



2022-23 Annual Report

www.hrvic.org.au

Formal Acknowledgement



Wominjeka.

Harm Reduction Victoria (HRVic) respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Custodians of these beautiful, unceded Lands and Waters that nourish and inspire us – where we live and work.

We pay our respects to the culture and to Elders – past and present.

HRVic also wish to pay our respects to any indigenous Australians who work for and along side HRVic and any Aboriginal members who may be reading this report.



WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and readers of the HRVic Annual Report are warned that the following report may contain the written names or images of deceased persons.

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**In Memoriam
to all of our peers, friends, family and community members
that we lost during 2022-2023
due to the harms of the ongoing 'War on (people who use) Drugs'.**

You will be missed and never forgotten.

The fight will continue.

President's Report

To our valued members,
our community and our stakeholders,

Welcome to Harm Reduction Victoria's Annual Report for 2022- 2023.

As the contents of this report make clear, the organisation is thriving in its mission to advance the well-being and dignity of, and social justice for, people who use drugs in Victoria.

Through these pages you can read about the impressive achievements in each of our core programs, PAMS, DOPE, DanceWize, Viral Hepatitis Health Promotion & Harm Reduction, and FUSE Initiatives, exemplified by the wide range of innovative projects and activities undertaken by the team at Harm Reduction Victoria (HRVic) throughout this reporting year.

HRVic's achievements are due to the incredible people who make up the organisation – our hard-working CEO, staff and volunteers who are dedicated to bringing about the changes our communities need and deserve. Along with my fellow Board members, I extend my heartfelt thanks and commend you for your inspiring service.

Of course, HRVic does not work alone. Throughout the year, we have continued to work with our many partners and stakeholders to address issues and priorities that matter to communities of people who use drugs. On behalf of the Board and HRVic, I thank all of our valued stakeholders and partners. We look forward to continuing and further strengthening these vital partnerships and collaborations in the coming year.

We also remain deeply grateful and extend our sincere thanks to our funders in the Department of Health. We are immensely fortunate in the respectful and productive relationships we continue to enjoy with Department staff and in the generous support they provide that enables our work addressing the multiple issues that impact on the health and well-being of people who use drugs.

In reflecting on this past year, what stands out for me is how our focused efforts over the last few years to build the internal capacity of the organisation have been realised. Most visible, of course, is our new premises in Brunswick. We hoped this new home would better support our goals of meaningfully engaging with our communities to work together on our needs, interests and priorities. We are already beginning to see these hopes realised as we have hosted a number of community-driven events, and we have many more planned for the year ahead. Less visible perhaps, at least as I write this, are the substantial achievements in expanding staffing and therefore program delivery capacity, and in consolidating and extending the leadership capabilities of the staff and the organisation as a whole. The strengthening confidence of the staff and organisation as lived and living experience peer leaders and advocates has been made most apparent to me as I have participated in our Strategic Planning processes throughout the year. These processes have highlighted the remarkably consistent shared values – of dignity, respect and justice - among the staff, volunteers, CEO and Board members who make up the organisation. But more impressive, and reflective of their living experience knowledge and confidence, has been the inspiring scope and ambition of the vision, mission and objectives we hope to achieve. With this serving as a teaser, I look forward to sharing our new Strategic Plan with you in the coming year.

In closing, I am pleased to assure you of the strong position of HRVic in meeting challenges going forward and I am excited to see what this outstanding **peer-based** and peer-run organisation will achieve over the coming years.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you
all a happy and successful year
ahead.

Robyn Dwyer
President
Harm Reduction Victoria

HRVic Staff

CEO

Sione Crawford

HEALTH PROMOTION

Jane Dicka
Caro Weidner
Brittany Chapman
Amanda Callus
Mark Belzer
Lesia Ryan
Zeneta Fetah

FUSE INITIATIVES

Nadia Gavin
Matthew Plumb
Christian Vega
Amelia Berg

DANCEWIZE

Nick Wallis
Ally Anketell
Liam Troon
Mae Vincent
Jackson McClean

PAMS

Sarah Lord
Jimmy Harrington
Daniel Ward
Frank Bees
Bee Hayes

ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

Jessica Holcombe
Snowy Primmer

COMMUNICATIONS

Samantha Jones

POLICY & ADVOCACY

Nick Kent
Ben Yonson

With Special Thanks To
our Accounts Team for 2022-
2023 for all their extra help -
Kim and Shaily



The Board (L-R, T-B)

ROBYN DWYER
TONY WYATT
PENNY HILL
KATIA LALLO
GABY BRUNING
CRAIG HARVEY
PETER HIGGS



CEO Report

One of the issues I have when writing these reports is that there is no way, in this short piece, to do justice to all of the work and all of the team members and volunteers that do that work for and with our community across the year. To get a wider sense of our work I urge you to check out the different program reports across the pages of this, our Annual Report for 2022 – 2023.

On August 31 last year we, along with our friends at Access Health, St. Kilda, undertook a public event at the Victorian Parliament Steps, rallying for a range of changes to public policy that we believe would lower overdose rates and lead to better lives for people who use drugs, as well as to remember those who have not survived the drug war. The steps looked amazing with so many of our crew and community showing up to support us, from politicians to service providers and of course people who use drugs.

Harm reduction is not just a service provision modality but a philosophy of love, care and empowerment, but too often stigma, discrimination and poor policy combine to make the work of harm reduction more challenging than it has to be.

In April, we co-hosted the 27th Harm Reduction International Conference.

Those involved know that a universe of experiences are contained in that sentence. This was a big deal for us and to be the local partner was an amazing opportunity to show the capacity of Victoria's community of people who use drugs and harm reductionists.

In summary, it was a fantastic experience and opportunity and one that stretched us and also showed us how innovative and resourceful we are. Everyone at HRVic made this happen but I have to call out Nick Kent and Ben Yonson for taking on a coordinating role that we may not have expected at the start of this journey – including when I went into hospital for surgery unexpectedly – and Samantha Jones who envisaged and designed and largely produced what Pat O'Hare – HRI's founder – called the best conference stall he had ever seen.



(Above): HRVic/AIVL Stall @ HR23

**(L): Int Harm Reduction Conference
Founder, Pat O'Hare**

The Harm Reduction International conference followed hot on the heels of our move into a new premises in Brunswick. We have space now to undertake community events, forums and large meetings that were impossible at Peel St HQ. Jess Holcombe should take a bow for wrangling us into this new building. There was a lot of heartache in the process – continually held up by things outside our control – but we are set up for a number of years now. A fantastic benefit of having a bit more space is that we can co-locate with allies. In particular we are proud to share the building with Vixen, Victoria's peer organisation of sex workers. Sex workers and people who inject drugs have long had shared communities and worked together strategically to prevent HIV in our communities and to break down stigma.

Stigmatising health promotion campaigns aimed at people who use and inject drugs are too common, so it has been fantastic to partner with EC Australia to roll out the Victorian arm of the It's Your Right: Live Free of Hep C campaign that challenges this.

Empowering messages that spoke to our communities were co-developed and designed to remind people who use drugs that we all deserve hepatitis C testing and treatment if we need it – that it is our right.

Messages like “get clear while on gear” and “clear it again and again” aimed to remind people they could treat hep C while still using and that we do not lose the right to treatment if we get hep C again. We ran peer / nurse testing and treatment partnerships at three sites across Victoria and we are still working in West Melbourne out of an outreach bus, testing and treating people. We have a number of fantastic peer workers that did or are doing the work of reaching out to the community and bringing them to the sites for discussions with a

nurse. I want to highlight Lesa, Zenn, Amanda and now Mark who have contributed to the success of this project by being amazing communicators and all-around stars. Programs like our NSP and our outreach peer education programs that work with community health and other community service providers were hamstrung by the Omicron outbreak in late 2022. Many healthcare providers remained open but did not allow outside organisations like ours back in for many months following that (hopefully) last outbreak. I couldn't quite believe it was so recent until I checked the dates.

The PAMS team are used to crises and as the lack of pharmacotherapy prescribers has tipped over into almost permanent crisis mode, it is amazing to see how integral the PAMS team are to helping coordinated responses to these crises in Victoria. They help hundreds and thousands of people remain on pharmacotherapy every

year. Although we have had the great victory of dosing being subsidised by the Commonwealth PBS scheme finally, the team has barely slowed down, despite financial issues being a major issue of concern until the changes occurred.

I want to thank Bee Hayes for coordinating DanceWize until November last year and Nick Wallis for stepping up to coordinate the program in an interim role until the end of the last season, ably supported by Aly Anketell. I'm happy that Nick is now in the role permanently and is working on sustainability and has welcomed Jaz into the team. They are working on building communication and engagement with the Key Peer Educator volunteers and welcoming the



(Above): 'It's Your Right' van rear window ad

(Background): '7 Demandments' T Shirt - Artwork by Sam Wallman



range of skills and inputs they have into the future of the program. This program has never been funded sustainably with funding for just 2 full time positions spread across three team members.

