workers, who bring their own experiences and specialist skills to build connections, offer hope and walk alongside clients in their journey.

The Framework is the next step in our journey of lived and living experience, to expand on this existing work across the whole organisation.

This important document supports understanding and best practice in engaging, employing, and working with people who have lived and living experience across all areas within AccessHC.

It achieves this through guiding best practice, supporting culture, and ensures that people with lived and living experience are recognised and supported to thrive at all levels of our organisation.

Did you know?

Lived and Living Experience awareness is a core competency for everyone at AccessHC.



Delivering on the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022



North East Metro Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect (Connect) is a mental health and wellbeing service. We deliver our service in line with the principles of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Act 2022. The principles are:

- Dignity and autonomy
- Diversity of care
- Least restrictive principle
- Supported decision-making
- Family and carers
- Lived experience
- Health needs
- Dignity of risk
- Wellbeing of young people
- Diversity
- Gender safety
- Cultural safety
- Wellbeing of dependents.



Case Study

Demonstrating the 'Lived Experience Principle' at Connect

The North East Metro Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect service was codesigned with and delivered by people with lived and living experience of being a family member, carer or supporter.

Lived Experience Principle: The lived experience of a person with mental illness or psychological distress and their carers, families and supporters is to be recognised and valued as experience that makes them valuable leaders and active partners in the mental health and wellbeing service system.

The North East Metro Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect service was codesigned with and delivered by people with lived and living experience of being a family member, carer or supporter.

Our Lived Experience Reference Group is made up of families and carers with lived/living experience caring for someone challenged by mental health or substance use concerns. In the early days of Connect, the reference group played a significant role in designing the Ivanhoe hub and were responsible for selecting everything from the carpet colour to entrance mural.

The reference group continues to play an active role in how Connect best supports carers in the local community through advising on service planning and implementation.

The Lived Experience Principle is also reflected with over half of the Connect team in designated lived experience roles, which means the service itself is delivered by people who understand the challenges of supporting someone with a mental illness or alcohol and other drug concern.

The Connect team's work is guided by the principle and an understanding of the importance of continuing to listen to the people we work with and connect with them in a way that makes them feel safe and respected.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a grey sweater and a lanyard, is kneeling and adjusting the footrest of a wheelchair. A person wearing blue jeans is seated in the wheelchair. The scene is set in a brightly lit room, possibly a clinic or hospital. A yellow measuring tape is visible on the floor to the left.

We improve
the health and
wellbeing of
communities

Impact

Demonstrating our impact

Evaluation is central to demonstrating our impact and helps to show how our work is leading to greater health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities.

In 2023-24 we completed evaluations of our Medication Support and Recovery Service (MSRS) and Richmond Urgent Care Clinic (previously Priority Primary Care Centre, PPCC).

The findings demonstrate the significant impact these services are having on the wellbeing of the community.

Medication Support and Recovery Service reduces harm

The Medication Support and Recovery Service (MSRS) is an Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) treatment service for people who are dependent on, or have concerns about, their use of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

The service is a partnership between AccessHC and Inspiro Health (Inspiro), funded by Eastern Melbourne PHN.

The MSRS team aims to assist people in reducing the harms associated with medication dependence or misuse and improving their overall health and wellbeing.

Through a series of interviews and surveys with clients, health sector colleagues and MSRS staff, we found:

- 100% of clients interviewed or surveyed had a meaningful experience of the program.
- 73% of clients interviewed reported greater control over their medication use.
- 88% of clients reduced their psychological distress. Over half (55%) experienced a significant reduction.
- 80% of clients surveyed said they had developed increased connection with loved ones, social networks and/or peers.
- 100% of health sector stakeholders interviewed said that MSRS staff have worked collaboratively to build partnerships within the sector.

The evaluation highlighted the significant health and wellbeing outcomes that can be achieved with a holistic approach to care.

To read the evaluation summary report, including recommendations, visit our website accesshc.org.au

Urgent Care Clinic success in community health

Urgent Care Clinics provide care for people with non-life-threatening illnesses and injury. Each Urgent Care Clinic is partnered with a high-demand Emergency Department (ED).

