



ANNA

As a Registered Nurse, one of the biggest challenges during COVID has been the continual redefinition of our role, picking up responsibilities that had never been ours before. Where families and friends had once been able to be by a loved ones' side through trauma, pain, and isolation - we had become the bridge of connection, the voices that passed on messages of hope. Lockdown meant that I was isolated from the beautiful LGBTQ+ people who gave me strength and courage to be who I am. The highlight in this is that it brought into question what kind of Nurse I am, and how can I channel my experience to help others - to create a workplace that promotes greater inclusion, a safe space where LGBTQ+ people are heard, accepted and see other LGBTQ+ people as rolemodels within their community.



stories from our community

THORNEHARBOUR HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021





CHARLOTTE

Oy vey, lockdown has been the strangest thing I've ever experienced. I never thought spending my nights at home, ordering takeaways every night would be considered "supporting local business." Before lockdown, it was "lazy" and "why not just cook?" and "you've ordered how many servings of dumplings?!" Some may have called it depression, but I called it a culinary adventure. Lockdown was hard for everybody. The idea that my best mates and I couldn't just meet any more and be there for each other was heartbreaking. Sure, we called each other - but nothing could replace the experience of starting off with a few coffees in a cafe and "accidentally" staying until happy hour kicked in. I think the hardest part was watching the world suffer, and not being able to help. On a lighter note, I got a cat.



stories from our community



4

PRESIDENT & CEO'S REPORT

6

VOLUNTEERING DURING LOCKDOWN

8

HIV & AIDS: 40 YEARS ON

10

2020 - 2021 MILESTONES

12

20 STORIES FROM THORNE HARBOUR HEALTH

20

AWARDS

22

STATEMENT OF APOLOGY

24

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

26

POLICY & ADVOCACY

27

FINANCIAL REPORT

SELFIE-SUSTAINING!

This year has been another challenging one for all LGBTI Victorians. We went into our sixth lockdown and Victoria held the global record for the population experiencing the longest period of restrictions in the world - a distinction no one wanted.

This year we asked our extraordinary volunteers to perform a simple task for the production of the Annual Report. We asked them to take a selfie and tell us what it has been like being in and coming out of lockdown, and how COVID has impacted their lives over the last year.

Some stories are funny, some are scary, and many are inspirational.

Once again our community has demonstrated, through creativity, resilience, determination, strength and courage that we can always beat adversity and meet the challenges we face - together.



TEGAN

During lockdown we were able to sneak out on a two-week trip to Darwin - legally of course. We're from Gippsland (Gunaikurnai land). We rented a van and did a road trip across Kakadu, Katherine and Litchfield. There was a brief moment when I felt free from the virus then BAM - lockdown! We got stuck in Katherine for a week, free camping on the side of the road with so much uncertainty. After two flight cancellations, we ended up getting back to Victoria and I developed a rare mosquito virus which spiralled into some mental health concerns. These mental challenges were very new to me, but I'm on the other side now and taking it day by day. They say some trips are life- changing, this one definitely was. Very grateful for the support systems I have and I'm excited to get back out into the community and reconnect.



stories from our community

PRESIDENT & CEO'S REPORT

For a year of lockdowns and limitations, this year has been one of significant movement for Thorne Harbour Health. We've moved, we've expanded, and in many ways, we've advanced the health and wellbeing of our LGBTIQ communities and people living with HIV.

Despite the pandemic, our committed staff and volunteers have continued to provide services to the community with many of our services expanding during lockdowns. We need to acknowledge the strength and fortitude shown by our staff and volunteers in a difficult year, in ensuring that the needs of our communities are being met.

ON THE MOVE

After the sale of the Peter Knight Centre in South Yarra and the temporary relocation to St Kilda Road, we finally moved into our new home at 200 Hoddle Street, a return to the northside of the Yarra after more than three decades. Our new home in Abbotsford has us positioned just a stone's throw from where the organisation was founded back in 1983. The new address is now shared by our PRONTO! peer-led testing clinic and Equinox gender diverse health centre. Our opening event provided us with an opportunity to welcome the community to our new home as well as showcase our ever-expanding portfolio of work.