We rely heavily on our volunteer's good will and skills and on fees from promoters. But this is a leading harm reduction program that other states and countries want to emulate. It is frustrating to see these programs being funded sustainably when the originator is not.

In these conditions, the work of the team, the KPEs and Mae and her gender based

violence counselling program volunteers is even more a testament to the strength of community. Working on improving this situation is a key priority for the year coming up.

Once more, a big thank you to our communities, staff and volunteers, our supporters, allies and funders. I'm looking forward to working with you all again in 2024.

-Sione Crawford

(Main): Int. Overdose Awareness Day Rally , Aug 31, 2023 Parliament steps

2022-23

Annual Report

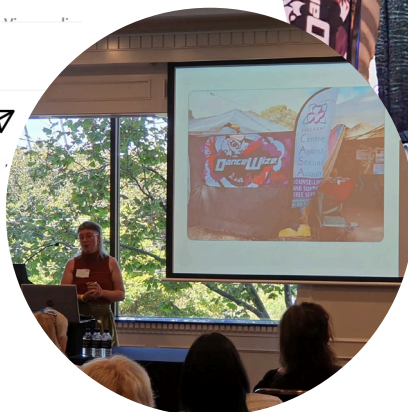


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(HRVIC) , our
office mates VL
HR volunteers fc
#hr23
26w

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[View insights](#)

♥ 💬 📌
Liked
APRIL 16



(Above R): DanceWize Chill/Care Space (Above L): Bee Hayes presenting

Organisational Services

When I received the email this year that our next Annual Report was coming up and I needed to send in an update for the Organisational Services team, I was shocked – had it already been a year since I wrote the last one? Then I realised that last year, we pushed our AGM out several months because we wanted to host the meeting in-person at our new office building. As you may know, we were still undergoing renovations when the AGM rolled around at the beginning of February, so we weren't able to hold it in-person. But at least I feel a little bit better knowing that I haven't lost another full year of my life. And the good news is – we can finally host our AGM in our new office this year & are so excited to welcome you to our new space.

For me, the most exciting part of the 2023 financial year was bringing Snowy Primmer on board as the new Organisational Services Support Officer. We received a ton of interest for this role, and it was hard to narrow down the impressive candidate list. However, after we did the interviews, the choice was clear: Snowy received an unequivocal “yes” from the panel and I contacted her straight away! Snowy started with us back in October 2022 and it's hard to remember what HRVic life was like without her. Snowy has continued to impress everyone at HRVic since her first day & we are so lucky to have her on our team.

I couldn't finish this report without updating you on our new office. We finally settled into the building in late February and if I thought moving was going to be the last thing on the list, I couldn't have been more wrong! Is it exciting to have a converted warehouse space in Brunswick? Absolutely! Does it feel good to have a bigger office that suits a ton of HRVic's needs?

Feels great!

Has moving into a space 5x bigger than our last office & discovering all the special quirks that it has to offer been fun?

Well, I wouldn't say “fun”. But it definitely feels like a huge accomplishment - getting

into the new office, finally having things set up, starting to host workshops and events and most importantly, sharing it with our community & allies – with each day that goes by, it feels more & more like home.

People keep telling me that the work on the building “will never be finished” – and I can't say I disagree. In fact, I might say this sums up a lot of the work that the Organisational Services team does. Our responsibilities revolve around supporting the HRVic Board, staff members, peers, volunteers and stakeholders, among others.

From human resource questions to IT solutions, organisational & program budgets and office enquiries, maintaining relationships and developing new systems that help HRVic evolve – these are just some of the tasks that we take on every day. Sometimes I describe our team as the one that people bring their questions to when they don't know who else to ask.

And with HRVic continuing to grow year after year, there's never a dull moment – but we love it!

Well, most of the time ;)



WE HAVE MOVED!

HRVIC HAVE CLOSED OUR NORTH MELBOURNE OFFICE. WE WILL RE-OPEN OUR NEW SPACE IN FEBRUARY 2023.

PLEASE COME SEE US AT OUR NEW SPACE

NEW ADDRESS
HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA
299-305 VICTORIA STREET
BRUNSWICK 3056
VICTORIA AUSTRALIA

CONTACT
OFFICE PHONE: (03) 9401 5100
FAX: (03) 9401 5101
EMAIL: info@hrvic.org.au
WWW: www.hrvic.org.au

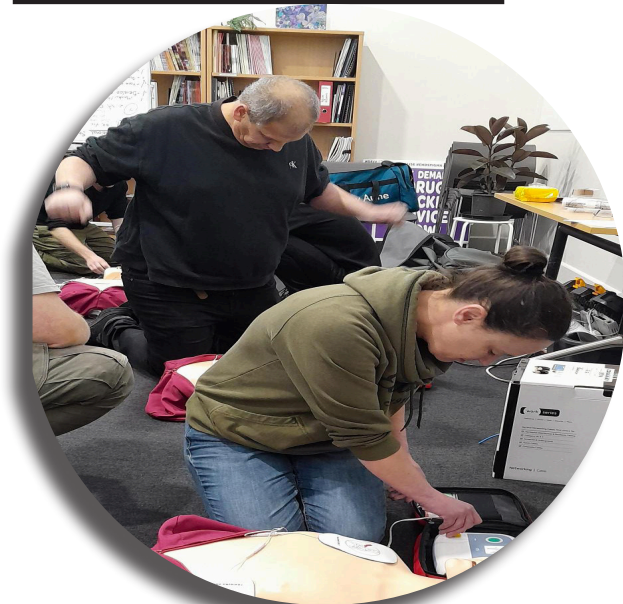
NEW PREMISES VS OLD

Area	Size	Address
NEW PREMISES	185 sq metres	128 Peel St Nth Melb
OLD PREMISES	854 sq metres	299-305 Victoria St

Share the love

The sharing of our new building with the Vixen Collective; the only peer-run sex worker organisation in Victoria, has brought new energy to the community work that HRVic does, as a lot of our work (and communities) cross paths.

SSDP and Family Drug Support have also joined us as 'hot deskers' and we've opened our doors and spaces to AIVL and other visiting community DUO when in Melbourne for meetings or conferences.



HRVic Staff First Aid Training



Support Don't Punish Forum
June 2023

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VICTORIA
2022-23
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Policy & Advocacy

This year Harm Reduction Victoria had the exciting opportunity to dedicate more time to drug law reform and advocacy! Historically, Australia's drug user organisations haven't been resourced or even allowed to dedicate time to policy advocacy and campaigning. Even while the need is so massive, and we're constantly asked by governments and organisations to give feedback and consult on harm reduction policies.

So in 2022, a new role was established called Policy & Campaigns Lead. A big focus in 2022 and early 2023 was preparing for the Harm Reduction International conference HR23, which HRVic played host to in Melbourne in April 2023. Also, with Victoria implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Mental Health, the Department of Health has been making changes to the mental health and AOD systems, and we've needed dedicated time to advocate for the rights of people who use drugs within these reforms. Below are some key outcomes of HRVic's emerging policy advocacy program in 2022 and 2023, and info on where to from here.

Harm Reduction International Conference:

HRVic was the lead local organization hosting this bi-annual conference bringing together over 1000 harm reduction activists, people who use drugs, researchers and policymakers! It was held at the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre on April 16th-19th 2023.

Community participation:

We organised a range of scholarships and volunteer opportunities for local people who use drugs and First Nations peoples to attend, including community rapporteurs responsible for posting on social media, and harm reduction volunteers responsible for supporting attendees. Uncle Bill from the Wurundjeri Land Council also gave an inspiring Welcome to Country to open the

conference, which you can watch here:

<https://YouTube/wHeR1jVHnAM>

Australian Stream:

Australia doesn't have its own national harm reduction conference (something we're thinking of addressing now). We coordinated a range of partners and allies to develop a stream of sessions in the conference program specific to the Australian context.

This included some really powerful discussions that we don't often hear about; including hearing from a panel of First Nations people on decolonisation and human rights in Australian drug policy.



HR23 Australian Declaration Conference Declaration:

HRVic also worked with HRI and Collabforge to facilitate 2 workshops at the conference, which resulted in writing a conference declaration. The Declaration includes a list of statements calling for community empowerment, decolonization, expansion of harm reduction and an end to drug prohibition. The Declaration was read out at the closing ceremony by HRVic Board member Gaby Bruning, and has since been referred to by multiple policymakers and researchers. The Declaration is providing the basis for ongoing movement and coalition building in Australia. Check out the Declaration here: [HR23 Conference Declaration | 27th Harm Reduction International Conference \(hri.global\)](#)



(Above R): HR23 Declaration PDF

The 7 Demandments

In 2022-23, we also began developing an Advocacy Platform for HRVic. There are so many policy changes needed, and some of them are pretty complex. We need to get it all on one page so we can build consensus and strategies among our communities and allies, around what we're fighting for.