AccessHC is proud to deliver the Richmond Urgent Care Clinic, supporting St Vincent's Hospital in Fitzroy.

The research evaluated three Urgent Care Clinics operated by Community Health organisations — AccessHC, LaTrobe Community Health Service and Sunraysia Community Health.

The evaluation found:

- **Urgent Care Clinics take pressure off emergency departments:** There is evidence that Urgent Care Clinics reduce primary care type presentations to local hospital Emergency Departments (EDs). Over half (57%) of patients surveyed agreed that they would have gone to ED if not for the Urgent Care Clinic.
- **They reduce health sector costs and save vital resources.** Economically, the calculated cost per patient across the three sites is 58% less than the per patient cost for ED presentations in Victoria.
- **Community health expertise and community connections benefit urgent care patients.** Staff expertise in community health organisations, and their knowledge of their communities and the issues community members, face provides additional value to the operation of the Urgent Care Clinics.

This evaluation suggests the positive impact that Urgent Care Clinics can have on the broader health system, particularly when delivered in a community health setting.



Measuring our impactful services

In May 2024 AccessHC launched a consistent way to measure the impact that we have on clients' health and wellbeing.

We know the work we do at AccessHC is impactful, however, we previously did not have the evidence to demonstrate this.

Our Impact Measurement approach aims to bridge this gap by asking people about the difference we are having in their lives and questions about their wellbeing. Collectively this tells a story about the impact AccessHC has at the community level.

The survey – known as the Consumer Outcomes Survey – asks questions from the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI), including a self-rated question about overall wellbeing, and a series of questions that are specific to all AccessHC services and aim to measure if we're achieving our intended impact on the community.

Personal Wellbeing Index

The Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI) is an evidence-based scale that measures subjective wellbeing, developed by the Australian Centre on Quality of Life at Deakin University.

The PWI asks how satisfied the client is with seven life domains. The results then measure if someone's subjective wellbeing is good, compromised or challenged.

Life domains

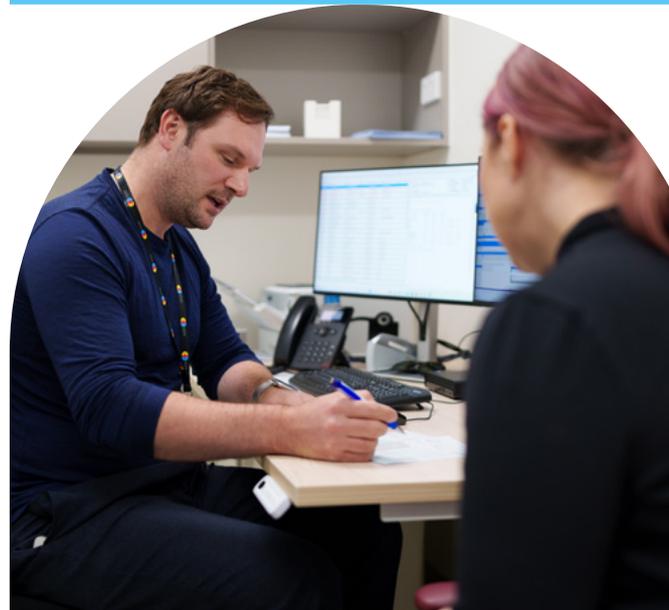
- standard of living
- health
- achieving in life
- relationships
- safety
- future security.

By asking questions about health and wellbeing over a period and collecting and analysing the data, we hope to get an aggregate picture of incremental changes in client wellbeing. This will help to demonstrate the difference that we're making for clients and the community and influence future practice by demonstrating where we aren't making a difference and need to focus our attention.

The survey was rolled out to a pilot group of clients in May 2024, followed by all clients from July 2024. New clients are now receiving the survey when they commence with us and every six months as they use our services.

AccessHC is believed to be one of the first community health organisations to take this comprehensive approach to measure health and wellbeing outcomes consistently across the organisation. It's ground-breaking work that enables us to not only demonstrate our value, but also adjust our services based on client needs.