Further afield, Thorne Harbour Country celebrated five years of supporting our regional communities with a move around the corner to 58 Mundy Street in Bendigo. The new location allows us to expand our offering and create a regional hub for LGBTIQ communities and people living with HIV.

South of the Yarra, the long-awaited opening of the Victorian Pride Centre means we have a new home for our Centre Clinic and a new location to offer family violence services, in addition to alcohol and other drug services.

2022 will see more changes as, with members consent, we embark on further structural change that will establish Thorne Harbour's place as critical to Victoria's health infrastructure and help us achieve our Vision and Mission.

REACHING FURTHER

While our commitment to expanding the reach and impact of our programs is not new, this year has seen promising growth in several areas. Our health promotion campaigns were reimagined with *Wherever Sex Happens* crossing the border to South Australia and *The Drama Downunder* revisiting its 'seasons' campaign with a diverse cast of community models, including the first trans model in the campaign's history.

The past year has seen us release more content translated into other languages than ever before. With resources translated into Thai, Spanish, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Tagalog, and simplified Chinese - we're continuing to



THE VICTORIAN PRIDE CENTRE OPENED THIS YEAR. THE CENTRE IS THE NEW HOME OF THORNE HARBOUR HEALTH'S CENTRE CLINIC AND A NEW LOCATION FOR OUR FAMILY VIOLENCE, AND ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG SERVICES.

look at ways we can make vital health information more accessible to our overseas-born community members. Moreover, we've continued to celebrate the rich cultural diversity they bring with projects such as *The Bent Spoon*. The culinary web series hosted by Miss Katalyna, has now featured the personal stories of over a dozen people with cultural connections spanning across the globe.

Meanwhile, we've also worked to continue reconciliation with our First Nations communities. Our *Statement of Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* acknowledges the longstanding injustice experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and affirms our commitment to working in solidarity with them into the future. The full statement can be found on page 22.

At a time when social connection was in short supply, our Women's Health Project has hosted an incredible number of online workshops and events to bring LGBTIQ+ women together and address their health needs. This momentum doesn't show any signs of slowing with additional health promotion campaigns, peer workshops, and a new strategic plan now in place.

But the women's project wasn't the only part of the organisation to embrace the digital space. Across the organisation, staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to transition many of our face-to-face interactions for online engagement. Community forums, peer education,

support groups, and major events took on new life in the virtual space.

Our trans and gender diverse communities have benefited from being able to connect through a suite of peer education workshops such as *PACE*, *NOVUS* and *RISE* as well as *ADMIN* - our bi-weekly support group for transgender, non-binary and gender diverse people looking to better manage their alcohol and other drug use.

WORLD AIDS DAY

World AIDS Day looked very different last year. We developed a World AIDS Day app in the absence of our much-loved street appeal, and we produced the Remembrance Ceremony for online broadcast for the first time.

While face-to-face experiences are no less desirable, going virtual has meant those in the community who previously faced geographic or accessibility barriers have been able to take a more active role.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

For all our efforts to support the health and wellbeing of the communities we serve, we need to see progress in the systems and societies in which we exist if we're to ever really see our vision become a reality. Thankfully, this year hasn't been without progress.

Working closely with the Brave Network, SOGICE Survivors, Equality Australia, Victorian Pride Lobby and a number of survivors of 'conversion' practices, we worked together to advocate for the successful passing of Victoria's *Change and Suppression (Conversion) Practices*

Prohibition Act 2021, legislation aimed at preventing the traumatic and harmful practices seeking to change one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

We've also seen progress in several Victorian peak bodies with the Embracing Equality Charter. The collective action by LGBTIQ allies has seen the initial seven signatories expanded to include dozens of organisations pledging to embrace equality and work to end the discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ people in Victoria.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen progress. With the introduction of vaccinations, we've worked to ensure our communities are equipped with evidence-based health information. We've collaborated with clinicians and medical specialists to address vaccine hesitancy and the unique concerns of people living with HIV as well as our trans and gender diverse communities.

So while the past year may have brought waves of lockdowns into our lives, we've persevered, we've survived, and at times we've even thrived. We may not have been able to gather for Pride festivals or dance parties, but we adapted to stay connected, honour our community's legacy, and take collective action. It hasn't been easy, but we've made it through life in lockdown.