It was a pleasure to work with all HRVic staff in the months before the conference to explore all the small, medium and massive policy changes we need to see. We then grouped these into 7 key policy demands, which we've dubbed 'The 7 Demandments'.

These are:

1. Decriminalise drug use and possession
2. Expand harm reduction activities
3. Safe workplaces for peer workers
4. Access and choice in healthcare and pharmacotherapy
5. Educate and de-stigmatise
6. Legalise drugs through community-regulated supply
7. Build a Victorian Drug Strategy led by affected communities

Each 'Demandment' has a list of more specific reforms underneath it (ie; implementation of drug checking services, or allowing more choice including injectable diamorphine as pharmacotherapy options, etc.) All of which will be continuously improved upon and are open for community feedback and input.

The Demandments also formed a basis for many of the Statements in the HR23 Conference Declaration. We think this is just the beginning of how these demands can unify and coordinate people who use drugs in Australia around a vision for systemic drug law reform.

In FY 2022-23, since the conference, Harm Reduction Victoria has convened an Advocacy Working Group of key allies, consulted in numerous government policies around mental health and AOD treatment, and coordinated a growing consensus in the sector for better harm reduction policies and more funding for our work. With the Department committing to funding this work for another 2 years, we look forward to seeing what else we can achieve in the fight to decriminalise and ending drug prohibition.



Individual demands:
Illustrated by
Sam Wallman

LEGALISE
THE CULT

Communications

This report serves as a testament to the tireless efforts put forth by our communications worker(s) and our entire team, who strive, not only to amplify our reach, advocate for change, and foster connections within the drug user, and wider harm reduction community, but to change general negative stereotypes around people who use drugs.

Over the course of this financial year; the challenge of moving offices from a suburb we've been in for over 15 years to a new suburb where the community does not yet know us, we have encountered unique challenges and celebrated remarkable successes,.

As we navigate an evolving landscape and work to address the ever-changing needs of our community, this report underlines our dedication to transparent, impactful, relevant and compassionate communication. It is a reflection of our commitment to embodying the values of harm reduction in everything HRVic does.

The strategies and channels that HRVic uses to reach and engage with our community of people who use drugs in Victoria are as follows:

- Printed materials & WHACK Magazine
- Social media campaigns
- Website content
- Email newsletters
- Events and workshops
- Partnerships with other organizations

WHACK Magazine

Issues printed in 2022-23 FY: 3

Total Printed Per Issue:

#46- 3000 copies (52pages)

#47- 2200 copies (52pages)

#48 HRPW Special HR23 Issue

1500 copies (54pages)

Readership per Issue:

904 Individual Members (posted)

60 x Organisational/Agency members given



WHACK ISSUES 46,47 &48

between **2 -120 magazines each.** (courier or HRVic delivered)

11 x Regional Victorian agencies (courier)

7x Interstate Australia (courier)

1x International (box of 50 mags) (post)

Community Content Percentage:

98% of all **Illustrations/artwork** submitted by local community (peer) artists and **80% written submissions** are by community including peer reviewed conferences and events.

This FY, we chose to focus on the ongoing systemic issues that create barriers to accessing health and wellbeing services for people who use drugs such as criminalisation, stigma and discrimination. We also chose to highlight the inspirational international peer workforce for the 2023 Harm Reduction Conference and lead up.

Special Edition WHACK #48- Harm Reduction Peer Worker (HRPW) HR23 Issue:

Our Comms and Fuse Coordinators took advantage of being in Europe/UK for INHSU to bring to fruition the Special Fuse Issue of WHACK on Harm Reduction Peer Workers and Peer Leaders. We made good use of our time away to interview HRPW from around the globe and travelled to 6 countries in the EU and UK in 2 weeks to create this Special issue of WHACK magazine for HR23 which got put in each delegates bag.

1000 magazines & 1000 Pull out A3 Fuse Initiatives Posters, designed by a living experience community member depicting the “ingredients” that make up the values & principles of harm reduction peer work, were put into in each HR23 Delegate bag, expanding HRVic’s reach and engagement both Nationally and Internationally.

HR23:

Harm Reduction International’s Global Harm Reduction Conference

As the local host and partner for HR23, this collaboration was an opportunity to

showcase Australian harm reduction work. In my view, a large part of Comms work is to recognise and to take advantage of untapped potential marketing and engagement opportunities.

One such under utilised opportunity is the The ‘Community Areas’ or ‘Market Areas’ of conferences where there is a little more freedom to have fun with how you share information and promote your organisations and services. Not being part of the main programming of a conference need not limit the impact you have on conference goers. The benefits range from face to face networking & engagement and information dissemination, to personal peer education and harm reduction interventions to visibility-The stall serves as a platform to showcase your organisation, its mission, and its initiatives. This visibility can attract the attention of potential funders, collaborators, and peers who may not attend the presentations but are interested in your work. Our stall at HR23 did all of these things.

Our stall, shared with AIVL, our national drug user org, was a special comms project- worked on by all and any members and staff of HRVic who wanted to. We discovered that having a creative ‘side project’ to stop our regular work for a couple hours in a day, helped a lot of people to stay focused and engaged in their regular work.

Starting months prior, with only a rough concept and an idea of giving out our NSP equipment in a type of ‘happy meal’ led to the overall concept of our utopian future where harm reduction and drug use were no longer a stigmatising topic so much so that you could get harm reduction supplies and equipment as quickly and conveniently as you could a take away burger meal. And were just as accessible.



**COLLATING THE
DELEGATE BAGS @ HR23**



“ 1 million Saved “ instead of “1 million served” would be on our (solar) lit up street sign.

HRVic Website

The website is slowly morphing into a reliable go-to source of information, education and communication between potential members and members alike. It is slowly but continuously evolving to respond to our needs and wants as peer workers and as fellow community members. The ‘chat’ function has created another anonymous avenue for connection and to ask questions or get quick ‘directions’ to website content. 2023-2024 will see community consultations with community and other peer service orgs/allies around harm reduction merch ie. Products with a message including the introduction of a Print On Demand service to acquire uniforms for volunteers through a member only portal on our website. Peers and community members are proud of the work they do and want to take those messages into their daily lives. This sparks conversation and opportunities

for BIs within community’s natural environs and a reach to more places than just within services or workplaces.

TRAFFIC

24,285

Unique Visitors

4m3s

Average Session Duration

VISITS
37.2k
Total Site Sessions
(^35%)

40% are coming via Google Search

24% or **8,094** : coming directly from business cards, advertising, direct marketing etc.