The first AccessHC Impact Report which will measure change over time is due to be published in the next financial year.





We are relevant
and viable in
a changing
environment

Sustainability

Growing for our clients and community

Reforms and health system pressures have resulted in community health organisations operating in an increasingly complex environment. Notwithstanding these challenges, AccessHC continues to grow and demonstrate our value in the health system and role in alleviating system-wide demand.

A focus on service planning, business development and partnerships has been key to this successful growth, which is creating better services for our clients and shaping the sector for the future.

Innovative intervention with Diabetes Connect

Diabetes Connect is a prevention program supporting individuals with early intervention at pre or initial diabetes diagnosis.

The 14-month pilot commenced in May 2024 as a partnership between community health providers healthAbility (lead agency), EACH and AccessHC and is demonstrating the value of community health in providing prevention and early intervention.

Diabetes Connect provides health coaching, care coordination and outreach. Through innovative interventions – such as social prescription – people are supported to make lifestyle changes and build healthy habits. It supports them to manage their diabetes at its early stages before moving to more clinical interventions such as insulin treatment.

Delivering the project in partnership enables greater reach across the east with consistent tools, flexibility to respond to demand and a community of practice to work together.

The pilot is demonstrating the impact that community health can have at a systemic level to help prevent primary care presentations.

The learnings from this pilot will be used in the treatment and management of other chronic conditions.

Strengthening services for older people

The Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) provides a range of support services to help older people remain independent and in their homes for longer. In 2023-24, AccessHC expanded its CHSP services to help people in the cities of Whitehorse and Manningham.

The expanded services include transport, social support for individuals and groups, flexible respite and allied health services from our Allied Health and Community programs.

The expansion is helping to improve care for clients as they transition from CHSP to My Aged Care. As a provider of both programs, AccessHC can offer clients continuity of their services.

Support at Home readiness

At the same time, AccessHC is proactively preparing for major reforms in the Aged Care sector in Australia that are underway in response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The reforms aim to create better standards of aged care for older people in Australia. This includes ensuring older people have greater choice and independence, access to services that respect and meet their needs, and support to stay independent.

In response, we have established a project to help us understand the changes coming in and to prepare the organisation to transition to the new Support at Home Program.

Welcome, hope and empathy: Strengthening Integrated Care

AccessHC (lead agency) is working with Banyule Community Health on the Strengthening Integrated Care initiative to improve outcomes for individuals with complex needs by strengthening the delivery of integrated care across Mental Health and Alcohol and other Drug (AOD) services.

Integrated care is about our ability to respond to all people seeking assistance with welcome, hope and empathy.

It means that each person is met with a welcoming and compassionate approach. There is 'no wrong door' and a philosophy of 'how can we help?'

In community health, we recognise that people have a range of different needs, including physical health, alcohol and other drugs, mental health and other life domains. Strengthening Integrated Care is about ensuring that our services are accessible, inclusive and welcoming – and that all our clients feel that their needs are welcomed in our service.

This work aligns with Recommendation 35 from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health Services, which found that services should provide integrated treatment, care and support to people living with mental illness, substance use or addiction.

The Recommendation and this work recognise that extraordinary outcomes can be achieved when services are integrated.

The project commenced in May 2024 and is a 12-month pilot, funded by the Eastern Melbourne PHN. Already there has been an audit of current practice, an improvement plan developed, and change is being implemented to improve access to services and strengthen our capability and collaboration.

The learnings are being shared across the organisation with a view to strengthen integrated care across AccessHC.

Growing GP services

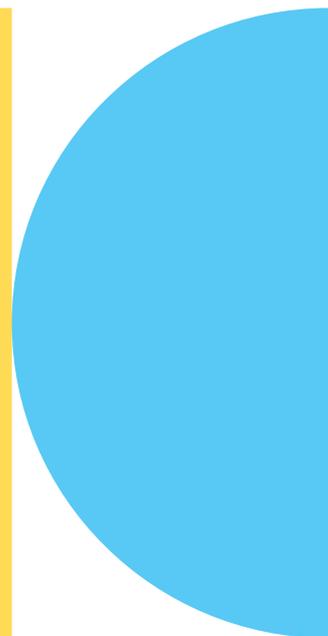
AccessHC is proud to offer a growing GP service in the east at our Richmond and Hawthorn hubs, which is a key contributor to the success of community health.