Simon Ruth, CEO



BEREN

My thoughts go out to those who have lost someone they love during lockdown. To the workforce communities that have supported us - thank you. When COVID started, emergency support opportunities arose for me to work - refining my skills within high-risk environments implementing protections with highly professional staff. It was an invigoratingly positive experience. Once I returned to my substantive role I developed a new initiative called *GenSHED*, to connect peers across the Victorian Public Service with local meet-ups, discussions and resources, linking reputable peer support groups (like Thorne Harbour), while raising awareness for cultural inclusion of Intersex, Trans and Gender diversity. It was an effort to combat the risks to my peers facing isolation and/or challenging homelife situations during lockdown. I found this connected me to new people, I might never otherwise have met.



stories from our community

VOLUNTEERING DURING LOCKDOWN

Volunteers have always been relied upon to strengthen our services and continue to be the foundation of our organisation. Although many of our volunteers were experiencing the adversity that comes with lockdown, they continued to come forward in record numbers and often at short notice to help out.

Due to successive lockdowns, volunteering at Thorne Harbour was turned upside down and has looked a little different the past year.

ADAPTING CREATIVELY

Early on many volunteers responded in new and creative ways. We held workshops to construct reusable face masks and later production lines to sort and pack government-issued face masks to clients and community members. We established a network of volunteer drivers, pantry hands and coordinators who helped ensure vulnerable clients and community members had access to essential items, which reduced the need for them to visit potentially high-risk settings.

NEIL'S STORY

Neil was one of those volunteers who joined the Rainbow Connection peer support team which, extended its remit to respond to people experiencing social isolation as a result of continued lockdowns. Neil witnessed his volunteering had more impact during this time and felt his roles had become more meaningful because of what he was able to do.

"I was struck by what I saw, mainly loneliness, in particular one client who hadn't seen anyone except for me in over two weeks. I wanted to do more, as it felt cold just dropping food at the front door but I'm glad we could do that at the least".

COVID RECEPTION

One of the volunteer roles that binds the organisation is our front of house reception team. Many of our volunteers in essential roles returned before staff to our newly opened head office at 200 Hoddle Street. For the majority of lockdown our clinical services such as Centre Clinic, Equinox and Pronto were open as essential services. Reception volunteers provided support to clients accessing our sites, the skeleton staff onsite and the extended staff working remotely.

HOLLY'S STORY

Starting as a World AIDS Day volunteer, Holly remembers moving to the reception role at a time of stop-start reopening. They reflect on what it meant to be a link between queer communities and support. "It was just so good to have a reason to leave the house and something I looked forward to. I think it's very validating to have that recognition, that volunteer work is part of essential service delivery".



CLARE

"I found it a really good way for me to connect with community. One of the things I really loved was learning more about First Nation queer mobs through the Yarning series that Peter Waples-Crow hosted.

I even lined up a student placement for my study after listening to the Transcripts series on TGD research!"



ABDURAHMAN

"It was powerful to be able to provide comfort to people who were seeking intimacy during lockdown but were concerned about the implications. I found it useful to talk about bubble buddies as a way of reducing people's risk of acquiring COVID and people often said they didn't feel they could have these conversations with friends for fear of judgement."

APPROACH

One volunteer function that was already operating online was our AppReach team which forms part of our Outreach work in the Health Promotion program. These roles historically provided online support to help people who have questions about testing, HIV and STIs. Since the emergence of COVID we have been communicating information about the risk of acquiring COVID from sex. Our AppReach team provided an important link to information that was not being widely talked about in mainstream media.

ABDURAHMAN'S STORY

Abdurahman has been an AppReach volunteer since Victoria first entered lockdowns, and recounts, "It was powerful to be able to provide comfort to people who were seeking intimacy during lockdown but were concerned about the implications. I found it useful to talk about bubble buddies as a way of reducing

people's risk of acquiring COVID and people often said they didn't feel they could have these conversations with friends for fear of judgement."

ONLINE EVENTS

As our events moved online, so did our volunteers. Volunteers who had previously assisted at physical events were now helping administer Zoom waiting rooms, moderate the chat and ensure technical glitches were kept to a minimum. Suddenly, online events powered by volunteers were being turned around in record time as we responded to emerging community needs.