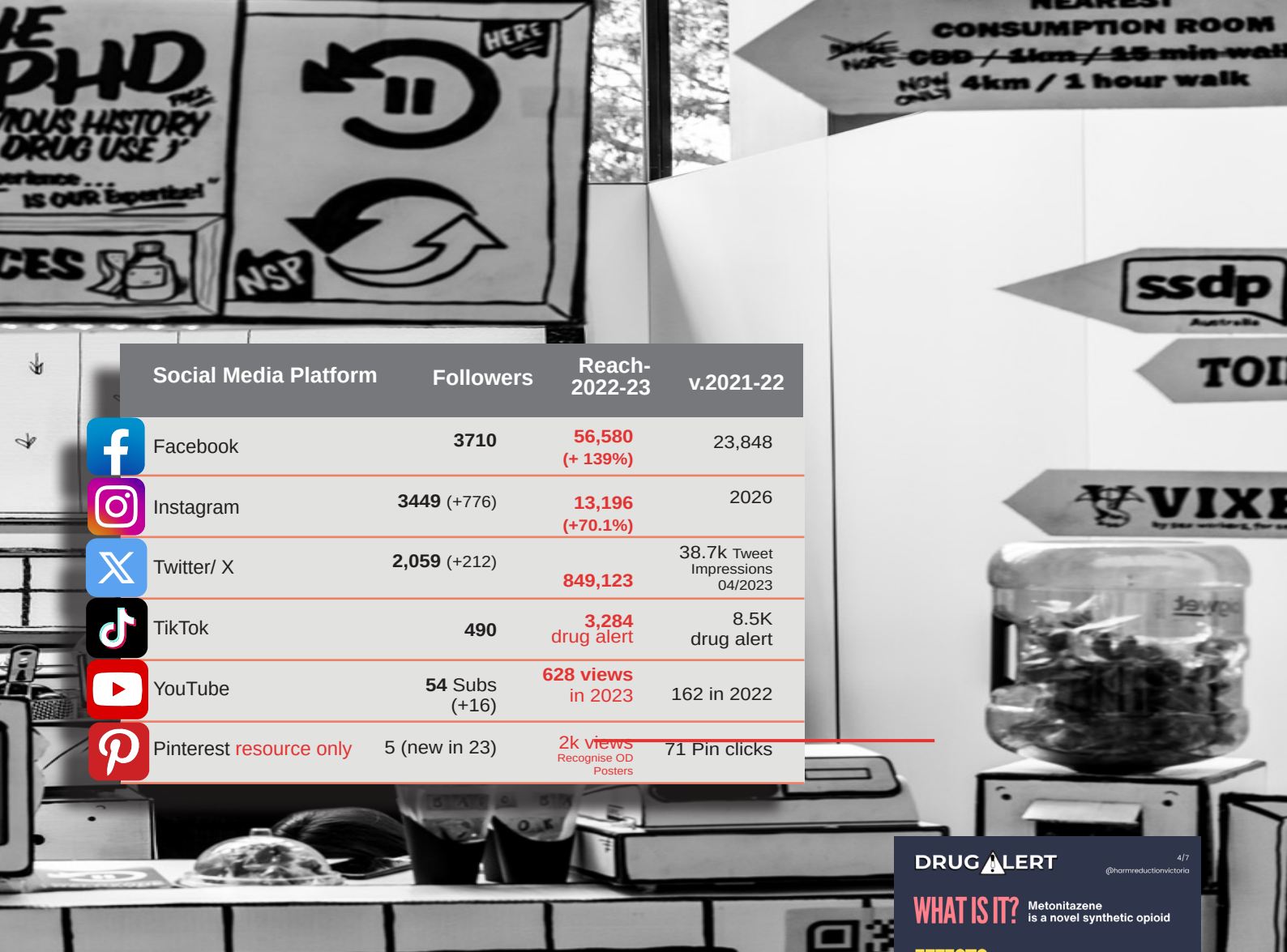
Page Visits:

Homepage 11,376 (+31%)

Resources 7898 (+41%)

PAMS 6238 (+41%)

(Main Image): HRVic/ AIVL Info Stall & Conference NSP @ HR23



Social Media Platform	Followers	Reach-2022-23	v.2021-22
Facebook	3710	56,580 (+ 139%)	23,848
Instagram	3449 (+776)	13,196 (+70.1%)	2026
Twitter/ X	2,059 (+212)	849,123	38.7k Tweet Impressions 04/2023
TikTok	490	3,284 drug alert	8.5K drug alert
YouTube	54 Subs (+16)	628 views in 2023	162 in 2022
Pinterest resource only	5 (new in 23)	2k views Recognise OD Posters	71 Pin clicks

Social Media

HRVic continues to increase its reach through various platforms in 2022-23. Our engagement with community has slowed on Facebook, but continually rises on Instagram, 'X' (nee Twitter), TikTok, YouTube and Pinterest to share our harm reduction resources with the world.

Drug Alerts

In 2023, HRVic started collaborating with the Dept. Health to release Community drug alerts.

This financial year we released 7 official Community Drug Alerts on all of our most viewed social media platforms.

HIGHEST ALERT REACH

8.5k ON TIKTOK

AVERAGE ALERT REACH 2.5-3.5k

(Above): HRVic Drug Alerts for social media

Health Promotion & D.O.P.E

The health promotion team has been busy this year. We managed to secure a position for Caro Weidner, Community Workshops and Peer Education and NSP, and Brit Chapman into the team in the role of workforce development training, but as all small teams do, we work across all projects and fill in where needed.

Workforce Development:

Harm Reduction Victoria developed a **Harm Reduction Masterclass** that was offered as a part of the VAADA **Elevate Training Program**.

The masterclass offers a full and varied program comprising seven modules over two half days. The program was delivered on four separate occasions throughout the year and each time it was very well attended.

Awareness Day Events:

One of the highlights early in the year was the **International Overdose Awareness Day** Rally that we held on the steps of Parliament House. The event was a collaboration between Harm Reduction Victoria and the Southern Metro Harm Reduction Coalition and around 150 people attended including ministers and politicians.

There was an installation of empty pairs of shoes, representing the lives lost to overdose. Purple and silver balloons and umbrellas drew the attention of passersby. We held signs with each of our 30 demands that had been posted on social media in the days leading up to the event.

The very clear message behind it all - a demand for drug decriminalisation.

Overdose Prevention Online Training: Overdose is preventable and Harm Reduction Victoria continues to offer overdose education to the sector and community.

With regard to opiate overdose we continue to offer our monthly Online Overdose Response (with naloxone) Training.

On completion, participants are eligible to receive a purpose made HRVic naloxone kit in the mail. These sessions became popular during COVID and have increased in popularity over the past 12 months: we delivered **11 monthly sessions** throughout the year to **131 participants**, **26 of which**, live in rural and regional areas.



11 ONLINE OVERDOSE WORKSHOPS

131 Participants

26 From Regional & Rural Victoria.

ITS YOUR RIGHT

3

Sites

591

Brief Interventions

264

Peers Tested

The campaign objectives included;

- reaching people who are not accessing hepatitis C services
- shifting perceptions about treatment
- supporting people to be tested and treated

“IT’S YOUR RIGHT” Hep C Testing & Treatment Campaign:

October saw the launch of the ‘It’s Your Right’ (IYR) campaign which aims to increase hepatitis C testing and treatment uptake in people who inject drugs using a peer led approach.

A national project, ‘It’s Your Right’ was a collaboration between The Burnet Institute and each of the state based drug user organisations. IYR included linking people who inject drugs with peer workers and trusted services, combining vibrant, rights-based messages in street advertising, with tailored peer-led engagement strategies. These strategies included client outreach, cash incentives, point-of-care testing, and events. We engaged the help of three new peers and set up in three locations, Melbourne CBD, the Western suburbs (based in St Albans) and Geelong for a period of three months. The number of people we saw in St Albans was overwhelming and the reason behind us gaining some extra funds to be able to continue on working out West. During that time we have had more than 350 conversations about hep C, we have managed to test more than 200 people and from those we have supported more than ten people from start to finish of their hep C treatment.



TALK TO HARM REDUCTION
ON 1800 430 800
GO TO ITSYOURRIGHT

Health Promotion & D.O.P.E Cont'd.

We were all fortunate enough to be able to attend AIVL's Stigma Conference at Parliament House in Canberra which was a great opportunity for us to network with like-minded people from all over Australia.

We saw a really interesting presentation from the folk at the Drug Users Liberation Front in Vancouver all about their Safe Supply project. Australians really do need to start thinking outside the box when it comes to these issues.

Stigma Participatory Film Series

Stigma remains a huge problem especially with regard to injecting drug use and is still one of the main reasons given for people not seeking help when they need it.

At the start of the year we engaged Conor Ashleigh - photographer, film maker - documentary storyteller with a background in community development and communications. In his words

“I facilitate the stories that people want to tell about themselves – stories that educate and empower.”

True to his word, Conor put out a call asking for our community's experiences in accessing healthcare. He asked what barriers, if any, stood in the way of them going onto hep C treatment? Conor also asked each survey participant if they would be involved in the subsequent creation of the project ie. filming, editing, acting and recording (audio) of the project as a skill-sharing exercise.

He heard a variety of different stories, each one was unique but the common theme with all of them was stigma.

There were some patterns of similar themes and some stand out experiences. Together, the health promotion team and Conor decided on a series of five stories capturing the most common themes and an outlier maybe not as common but still an issue in our community. We drafted scripts for each story and once they were done Conor called the peers who had previously indicated that they would like to be involved and offered them acting roles and production positions, i.e. camera operator, director and sound tech. The filming occurred over ten days throughout Melbourne and rural Victoria. Eight peers participated in the filming alongside HRVic staff and other volunteer actors including a pharmacist and a nurse practitioner. The group came back together and gave feedback on the films and we decided to add a 'call to action' to each one with the purpose of including a direct message to healthcare workers. We now have a series of films that will be released in the very near future and hopefully utilized by healthcare workers or anyone who works with people who use drugs.



(Above): Still of Stigma Film Project collaboration with Conor Ashleigh film

HR23- Melbourne

The International Harm Reduction Conference (HR23) came to Melbourne this year and all team members were able to attend.

We trained over 40 Conference Harm Reduction volunteers for Peer Outreach and NSP distribution and peer education/information during the conference.