A purposeful GP recruitment strategy over 12 months has seen us increase the number of GPs working with AccessHC, with GPs drawn to the organisation’s people-focussed culture, commitment to wellbeing and new GP clinics opening soon (Goodwood Street Richmond in September 2024 and Doncaster in early 2025).

In 2025, we plan to expand this offering further by increasing the reach of our GP services, providing out of hours access and a new GP Practice out of our new Doncaster location.



In June 2024 AccessHC held a forum involving staff from across the portfolio (pictured). They provided ideas and feedback on how to improve integration. This information, and the voices of those with Lived and Living Experience, guide the action plan.



Case Study

Neighbourhood Houses help take back Sundays to improve wellbeing

In February 2024, AccessHC supported Neighbourhood Houses to open their doors and offer free health and wellbeing classes through the Sunday Sessions program.

Sunday Sessions aim to encourage participants to push back against boozy weekends by getting involved in free exercise and wellbeing activities on Sunday mornings.

Through a unique partnership with Neighbourhood Houses this year, our focus was on connecting with a diverse representation of people to increase their participation in active living, social inclusion and reducing risky drinking.

To help enable this, AccessHC created a small grants program to support Neighbourhood Houses to deliver the program.

Hosting Sunday Sessions in Neighbourhood Houses increased participation from diverse community members, due to the wide range of activities, locations, and accessibility. This approach ensured the program was suited to people of all ages, genders, abilities, body shapes and sizes, and diverse cultures and ethnicities.

Forty sessions were delivered, with over 300 participants from diverse backgrounds participating in activities including yoga, strength, mindfulness and breathwork:

- 100% of those who attended Neighbourhood Houses said the "program allowed them to engage new people from their community".
- 100% of program participants stated they "would participate in Sunday Sessions again".
- Participants described the sessions as: "*invigorating*", "*more than excellent*" and "*fun and great for overall fitness*".

Another standout feature of the Sunday Sessions program was the emphasis on social inclusion. Participants expressed that connecting with others and building a sense of community was their favourite aspect of the program, with one participant saying: "*I don't know many people who live in my local area and don't have much time that I spend on 'me'. I met new people and felt refreshed and relaxed afterwards...*"

Through a unique partnership with Neighbourhood Houses this year, our focus was on connecting with a diverse representation of people to increase their participation in active living, social inclusion and reducing risky drinking.



In Loving Memory

We pay our respects to our colleagues Dr BK Tee and Kaush Troy who made a lasting impact on AccessHC, our clients and communities.

Dr BK Tee (1971-2024)

BK worked with AccessHC as a GP for 15 years and was a much-loved member of the Richmond team and the community. BK was a wonderful GP – values-driven and person-centred in a way that was truly special.

He was deeply committed to his patients and known for working with some of the most vulnerable members of our communities to ensure they had access to the highest quality, inclusive care. He was humble, thoughtful and kind, going out of his way to show care for his colleagues and patients.

BK has left a lasting legacy and we miss him dearly.



Kaushalya (Kaush) Troy (1982-2024)

Kaush led our Audiology practice in Richmond and worked with AccessHC for close to a decade. Kaush had an incredible ability to make her clients feel welcome, safe and supported. She was skilled at working with children, elderly and marginalised communities and going the extra mile to accommodate a client's needs.

Kaush was beloved by her colleagues and clients. She was known for not just her professional expertise, but also her vibrant personality. We miss Kaush, and her wide beaming smile, dearly.

Rest in peace.



Meet the Board



Gayle Austen, Board Chair

Director since November 2018

Experience

Gayle is a specialist in communications, marketing and strategic advice. She has consulted for non-profits on a range of initiatives, including advocacy, merger and acquisitions, targeted communication, organisational structure and leadership coaching. Gayle was formerly Head of Marketing and Communications with ANZ Institutional, led corporate affairs teams for Foster's and Seven Network and was a senior journalist, section editor and chief of staff with The Age. Gayle was most recently President of Camcare and Chair of Trust for Nature. Her passion for social justice and local community is reflected in her career and previous nonprofit Board roles.