CLARE'S STORY

Clare joined a newly established transcription role, which ensured we had accurate captioning for all of our newly produced online events. This was particularly important to Clare as she has a close friend who is deaf and relies on these features. Being a student of public

health, Clare found it useful to be across the topics that were featured, especially in our health promotion series. "I found it a really good way for me to connect with the community. One of the things I really loved was learning more about First Nation queer mobs through the Yarning series that Peter Waples-Crow hosted. I even lined up a student placement for my study after listening to the Transcripts series on TGD research!"

When considering what she's taken away from volunteering during lockdown Clare says, "I can do more than I thought I could and as a result, I'm more resilient. Because I am very passionate about the work that Thorne Harbour does for our community it's something I want to support."



BEN

Life in lockdown has had its good and bad moments. As a final year law student, I've had to adjust my approach to my studies and acclimate to remote learning. That has been incredibly challenging. Countless Zoom meetings, pre-recorded lectures and few opportunities for collaboration and socialising have made life difficult for me and other students. However, despite working remotely, I've been able to help our community in my capacity as a Paralegal at the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre. Whether it be calling clients and discussing their legal concerns, or undertaking research or policy work on HIV and the law, it has provided me with a sense of purpose during what has been a very difficult, and at times alienating, lockdown experience. I am so proud of the exceptional remote client service we have provided in lockdown, but I can't wait to return to doing it in-person.



stories from our community

This year marks 40 years since the first cases of HIV and AIDS were identified. As we go into our fifth and hopefully our last decade in the epidemic, we asked a couple of living legends to offer their reflections on how far we've come.

David Menadue is a longstanding advocate for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and one of the first public spokespeople for PLHIV in Australia. Forged in the fires of gay and lesbian liberation, Phil Carswell was the founding President of the Victorian AIDS Action Committee (later Thorne Harbour Health) back in 1983.

Looking back to the very start of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

PHIL: "This almost imperceptible feeling of quiet dread as the very early news in late 1981 started to filter through from friends in the USA. Then when we had our first case in Australia in November 1982, and the fear grew. Then at the Royal Dental Hospital meeting in Melbourne in June 1983, a voice was put to that fear. A month later at the Laird Hotel meeting, the fear started to turn into concrete action. Other strong memories include looking around the table at the first meetings of the Victorian AIDS Action Committee and marvelling at the talent, skill, and bravery shown by everyone present."

DAVID: "When articles started appearing in Melbourne's gay press about a 'mysterious gay cancer' in the United States, I was glad that I lived away from such threats. To some degree, we were ignorant of its impacts. The initial caseload was small and even those people affected did not want anyone to know about it. They were in fear of the horrible stigma that was starting to accompany the disease - made worse by sensational media headlines about people with AIDS, like "Die you Deviant" in the Melbourne *Truth* newspaper after a blood donation that infected several babies with HIV in Brisbane was linked to a gay man who had innocently and altruistically donated blood to a blood bank."

PHIL: "Another memory from those early days was the funeral for Peter Knight, founder of VAAC Support, who became one of their first clients. It was the first big AIDS funeral I had ever been to. I remember having to find a quiet place afterwards to bawl my eyes out. It was grief for Peter of course, but also a grieving for what was to come as well as the fact that many of us had worked so hard for decriminalisation (1981) so that a community could come out of the shadows only to find that joy cruelly snatched from all of us."

DAVID: "It's important though to appreciate how ahead of the curve

we were in Australia with some states, including Victoria, setting up AIDS Councils early on to prepare to care for people with the virus but also to prevent people at risk from getting infected."

Have you been surprised at where we are today in the HIV Pandemic?

DAVID: "As someone who has lived with the virus since 1984, I am amazed to still be here. I thank some incredible doctors, nurses and research scientists for contributing to my longevity against the odds. I pinch myself sometimes to think that now I can't transmit the virus to my partner, that people with HIV can live relatively normal lifespans in many cases, and that some (but not all) of the stigma surrounding HIV has reduced as the general community learns that we are absolutely no health threat to them. It would be great to have a vaccine against HIV, but HIV antivirals are very effective with minimal side effects for most people. And HIV-negative people can access PrEP in most parts of the country. It is a lot of progress, if a long time coming, over those 40 years."