(R): Health Promotion staff Mark and Caro in their volunteer roles at HR23



HR23
VOLUNTEER

HR23

MARK
BELZER

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA
AUSTRALIA



HR23

CAROLYN
WEIDNER

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA
AUSTRALIA

PAMS: Pharmacotherapy Advocacy Mediation & Support

Over the past 12 months the Pharmacotherapy Advocacy, Mediation & Support (PAMS) Service has continued to meet the needs of current and potential pharmacotherapy consumers in Victoria. Our staffing levels have increased, our systemic advocacy continues, and we have seen a long-awaited fundamental change to the cost of treatment nationally.

We welcome **Jimmy Harrington** and **Frank Bees** to the PAMS staff team, both of whom bring a wealth of professional and personal experience. **Daniel Ward** took leave for a few months to travel and has fortunately for us, now returned. We are lucky to have **Bee Hayes** move across to PAMS from the HRVic Dancewise team to assist us with the data project and more recently to work with our service users. PAMS is incredibly fortunate to have such a wonderful and committed staff team.

Pharmacotherapy Policy:

COVID-19 resulted in a couple of beneficial changes to the Victorian pharmacotherapy policy, namely 'third party pick-up' and increased take-away doses. Both changes were generally viewed as positive and have allowed consumers (on occasion) to have an alternative, (authorized) person collect their dose and, in some instances, receive up to 6 take-away doses per week.

998

**TOTAL CASES
2022-23**

▲150 from 2021-22

83.2

CASES
PER MONTH

57.6%

ARE NEW
SERVICE
USERS
IN 2022-23

Changes to the Cost of Treatment:

After what seems like a lifetime of advocacy, the cost of pharmacotherapy dosing fees are now on the PBS. Just like many other medicines, a 28-day supply of methadone or buprenorphine-naloxone now costs \$7.30 with a health care card and up to \$30 per month for those without. This significant development has been incredibly well-received by the consumer group; however, it has meant some changes to the way pharmacotherapy prescriptions are written and how pharmacists are remunerated for the valuable work they undertake daily.

The long-acting injectable buprenorphine is still provided to some medical practices directly by the wholesaler, however as of November 2023 all depot buprenorphine will also go through a PBS pharmacy. Unfortunately, the cost of treatment has risen substantially for those who are not eligible for a Medicare Care Card (e.g. asylum seekers). We believe this is a most unintended consequence and are working to find a way to address this issue to retain some of our most marginalized consumers on program.

Despite this astounding development in the cost of pharmacotherapy, unfortunately many medical clinics are no longer able to offer bulk-billing and instead are moving towards mixed and private billing. This is very concerning for the pharmacotherapy consumer group, many of whom are surviving on low incomes and do not have the money to pay for a medical appointment.

CHANGE IS COMING JULY 01 2023

HOW MUCH DO I PAY NOW?
The daily (or weekly/monthly) dose fees will STOP and will change to one PBS co-payment of \$7.30 per 28 day script (with a healthcare card) or \$30 per 28 day script (without a healthcare card).
There will be NO official extra charges. (e.g. for bottles, arriving early/late, getting take aways etc).
All pharmacotherapy scripts will count toward your PBS safety net. From 1 January 2023, the PBS Safety Net thresholds are \$262.80 for concession card holders and \$1,563.50 for general patients.
Scripts will be for 28 days (with a possibility of up to 2 repeats) (i.e., if you are on a 3-month supply).

WHAT IF I TAKE 2mg AND 8mg OF BUPE?
If you are taking 2 different strengths of Suboxone® or Subutex®, ie. your doctor prescribes you both 2mg and 8mg strips/tablets to make up your dose amount, you will pay one co-payment for each. However, each prescription will count towards your PBS Safety Net record and you will reach the limit sooner.
This payment rule is the same for any other PBS medication.

PBS SUBSIDY ELIGIBILITY:
To receive these changes, you will need to have:
a) A valid Medicare card
b) A valid pharmacotherapy prescription
c) A valid Health Care Card (if applicable)
d) Sign a privacy statement

CAN I STILL DOSE?
Yes. For most people this will not change. You can continue to get your take-away doses and Safety-Net support costs.
If your (paper or e-script) expires on 30 June 2023, (e.g., a script which expires on 30 June 2023) it will be transferred to the new PBS system.
*ASK your pharmacist when your script is due to expire. Remember to book appointment.

WHAT IF I OWE MY CHEMIST?
You are still eligible for the amount starting on the 1st of July 2023. If you think you owe money for doses up until the 30th of June 2023, you should talk to your pharmacist.

PRIVACY STATEMENT
Please Note: Your pharmacist will ask you to sign a privacy statement. This allows them to enter your details into the system and pay by the Government.
Unfortunately, if you refuse to sign a statement, you will not be eligible for the new PBS system.

KEEPING EACH OTHER THROUGH THE BIG CHANGE
a BIG change: treatment is now more affordable and equitable with other medicines.

Top 3 reasons for PAMS contact:

1. Cost of program at community pharmacy at 16.5%

RESULT: 83% were provided with one-off financial assistance.

2. Prescriber Retired or Moved on at 15.5%

RESULT: PAMS sourced & transferred 85% of consumers to a new prescriber.

3. Trouble Sourcing Both Pharmacotherapy Prescriber and Pharmacy at 10.7%

RESULT: PAMS sourced 89% of cases, a new prescriber and/or pharmacy.

ON JULY 17?

The priority is to make treatment and access PBS to remove daily dosing

AFTER Saturday 1st expires mid-late July 2023, PBS system by your pharmacotherapy

ts well in advance.

WASTING MONEY?

new, lower PBS co-payment of July 2023.

might owe your chemist end of June 2023, then you list NOW to sort out how to pay

NOTES:

will ask you to sign a pharmacy to enter be reimbursed (ie. get

sign the privacy file for the subsidy.

OUTCOMES:

74.8% of all service users retained their pharmacotherapy because of PAMS support and intervention.

20.8% started or re-started treatment because of support and/or intervention by PAMS.

86% of all PAMS service users were on program at the point of last follow-up by PAMS.

97% of all PAMS cases were completely or partly resolved.

Demographics of PAMS Service Users:

Gender:

- 33.8% identify as Female
- 66% identify as Male
- 0.2% identify as Transgender

Age:

- Average: 42.7 years
- Maximum: 73.5 years
- Minimum: 18.9 years

ATSI

9.4% of PAMS Service users identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander





PAMS Cont'd.

Treatment Choice:

Over the last 12 months we have seen an increasing number of people prescribed depot buprenorphine or the Long-Acting Injectable Buprenorphine (LAIB). These products, (Buvidal and Sublocade) are generally well-received by many prescribers and often viewed as “safer” treatment options.

Although very beneficial for some, LAIB is not for everyone. In some cases, this possible prescriber preference has resulted in difficulties for those wanting to remain on or start/re-start on methadone.

In these 12 months 51% of all PAMS service users were on or wanting to start on a methadone program, compared to 14.8% LAIB and 30% buprenorphine-naloxone (Suboxone Film).

Pharmacotherapy Prescriber Workforce:

Pharmacotherapy is rife with stigma and discrimination impacting on us all- the consumer, prescriber, and pharmacist.

Unfortunately, it seems there is a growing shortage of pharmacotherapy prescribers which limits consumer choice, inhibits treatment access, and places significant pressure on those who continue to prescribe.

Many of our Victorian prescribers are aging and understandably retiring, which, in the case of high-volume prescribers, has the potential to leave many consumers without a script or having to source a new prescriber.

In the last 12 months we faced this scenario in central Melbourne. In addition, there were at least 3 other pharmacotherapy prescribers who ran into issues with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency, (AHPRA), 2 of which ceased prescribing and the other had their case over-turned. In these highly stressful situations PAMS staff, the Victorian Department of Health, (DH) and staff from the Pharmacotherapy Area Based Networks, (PABNs) meet and plan an effective response to ensure program continuity is preserved for the consumer group.

Rural/Regional Victoria:

Based on recent data, almost 30% of all PAMS service users live in regional Victoria. Anything that impacts on pharmacotherapy just hits harder when it lands in rural or regional Victoria. In the last 12 months, there were some areas of Victoria subject to floods, (e.g. Echuca, Rochester) which made access to prescribers and/or pharmacies for scripts and dosing a challenge.



MY RIGHT. ABSTINENCE=
ITION= NO R

MYBODY, MYCHOICEofTREATMENT
OPIOID (OF YOUR CHOICE)

Dose: DETERMINED BY CONSUMER, 5mg/mL, diluted in 200mL
To Be Taken: WHEN-EVER-YOU-LIKE
OR, Your Right-to-Treatment
Supported by The Harm Reduction Pharmacist 16-Mar-2023
DRO EXP: NEVER
Why cause death or serious harm if taken by someone else.