Special responsibilities

Board Chair
 Audit and Risk Committee Member
 Community Advisory Committee Member
 Governance Committee Member
 Quality and Safety Committee Member

Qualifications

Graduate Certificate Applied Languages
 Bachelor of Arts
 Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors



Annette Mercuri

Director since May 2022

Experience

Annette is an accomplished Executive, Project & Program Director, harnessing 25+ years' experience in strategic health planning, capital project management and service reform, for Government, NGO and NFP service providers. She has consulted for government and non-profits on a range of initiatives, including strategic planning, merger and transformation, service and capital planning, service redesign and model of care development - most recently in the primary care and mental health sectors. Annette was formerly a Principal at Nous Group, led strategic, service development and capital infrastructure project teams for Multiple Sclerosis Limited, St Vincent's Health, Royal Children's Hospital and Royal District Nursing Service (now Bolton Clarke) and was a senior manager involved in the merger of Australian Airlines with Qantas. Annette is also the Deputy Chair of Tweddle Child and Family Health Service.

Special responsibilities

Deputy Chair
 Chair Community Advisory Committee
 Quality and Safety Committee Member

Qualifications

Bachelor of Applied Science
 Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors
 Associate Fellow Australasian College of Health Service Management



David Benady

Director since July 2021

Experience

David has 20 years of experience in a broad range of community and human rights settings in the UK, Africa, Australia and Asia. His primary focus in the community has been on children's rights. He is proud of the landmark cases he won leading to substantial change and improved recognition of children's rights in Victoria. After leaving the law profession, he worked in business strategy consulting for Strategy&. He now consults to manufacturers on strategy and operations and has set up his own procurement consulting firm specialising in manufacturing and health sector procurement.

Special responsibilities

Quality and Safety Committee Member
Audit and Risk Committee Member

Qualifications

Juris Doctor
Master of Public and International Law
Master of Public Policy and Management
Senior Executive Master of Business Administration



Ross Goeman

Director since May 2022

Experience

Ross has extensive leadership experience within local government, most recently as Manager of Corporate Performance and Strategic Risk at the City of Melbourne. He has held leadership roles at Monash City Council and Yarra City Council. Ross has significant expertise in risk management, business assurance, compliance management and corporate planning.

Special responsibilities

Audit and Risk Committee Member
Community Advisory Committee Member

Qualifications

Master of Business Administration
Master of Public Policy and Management
Master of Science
Bachelor of Arts (Honours)



David Lau

Director since May 2022

Experience

David's early experiences as a hospital clinician led to his enduring passion for system reform, its sustainability and service quality. His specialist skills and experiences span hospital leadership, pharmaceutical supply chain, digital health, health industry development and commercialisation, and health practitioner regulation. He is currently the Managing Partner of Mitte Analytics, a technology start-up, and past positions include General Manager of Institutional Healthcare at EBOS Group, Health Industry Lead at Optus, and Executive Director of Ambulatory Services at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. He has previously chaired the Pharmacy Board of Victoria and the Victorian Pharmacy Authority, and has served as a board director of several other health services including Western Health, The Royal Children's Hospital, and North Yarra Community Health.

Special responsibilities

Governance Committee Member
Quality and Safety Committee Member

Qualifications

Professional Certificate in Health Systems Management
Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia, Fellowship
Master of Clinical Pharmacy
Bachelor of Pharmacy



Penny Lovett

Director since October 2018

Experience

Penny Lovett is Executive General Manager People and Culture at Invocare. Penny's experience encompasses organisational leadership and all aspects of People and Culture leadership including cultural renewal, HR Business Partnering, Workplace Health and Safety, Remuneration and Benefits, Organisational Development, HR Services, and Volunteer Management. Penny has held board roles for over 10 years and has more than 20 years of experience in executive positions, having served as an HR Director across the not-for-profit, health, insurance, aged care, and manufacturing sectors for over 15 years.