PHIL: "To be honest, there were times when I wondered if the 'gay community' would survive the onslaught of fear, hatred from some, media misinformation, and the growing number of deaths - especially when you went out, say in January, and danced with a good friend, only to go to their funeral in August. I am surprised that we have reached the stage we are at, although there was an awful price to pay to get here. I always make the point of course, that as a rich, First-World nation we have been 'lucky'. It is still a leading cause of death around the world. Yesterday approximately 1,860 people died of AIDS globally. Maybe all the focussed research worldwide on COVID will help us in HIV/AIDS research?"

As the world continues to face the COVID-19 pandemic, what did we learn from the HIV/AIDS pandemic?

DAVID: "Many PLHIV were stunned when a COVID vaccine was found within a year, asking ourselves why has it taken so long for an HIV vaccine? Scientists have explained that HIV is an especially tricky virus that has defied all their efforts to make a vaccine, but we are lucky that today's antivirals are much less toxic than some other early regimens we were asked to take, which, in my case, caused major lifelong muscle wasting and metabolic problems."

PHIL: "One of the many things we were able to do during the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Australia was overturn the traditional role of doctors as 'gods' and consumers as 'ordinary civilians'. Often in the early days, we knew more and were



IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE EPIDEMIC IT WAS NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE MEDIA REPORTING THAT VILIFIED PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV. TODAY THERE IS A POWERFUL SOCIAL MOVEMENT THAT SEEKS TO RIGHT THOSE WRONGS.

more politically experienced than most doctors. We made sure the community voice was heard and that there was a chair at the table for us. Unfortunately, the community voice has not been heard in the COVID response - we have the same parade of politicians offering often conflicting and confusing messages. Where are the voices of our wider community? Plus, HIV/AIDS was also able to maintain bi-partisan support. COVID is dividing the community."

DAVID: "I think the education campaigns about HIV have probably influenced the government's attempts to get people vaccinated. They have wisely avoided the fear-based Grim Reaper campaign approach but arguably have not been as effective as some of the community HIV education campaigns like *The Drama Downunder*. The community engagement factor has not been as effective as it could have been, although vaccination rates are catching up now."

PHIL: "The other thing that the COVID response has reminded me of is the importance of the media to provide sober and accurate information. We may have to live with COVID for a very long time, if not forever. The gay community had to learn the hard way how to adjust our lives around HIV, now the world will have to

adjust their lives to live with COVID."

What do you think is the biggest issue or challenge we still need to overcome in addressing HIV and AIDS?

DAVID: "The biggest challenge from my perspective is the need to ramp up the awareness of and service provision for PLHIV as they age. More than 50 per cent of PLHIV in Australia are over 50. We are discovering that many PLHIV experience ageing conditions sooner than their HIV-negative peers and will be more likely to have a higher number of co-morbidities. This means that people like myself are seeing five or six specialists for our health problems as the virus continues to cause inflammation in our bodies. So ageing PLHIV need care coordination."

PHIL: "The big issue for me is to not forget our history and the simply magnificent response of the gay community. I also want to make sure we all acknowledge that HIV/AIDS is NOT over until it is over around the world. Finally, I want to find a cure for stigma, maybe a pill?"



NIKKI

Like many people, I worked at home this year. While it meant I could spend an extra hour in bed in the mornings, I did find myself getting into a bit of a hole. I love people and I really missed the energy that I get from being with people. Lockdown did bring some new things into my life that have been great. One was sewing: I ran a community arts project in which participants stitched political messages. This initiative kept me connected to others, and feeling as if there was still an outlet for my need to be doing activism. It also gave me an opportunity to learn a new skill. I also went camping for the first time ever and now I'm hooked!



stories from our community





MUHAMMAD

Lockdown proved to be highly distressing for me. It made me feel buried alive - snatched of all possibilities to interact with other people. I missed my school and gym. I'm an international student in Melbourne who never lived alone. I came from an extended joint family background where I always received love and care from my people. And here in Melbourne, I lived with no friends or family. Just before the first lockdown, I suffered from homophobic treatment at my workplace and accessed mental health support. Lockdown added to this stress. I was sharing my place with other people at that time, and it was challenging to maintain my privacy while accessing services. Coming out of lockdown, I've got access to the gym again, and I look forward to accessing face-to-face services.