This Product Contains No Stigma
PAMS
1800 443 844
Pharmaceuticals, Advocacy, Medication, Support Service

MYCHOICEofTREATMENT
OPIOID (OF YOUR CHOICE)

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Fuse Initiatives

2022–23 has been a year of growth and opportunity for Fuse Initiatives.

We welcomed Christian Vega and Matt Plumb to the team. Christian is the **Workplace Integration Lead** with a focus on developing and delivering induction, and skill development training for Harm Reduction Peer Workers (HRPWs) and expand the understanding of our skill set and philosophy. Matt is the **Policy Officer**, developing imperative framework and other policy documents to help create change and make workplaces safer for HRPWs.

HR23

Harm Reduction 2023 was great for Fuse Initiatives. The team was involved in many aspects behind the scenes, in the lead up to the bi-annual conference as well as making the most of the many other opportunities that only an international conference of this size coming to your city can bring.

Harm Reduction Peer Worker (HRPW) Scholarships

The Victorian Department of Health, invested in the harm reduction peer workforce (HRPW) by providing full scholarships for 20 Victorian harm reduction peer workers to not only attend, but to make sure as many HRPW were able to engage meaningfully in all the opportunities on offer at an international conference.

Harm Reduction Peer Worker (HRPW) Presentations At HR23

3 of our awesome HRPW (harm reduction peer workers) & members of Fuse Network had their abstract accepted and presented at HR23. They provided insights into some of the structural and systemic barriers they had faced in the workplace and described how their involvement in the Network has made them feel safer and more supported whilst also providing an opportunity to collectively enhance their peer work practice.



The Australian Stream

The Australian Stream at the conference was developed during the week and offered an international platform to speak on really important topics such as the findings and recommendations from the Coronial Enquiry into Veronica Nelson's death in custody.

Workshops

Fuse Initiatives ran a workshop we developed on best practice tools for the implementation of a current PWU/ID peer workforce in mainstream health services in Victoria.

Supportive Interventions for HRPW

Fuse Network (our support/mentoring & skill development network of practice for HRPW that work outside of DUO'S in mainstream harm reduction services in Victoria) we meet monthly for 2hrs = 12 x per year (we also include special event like lunches & excursions) 4 x per year.

The Fuse Network HRPW Membership has grown - starting out with 6 members, we are now sitting at 19 HRPW members accessing FN and 24 HRPWs on our mailing list.

We are now able to provide external discipline specific supervision, which is so exciting for us. Amelia & Nadia are now qualified to provide supervision. As soon as we had finished our Support & Supervision Framework, 5 x HRPW started accessing monthly supervision.

Many more HRPW have expressed the need and want for supervision, but we don't have the capacity atm, especially while we are developing other important strategic documents as a part of LLEW Development Partnership.

We have had a couple of interstate requests, for this same supervision but our focus is Victoria, this is a fee for service model.

The Victorian Harm Reduction Peer Workforce Strategy

Fuse Initiatives took the opportunity to launch the Victorian Harm Reduction Peer Workforce Strategy at the VAADA conference 2023, whilst running a workshop

on what cultural safety for HRPW should look like in the workplace as well as the values and principles of harm reduction peer work itself.

End of partnering on Fuse Initiative with APSU

It is the end of an era, we want to thank APSU for being our partners, helping support the progression of the harm reduction peer worker (living experience) perspective, we want to say a big thank you. This is the end of a project partnership but not the end, we now all have a better understanding of perspectives, that follows the continuum of drug use and a much-strengthened relationship with APSU & SHARC into the future

LLEW Development

The Victorian Mental Health Royal Commission recommendations announced the need for total system reform, there were 40 + recommendations. At the center of these recommendations there was a call for lived and living experience workers to be at the center of creating a whole of systems reform. The LLEW (lived & living experience workforce) Development Partnership Project funded the development of lived and living experience workforces; these were the mental health consumers, AOD recovery, family & carer and harm reduction peer workforces. This created new opportunities for Fuse Initiatives: new staff and new work to help build and sustain the living experience/harm reduction peer workforce.

147

SUPPORTIVE
INTERVENTIONS
for HRPW in
2023

19

MEMBERS TO DATE

12

MEETINGS P22-23FY

of **20+**

Harm Reduction
Peer Workers
from

7+ VIC workplaces

VALUES & PRINCIPLES OF HARM REDUCTION PEER WORK

1. OUR LIVING EXPERIENCE IS OUR EXPERTISE

2. WE SHARE SIMILARITIES IN OUR EXPERIENCES, WHILE RESPECTING AND LEARNING FROM OUR DIFFERENCES

3. NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US

4. WE ARE COMMITTED HARM REDUCTIONISTS

6. WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENHANCING THE HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WHO USE/INJECT DRUGS

5. PEOPLE SHOULD BE EMPOWERED TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION

7. WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE ONGOING GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY

8. WE WORK WITH EMPATHY AND COMPASSION TO BUILD MUTUALLY EMPOWERING RELATIONSHIPS FREE FROM JUDGEMENT

PRINCIPLES OF HARM REDUCTION PEER WORK

INGREDIENTS: (01) We represent a highly stigmatised and criminalised community, (02) We want to ensure our voices are heard and valued as an essential workforce, (03) We have a diversity of perspectives and experiences, (04) Substance use is not fixed, people use different drugs in different ways at different times and is not always problematic, (05) We are connected to our community and accepted as peers, (06) We work to dismantle the barriers faced by parents who use/inject drugs to receive equitable health care, (07) We work towards equitable access to services for all genders and identities, (08) As peer workers we are able to engage hidden communities that services do not typically reach

Contains Common Sense and Empathy.

Fuse Initiatives cont'd.

Fuse HRPW Special Issue of WHACK for HR23

1000 Harm reduction peer worker (HRPW) Special Edition WHACK magazines went into every delegate conference bag at HR23-the International Harm Reduction Conference held in Melbourne in 2023.

We commissioned a local artist and HRPW to create an A3 poster of our Values & Principles of Peer Work and inserted into EVERY single WHACK magazine that went into the 1000 delegate bags at HR23. What an awesome way to showcase peer workers and the work that we do and what drives us to keep doing it. Show what we DUO's mean by real peer leadership; show the varying roles, from frontline work with our communities, peers in management, research, and governmental roles.

Whilst in Europe, we interviewed HRPW from all over the UK and the EU while trying to visit Safe Consumption Sites (if available) in each city we stopped in.

While in Barcelona, Spain we made it a point to check out Metzineres, the only peer led female/trans/nonbinary only drug consumption room, it was so awesome, it had such a welcoming vibe, female focused harm reduction services, yes please!!! If you want to find out more about Metzineres or any of the interviews or articles, read WHACK's peer worker special edition.

We are currently in the process of developing:

- **Discipline Specific Framework for HRPW** in partnership with the other LLE (lived & living experience) workforces
- **Bank of Best Practice Position Descriptions** for HRPWs employed by mainstream organisations.
- **Developing and delivering a training curriculum for HRPWs** following the employment of a Living Experience Peer Educator.
- Funding was also provided to pay for the participation for HRPWs to engaged in the



development of these projects and across the workforces to provide their living experience and harm reduction expertise/perspectives through a process of peer-led meaningful involvement.

- Fuse Network was funded to continue providing support and supervision to HRPWs. Monthly meetings provide HRPWs opportunity to connect with their community of peers and share their experiences, both their successes and challenges, within a supportive and safe environment.

DanceWize

The DanceWize Staff:

There have been multiple changes to staff this year as ongoing funding and resourcing issues continue to impact one of our most popular programs. Bee Hayes the DanceWize Coordinator, transferred to the PAMS team with Nick Wallis taking over as DW program coordinator. Alexand Anketell remained as program officer and Liam Troon was engaged casually throughout the festival season as a Program Support Officer.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) Service:

Mae Vincent was engaged for ~1 day per week as the GBV Service Manager, which works directly alongside the DanceWize service at events.

Casual Positions:

Tate Bourke and Jackson McLean were occasionally engaged as casual project officers for specific events.

24 (^{^32%})
EVENTS SERVICED
10 of which were Multi-Day
Events = 2-6 days on site
OVER A TOTAL OF
67 days

*Unfortunately, 30% of Booking Enquiries are necessarily DECLINED due to a lack of harm reduction resourcing/funding & a mix of cancelled festivals, or bookings cancelled by the event contact.

DanceWize Event Care Service Provision:

The DanceWize team provided service at **24 events during the 2022-23 period**, **10 of which were multiple-day events around regional Victoria.**

A 32% increase on the previous FY.

DanceWize operated two or more simultaneous Peer Care Services in 6 instances during that period.

Peers Cared For At Events:

DW KPEs cared for a total of **558 Persons In Care** (PIC).

Labor Day weekend (**March 10-13 2023**) was our busiest weekend.