Special responsibilities

Chair Governance Committee

Qualifications

Master of Business Administration
Graduate Diploma, Human Resource Management
Bachelor of Commerce
Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors



Mike Morgan

Director since May 2019

Experience

Mike is the immediate past Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Otago, New Zealand. He was previously the Head of Melbourne Dental School in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at The University of Melbourne. He holds an Honorary Professorship at both institutions. Mike has been involved in dental education and research in Australia, New Zealand and internationally. Mike is a registered specialist in both Australia and New Zealand with a background in paediatric dentistry, dental public health and epidemiology.

Special responsibilities

Chair Quality and Safety Committee
Community Advisory Committee Member

Qualifications

PhD
Master of Dental Science
Graduate Diploma Epidemiology
Bachelor of Dental Surgery
Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors
Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons



Alan Studley

Director since December 2015

Experience

Alan is a non-executive director of Alexandra District Hospital, Wayss (Family Violence & Housing Support), ANZGITA and Member of Audit and Risk Committee at Murrindindi Shire Council. Alan has worked for multinational companies in the fields of manufacturing, media and food production. His roles have included Finance Director, CEO and Executive Chairman of large acute care health facilities, public transport related services and a federal government trust responsible for national heritage assets. In the past, he has been a director and trustee of Metropolitan Ambulance Service, Royal Guide Dogs for the Blind Association of Victoria and Australia, Aware Super (Health Super) and ASX listed Sausage Software Pty Ltd. He has acted as a Surveyor, Australian Council of Healthcare Standards and member of the Department of Human Services, Strategy steering Committee I2T2.

Special responsibilities

Chair Audit and Risk Committee
Governance Committee Member

Qualifications

Master of Business Administration
Graduate Diploma in Management Systems
Bachelor of Business
Fellow Australian Institute of Company Directors
Fellow of CPA Australia



Peter Turner

Director since April 2013

Experience

Peter is the Managing Director of Independence Australia Group. He has worked in a range of senior management positions in the health and community services industry for over 30 years in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. He is a Harvard Club Fellow, an Alumnus of Leadership Victoria, was a volunteer Surveyor for the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards for 20 years and has also served as the pro-bono Chief Executive of a charitable trust. Peter has extensive experience in corporate governance, capital, service planning and the management of health and community services. He has special interests in corporate governance and risk management.

Special responsibilities

Audit and Risk Committee Member
Governance Committee Member

Qualifications

Master of Health Administration
Graduate Diploma of Business
Fellow of CPA Australia
Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management
Fellow of the Australian College of Health Service Management
Certified Health Executive
Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors

Meet the Executive



Anna Robinson | Chief Executive Officer

Anna joined AccessHC in August 2021. Anna has over 15 years of experience leading operations, growth and innovation in for-purpose organisations. Her experience spans Australia, the UK, Asia and Latin America. Prior to AccessHC, Anna was on the Executive team at the Benevolent Society leading the disability services team, one of Australia's largest community multi-disciplinary allied health and behaviour support teams, in addition to overseeing the organisation's growth and business excellence framework. Prior to joining the Benevolent Society, Anna was Senior Director of Business Development for Change.org, the world's largest online platform for social change, launching and expanding their business model in eight countries globally.

Anna is the current CEO of AccessHC.



Rebecca Aldridge | Executive Lead People and Culture

Rebecca joined AccessHC in June 2022. Rebecca is an experienced people and culture leader. She led the People and Strategy team at Bayside Council and was a partner at Davidson Search and Advisory. She also has extensive operational, strategy and change management experience, having had a number of leadership roles with City of Melbourne. Rebecca leads the People, Culture and Strategy division of AccessHC, which encompasses human resources, talent acquisition, learning and development, communication, safety and wellbeing, project management and strategy.



Michael Le Lacheur | Chief Financial Officer

Michael joined AccessHC in January 2022. Michael has over 25 years of senior financial experience, working in listed and small to medium-size organisations. Prior to joining AccessHC, Michael worked as a Chief Financial Officer for a not-for-profit in the aged care sector. Michael is a Fellow Certified Practising Accountant (FCPA) and holds a Bachelor of Business from Victoria University of Technology. As CFO, Michael leads the Finance and Corporate Services teams.