This weekend DW had **three simultaneous deployments:**

to Esoteric Festival 4 days open,
approx 7K Attendees @Donald VIC
(275km /3hr17min drive)

to Pitch Music & Arts 4 days open,
approx 15K attendees @Moyston VIC
(218km/ 2hr51min)

and to Karnival single day
20k Attendees @ Flemington RC,
Melbourne

**Largest number of Person(s)
In Care (PIC) per event:**

1. Pitch @ 187 PIC
2. Esoteric @ 112 PIC

**Our longest average
duration of care:**

1. The Town - 2x 6+ hour
care periods of PIC
2. Esoteric festival.



“We provided peer-based AOD harm reduction education, basic supplies such as water, sunscreen, band aids, sanitary products and electrolytes to approximately 7.6k patrons and more intensive personal support and 1-on-1 care was provided for over 550 people who use drugs at music festivals every year, creating a safer, non-judgmental environment that respects people and helps alleviate pressure on medical services, ambulance & hospitals”



DanceWize®



2022-23 Annual Report

DanceWize cont'd.

Key Peer Educators:

During the 2022-23 season, the DanceWize team inducted 68 new team members and conducted our suite of training sessions during fortnightly meetings.

The 2022-23 festival season had some major challenges and subsequent changes.

It was our first full festival season post-pandemic, and volunteer retention was a high priority, having lost many experienced team members and having lower engagement overall. Internal change-overs during November of 2022 combined with this new intake training schedule and updated training topics led to some event inquiries being declined due to unclear resourcing availability.

Challenges and lessons over this festival season were all collected and lessons enacted or plans built for future change.

The New Office, Meeting/Training Spaces & DW Storage Area:

HRVic also moved offices during this time, providing an opportunity for DanceWize to clear and consolidate our kit and inventory ; from the previous 2x off site storage units and off site meeting rooms, to build a new storage area (and laundry!) as well as finally having on sight training/workshop and meeting spaces that will fit all our enthusiastic DW KPES- at the new Brunswick offices.

Though there were many challenges that took away from time to progress with program-specific updates and upgrades, those tapered off as the 22-23 season went on, and some things were able to be implemented, such as new administrative recording and reporting systems and fixes to the ways that data capture occurs within the program.

I expect the 2023-24 festival season will be a much more settled one, where some of the changes and updates can be fully tested and implemented, and some of the bigger plans can begin to take their solid, smaller steps.





68

NEW

KEY PEER EDUCATORS
TRAINED

19

TRAINING MODULES
& PROFICIENCIES
AVAILABLE TO KPES



Treasurer Report

This is my second year as Treasurer of Harm Reduction Victoria (HRVic), after being elected as a Board Member in 2021.

Dr Chooi Beh - Chartered Accountant conducted the audit for financial year 2023. He delivered a satisfactory report with no concerns raised regarding organisational management of finances. HRVic is able to pay all of its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This year, HRVic implemented a new budgeting technique which assisted in distinguishing between certain organisational and program income and expenditure. This is noted as "Levy Income" and "Levy Expense" on the Detailed Management Profit & Loss Accounts page of the audited financials in equivalent amounts of \$844,780. This technique is strictly for accounting and internal purposes and is not indicative of actual additional income or expenses.

HRVic has had a sound financial year with a deficit of \$48,247. The most significant expenses were Employee Expenses (salaries & on-costs) of \$1,423,398. In addition to these expenses, we see expenditure on Volunteer Reimbursements of \$57,284, which is an indicator of HRVic's engagement with and valuing of the community. Lastly, there was \$63,913 spent on Events & Programs, further reflecting HRVic's involvement in & support of our community.

This year, HRVic received \$1,416,807 from the Victorian State Government (VSG) in the form of government grants. In addition to this, the Grant in Advance (GIA) income of \$860,342 is primarily made up of VSG grants from previous years that were permitted to be held over and expended this fiscal year.

We also received smaller but still significant pieces of income for various fee-for-service and other projects.

We thank the VSG as well as the Burnet Institute & DanceWize event promoters in particular for their support.

Accumulated Funds remain steady at \$806,067 for the year.

In summary, it has been another successful year for HRVic, and I would like to thank the HRVic staff and Board as well as our accounts consultants for their support and assistance throughout the year.

Peter Higgs
Treasurer,
Harm Reduction Victoria



Harm Reduction Victoria
(Reg. No: A14792P)

CSB Accountants, Melbourne

**HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)**

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Financial Report

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC. (REG. NO: A14792P)

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<u>Revenue From Ordinary Activities:</u>			
Service grant-- DHHS	3	1,416,807	1,547,368
Levy income		844,780	232,347
Dosing Fee Income		1,321	4,753
Donations received		50	427
Gia income		860,342	40,000
DW Promotor income		54,825	78,124
Other project income		43,100	8,041
PABN income PAMS		11,000	11,000
Sublet income		45,738	-
Miscellaneous income		68,631	89,678
Interest received		2,187	8,946
		<u>3,348,781</u>	<u>2,020,684</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Depreciation and amortization		(76,124)	(13,373)
Education and awareness programs		(63,913)	(5,019)
Other expenses from ordinary activities	4	<u>(3,256,991)</u>	<u>(1,856,912)</u>
		(3,397,028)	(1,875,304)
Operating surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities before income tax expense		(48,247)	145,380
Income tax expense	5	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities after income tax expense		(48,247)	145,380
Accumulated funds at beginning of year		854,314	708,934
Adjusted general reserve to accumulated funds		-	-
Accumulated funds at end of year		<u>806,067</u>	<u>854,314</u>

The Income Statement is to be read in conjunction with the notes to and forming part of the financial report.

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
		\$	\$
<u>EQUITY</u>			
Accumulated funds		806,067	854,314
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>806,067</u>	<u>854,314</u>
<u>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			
Motor vehicle finance liabilities	9	-	-
		<u>806,067</u>	<u>854,314</u>
Represented by:			
		\$	\$
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Cash assets	6	927,791	2,261,905
Term deposit		1,000,000	-
Pledges receivable		76,306	8,749
Other current assets	7	<u>67,322</u>	<u>106,903</u>
		<u>2,071,419</u>	<u>2,377,557</u>
<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Plant and equipment	8	<u>325,638</u>	<u>38,766</u>
		325,638	38,766
Total Assets		<u>2,397,057</u>	<u>2,416,323</u>
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			
Trade and other payables		1,320,096	1,315,910
Motor vehicle finance liabilities	9	-	-
GST payable		47,481	90,569
Provisions	10	<u>223,413</u>	<u>155,530</u>
		<u>1,590,990</u>	<u>1,562,009</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>806,067</u>	<u>854,314</u>

The Balance Sheet is to be read in conjunction with the notes to and forming part of the financial report.

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	\$	\$
Accumulated funds at the beginning of year	854,314	708,934
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	<u>(48,247)</u>	<u>145,380</u>
Accumulated funds at end of the year	<u>806,067</u>	<u>854,314</u>
TOTAL EQUITY	<u><u>806,067</u></u>	<u><u>854,314</u></u>

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
		\$	\$
<u>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</u>			
Receipts from grants, members & other activities		3,318,618	2,197,312
Interest received		2,187	8,946
Payments to suppliers & employees		<u>(3,291,923)</u>	<u>(1,127,863)</u>
Net cash flow from operating activities		28,882	1,078,395
<u>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</u>			
(Increase)/ Decrease in term deposit		(1,000,000)	-
Payment for purchase of plant & equipment		<u>(362,996)</u>	<u>(16,236)</u>
Net cash flow from investing activities		(1,362,996)	(16,236)
<u>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</u>			
Payment of finance borrowing		<u>-</u>	<u>(8,621)</u>
Net cash flow from financing activities		-	(8,621)
Cash held at the beginning of the year		<u>2,261,905</u>	<u>1,208,367</u>
Cash held at the end of the year	6	<u><u>927,791</u></u>	<u><u>2,261,905</u></u>

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2023

1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

a) Basis of Accounting:

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report (reduced disclosure) prepared in accordance with *Australian Accounting Standards* for the members of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. using the accrual basis of accounting, and to enable compliance with the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act* (2012).