David Towl | Executive Lead Community Access and Impact

David joined AccessHC in 2013. David has more than 15 years' experience in public health, health policy and community development. He is a qualified paramedic, having formerly held senior clinical, training and risk management roles with St John Ambulance in both New Zealand and Australia.

In his current role, David leads the Community Access and Impact division inclusive of Health Promotion, Community Engagement, Outreach, Family and Wellbeing and Community Programs.

**Dr Tamsin Short** | Executive Lead Mental Health and AOD

Tamsin joined AccessHC in 2012 and has worked in clinical, management and leadership roles in the organisation. Spending most of her career in community health, Tamsin has also previously worked in forensic mental health, AOD and research settings. In her current role, Tamsin oversees mental health, AOD and headspace programs at AccessHC. Over the past decade, she has led the establishment of several new and innovative AOD and mental health services at AccessHC, including the North East Metro Mental Health and Wellbeing Connect service.

**Debbie Wilkinson** | Executive Lead Primary Care

Debbie joined AccessHC in 2023, bringing over 20 years' experience as a Senior Manager/ Executive. Debbie is experienced in planning, strategy, execution, project management, operations, financial stewardship and change management within complex and large organisations in the health and community sector. Debbie is committed and personally driven to ensure all vulnerable people who experience disadvantage are treated with fairness and equity and can achieve the health and social outcomes important to them, with the support of systemic integrated evidence-based models of care. In her current role at AccessHC, Debbie oversees medical, urgent care and allied health services as part of the Primary Care portfolio.

Funders and Partners

It is important to note and thank our many funders and partners without whose support we could not deliver our wide range of services.

Our main funders include:

- City of Boroondara
- Dental Health Services Victoria
- Eastern Melbourne PHN (EMPHN)
- Federal Government (Dept of Health and Aged Care)
- headspace National
- Manningham Council
- North West Melbourne PHN (NWMPHN)
- South Eastern Melbourne PHN (SEMPHN)
- VicHealth
- Victorian Government



Some programs were delivered in partnership with:

- Banyule Community Health
- EACH
- Eastern Health - Turning Point
- healthAbility
- Inner East Primary Care Partnership (PCP)
- Inspiro
- Latrobe Community Health
- Oonah Belonging Place
- SalvoCare Eastern
- Self Help Addiction Resource Centre (SHARC)
- St Vincent's Mental Health Service
- Women's Health East
- Inner East IFS Alliance (Doncare, Uniting, Anglicare, MacKillop, Link, Monash Council, Vacca, Boorndawan Willam)



Locations and Services



17
sites across
the Inner East
of Melbourne

List of services

Alcohol & Other Drugs Services



Audiology



Carer Respite



Case Management Services



Child Development Services



Child & Play-based programs



Community Barbecues



Community Information & Referral



Community Nursing & Outreach



Community Outings & Bus Trips



Mental Health & Counselling



Dentist, Oral Health & Dentures



Diabetes Education & Support



Early Childhood Intervention



Education & Training Support



Emergency Relief



Exercise Groups



Health Promotion & Engagement



Housing Support



Education Sessions & Discussion Groups



Integrated Family Services



Medical Doctors



Medication Support & Recovery Service



NDIS Services



Needle & Syringe Program



Nursing



Nutrition & Dietetics



Occupational Therapy



Parenting Services & Support



Pathology



Peer Support Services & Groups



Physiotherapy



Podiatry



Sexual Health Services



Social Activity Groups



Social Prescribing



Transport Support

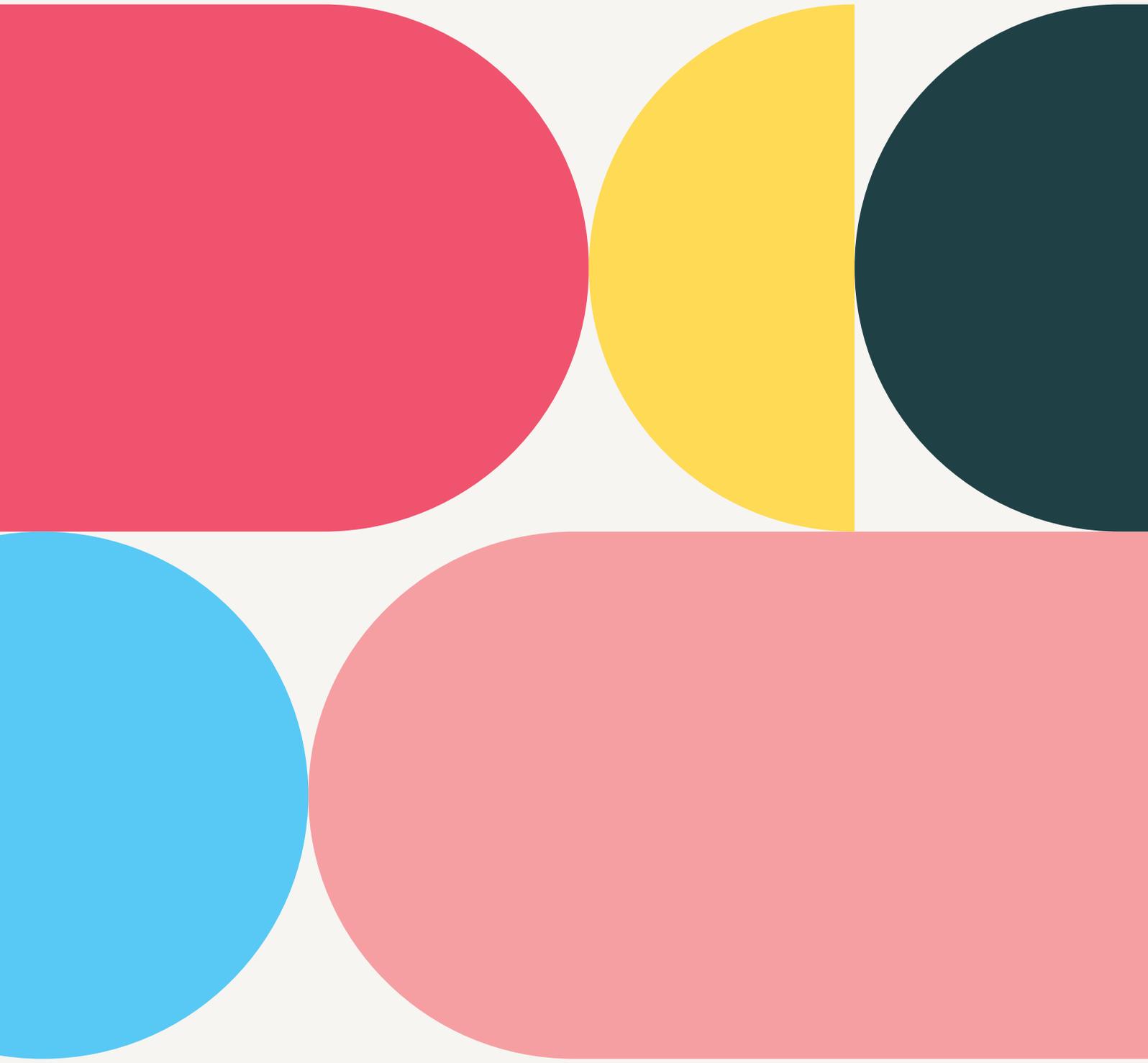
Various locations

Skill-based Activities & Training



Legend

- Ashburton
- Box Hill
- Camberwell - Camcare
- Doncaster East
- Greythorn - Trentwood @ The Hub
- HCH Glenferrie St
- Hawthorn
- Hawthorn Community House (HCH)
- headspace Hawthorn & Malvern
- Lower Templestowe
- MC-Squared
- Manningham Men's Shed
- Richmond Urgent Care Clinic
- Richmond
- Y Street Ashburton
- HCH William St
- Home-based services
- Services provided in community



ACCESS
Health & Community

Building healthier lives together

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