The significant accounting policies are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements

AASB 107: Cash Flow Statements

AASB 108: Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors

AASB 1048: Interpretation and Application of Standards

The accounts have been prepared using historical costs and do not take into account changing money values.

b) Plant and Equipment

The plant and equipment are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is calculated to write off the asset over its useful life using the diminishing method and the straight-line method. The rates used for the year were 25% - 66.6% p.a.

c) Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, reviews are undertaken by management on the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

d) Income Tax

The economic entity, Harm Reduction Victoria Inc., is registered as an Income Tax Exempt organization under Subdivision 50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act*.

e) **Payables**

The payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided prior to the financial year end, and which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are paid in accordance with existing trading terms.

f) **Employee Provisions**

Provision is made for the employee entitlements. Employee entitlements are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly for which the employees have rendered their services, including wages, salaries and sick leave. Provision is also made for the employees' long service leave and annual leave entitlements.

g) **Cash Assets**

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash assets include cash on hand and at call deposits with banks or financial institutions, and investments in money market instruments maturing within two months, net of bank overdrafts.

h) **Revenue Recognition**

Revenue is recognised in accordance with AASB118. In general, revenue is recognised where it can be reliably measured, in the period to which it relates.

i) **Rounding**

In this report, all the amounts have been rounded to the nearest dollar, unless otherwise stated.

j) **Comparative Figures**

Where necessary, the previous year's figures have been re-classified to facilitate comparison.

k) **GST**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST except where the amount of GST is not recoverable, in which case it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or part of an item of expense or revenue. GST receivable from and payable to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is included in the Balance Sheet. The GST component of a receipt or payment is recognised on a gross basis in the statement of cash flows in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB107.

2. **PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES**

Harm Reduction Victoria Inc., which is a prescribed body and classified as Tier 3 under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (2012)*, is principally engaged in the provision of health education and awareness services relating to intravenous drug use and AIDS to the community.

The economic entity, Harm Reduction Victoria Inc., is registered with the Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

3. **GOVERNMENT GRANTS**

During the year the economic entity received government assistance and grants totalling \$1,416,807 (2022 - \$1,547,368). The amounts are for specific purposes and are to be expended in accordance with the terms of the grants. Amounts that are committed but have not been expended at balance sheet date are treated and recorded as a liability.

4. **OTHER EXPENSES FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES**

The other expenses from ordinary activities include the following items:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	\$	\$
Rent – premises and halls	145,326	60,186
Salaries and on-costs	1,423,398	1,097,912
Consultancy	184,133	142,321

5. **INCOME TAX RELATING TO ORDINARY ACTIVITIES**

No income tax is provided as the economic entity is income tax exempt.

6. **CASH**

(a) Cash Assets:

	\$	\$
Petty cash	-	16,552
Cash at bank and finance institutions	<u>927,791</u>	<u>2,245,353</u>
	<u>927,791</u>	<u>2,261,905</u>

(b) Reconciliation of Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:

	\$	\$
Surplus/(deficit) from operating activities	(48,247)	145,380
Add/(Less) Non-cash Items:		
Depreciation and amortization	76,124	13,373
Write-offs	-	-
Provision for staff entitlements	<u>67,885</u>	<u>(11,537)</u>
	<u>95,762</u>	<u>147,216</u>

Changes in Assets and Liabilities:

Decrease/ (increase) in trade and other receivables	(27,976)	189,224
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accrued expenses	<u>56,858</u>	<u>741,955</u>
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATIONS	<u>28,882</u>	<u>1,078,395</u>

7. **OTHER CURRENT ASSETS**

Other current assets include the following item:

	\$	\$
Prepayment and other receivables	67,322	106,903

8. **PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

	\$	\$
Lease holding improvement	-	-
Addition - At Cost	349,841	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(55,534)</u>	-
	<u>294,307</u>	-
 Motor vehicles	86,844	86,844
Disposal/Written-off	(55,862)	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(22,992)	(74,489)
Accumulated depreciation for disposal	<u>(638)</u>	-
	<u>7,352</u>	<u>12,355</u>
 Office Equipment	91,248	91,248
Disposal/Written-off	(33,988)	-
Addition	13,155	21,815
Less: Accumulated depreciation	<u>(46,436)</u>	<u>(86,652)</u>
	<u>23,979</u>	<u>26,411</u>
 Net Book Value	<u>325,638</u>	<u>38,766</u>

9. **MOTOR VEHICLE FINANCE LIABILITIES**

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	\$	\$
Amount due – not later than 1 year	-	-
– later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

10. **PROVISIONS**

	\$	\$
Staff entitlements	223,413	155,530

11. **AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION**

Amounts received or due and receivable by the auditor for:

	\$	\$
Auditing of the accounts	2,200	2,000

12. **ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY**

The economic entity receives assistance and grants from the State government. The grants are generally made for specific purposes and are to be expended within the terms.

13. **CONTINGENT ASSET/LIABILITY**

At the date of this report, management is not aware of any contingent liability or claim that is likely to become enforceable within the period of twelve months after the end of the financial year.

14. **FINANCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT**

(a) Interest Rate Risk

The economic entity has no material exposure to interest rate risk on its financial instruments.

(b) Credit Risk Exposure

The economic entity's maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Balance Sheet.

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)

STATEMENT BY BOARD MEMBERS

The Board has determined that Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. is not a reporting entity, and therefore there is no requirement to apply all the Australian Accounting Standards. The Board Members have determined that this general purpose financial report (reduced disclosure) should be prepared in accordance with the *Australian Accounting Standards* and the accounting policies to the extent outlined in Note 1 to the Financial Statements.

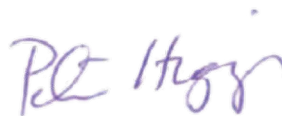
In the opinion of the Board of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc.:

- (a) the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30th June 2023 and of the performance as represented by the results of its operations, and the cash flows for the financial year ended on that date.
- (b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the economic entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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



Robyn Dwyer
President



Peter Higgs
Treasurer

Dated at Melbourne: 29 November 2023

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(Reg No. A147921P)**

Opinion

We have audited the general purpose financial report (reduced disclosure) of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30th June 2023, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. is in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (2012)*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the entity's financial position as at 30th June 2023, its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent outlined in Note 1 of the Notes to the Financial Statements, and the Regulations.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Other Information

The Board members and management of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Statement By the Board Members, which we obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed on the other information that we obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have, however, nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Board and Management for the Financial Report

The members of the Board and management are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act* (2012), and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Board and management are responsible for assessing the ability of Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Board either intend to liquidate Harm Reduction Victoria Inc. or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

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

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we have exercised professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit.

CSB Accountants



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Dr Chooi S. Beh, CA

Dated at Melbourne:

29th November 2023

HARM REDUCTION VICTORIA INC.
(REG. NO: A14792P)

DETAILED MANAGEMENT PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	\$	\$
<u>INCOME</u>		
Service grant-- DHHS	1,416,807	1,547,368
Levy income	844,780	232,347
Donations received	50	427
Dosing fee income	1,321	4,753
Gia income	860,342	40,000
Promotor income	54,825	78,124
Project income	43,100	8,041
Reporting Fee Income-PABN incomes PAMS	11,000	11,000
Sublet income	45,738	-
Miscellaneous income	68,631	89,678
Interest received	2,187	8,946
	<u>3,348,781</u>	<u>2,020,684</u>
<u>OPERATING EXPENSES</u>		
Accounting fee	25,698	24,258
Advertising and promotion	18,279	1,554
Levy expenses	844,780	232,347
Asset purchased	67,749	17,273
Audit fee	2,200	2,000
Bad debt	-	3,650
Bank charges	199	196
Cleaning and supplies	13,192	5,842
Computer expenses	75,051	74,486
Consultancy	184,133	142,321
Council rates	7,769	7,970
Client support consumables	8,998	20,644
Depreciation and amortization	76,124	13,373
Events and programs	63,913	5,019
Equipment hire and purchase	2,580	2,580
Human resources and governance	2,657	5,477
Insurance	19,051	3,804
Interest expense	1,210	90
Legal and consultancy fees	2,368	2,800
Meeting expense	3,531	857
Motor vehicle expenses	24,368	18,183
Outreach support	6,221	6,490
Postage and courier	8,271	7,383
Provision for staff entitlements	67,885	(11,537)
Publications	18,074	17,730
Rent	145,326	60,186
Repair and maintenance	40,618	3,967
Salary and on-costs	1,423,398	1,097,912
Staff training	34,829	18,596
Security and inspection	3,379	2,577
Staff amenities	6,972	8,080
Stationery, printing and office supplies	4,338	3,734
Subscriptions and membership	3,441	3,311
Telephone and internet expenses	27,909	13,346
Travel and accommodation expenses	72,791	22,050
Utilities expense	8,369	5,168
Volunteer cost	1,130	-
Volunteer reimbursements	57,284	21,342
Volunteer meeting cost	4,051	1,543
Workers' compensation	18,892	8,702
	<u>3,397,028</u>	<u>1,875,304</u>
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) For The Year	<u>(48,247)</u>	<u>145,380</u>



299-305 Victoria Street
Brunswick, VIC 3056
E: info@hrvic.org.au
website: www.hrvic.org.au