stories from our community



MUG SHOT OF NEVILLE McQUADE, 18 AND LEWIS STANLEY KEITH, 19, NORTH SYDNEY POLICE STATION, JUNE 1942. SOURCE: JUSTICE & POLICE MUSEUM COLLECTION, SYDNEY LIVING MUSEUMS, 31234

1 Back in Time Online

During lockdown, our Women's Project hosted an incredible number of online events to provide a way for our LGBTIQ communities to come together. In particular, our history events proved popular with over 200 people joining us online. Australian Queer Archives' Graham Willett presented three events beginning with *Before we were us: Australia's queer 19th century*. This session introduced us to the Heritage 100 Project which seeks to identify places and objects of significance to

the LGBTIQ community from as far back as records go to the present day. Then *Kamp as...Australian Queer Life in the Early Twentieth Century* took us through the first decades of the twentieth century. Finally, *Their AIDS Crisis and Ours* commemorated World AIDS Day and the early days of activism which resulted in a model of health policy that saved tens of thousands of lives and saw off an attempt to roll back the queer communities' gains of the previous decade.

2 Walk-in AOD Program

In November 2020, in response to a growing demand for services, the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) team developed the Walk-in AOD Program (WAP). The program allows community members more rapid access to single-session interventions with one of our clinical teams. While waitlists expand the sector, WAP has run weekly - providing clients with a timely service they can access when they are ready to address their AOD use. When restrictions made face-to-face services impossible, WAP went digital, providing phone and zoom based sessions to clients. At this stage, WAP is currently the only digital AOD walk-in service in Victoria.

3 What Works in SA

What Works SA launched June 2021, featuring key community members from South Australia - a first time for the SAMESH program. Each community member is aligned to and promotes a particular HIV prevention strategy:

Blake, a social media influencer and activist, and Ben, a drag queen and host of Adelaide Gay Bingo, promoted the use of PrEP.

Tyson, a prominent Indigenous drag queen, advocated for PEP.

Zac, the founder of TransMasc, also a sexual health activist, and the first transgender leather title holder in South Australia, promoted condom use.

Hayden, an openly HIV positive activist and educator, promoted the message that Undetectable = Untransmissible, U=U.

The campaign could be seen across the Adelaide metropolitan area.



4 SA AIDS Quilts

As part of the SA History Festival, SAMESH curated an exhibition of the South Australian AIDS Memorial Quilts in collaboration with the History Trust of SA. After returning to South Australia, the quilts went to ArtLab, one of Australia's best restoration studios, to undergo conservation. The exhibition marked the first time the quilts were displayed in almost 10 years. Hundreds of people came to visit the exhibition during its two-week run, and a forum was held alongside the exhibition featuring local and national queer historians sharing memories and stories of the lives of those memorialised in the quilt panels.

5 Wherever Sex Happens in SA

In November 2020, our *Wherever Sex Happens* campaign took on new life in Adelaide. Featuring distinctive locations, including the famous Malls Balls, and elements of the Adelaide festival season and Royal Show, this was the first SAMESH campaign to feature conspicuously South Australian spaces. Promoting the contemporary suite of HIV prevention strategies including condoms, PrEP, PEP and undetectable viral load (UVL), the campaign was well-received by local communities. The outdoor campaign ran through summer. Our new Adelaide-specific images can still be seen at whereversexhappens.org.



MONIQUE

Lockdown has meant not being able to socialise with family or friends, and being confined to our homes. It's meant trying to maintain one's sanity. As I was recovering from surgery in February 2020, my grandson was born in March. But I was unable to see him until November as he was also in and out of hospital.

However, lockdown also opened the door for online group meetings and being able to connect with other trans and gender diverse persons in a virtual world. During this time I trained with Thorne Harbour Health and Transgender Victoria as a peer support volunteer.



stories from our community



THE FABULOUS MISS KATALYNA, HOST OF *THE BENT SPOON*



6 Family Violence Services - James

James* experienced years of controlling behaviours from his partner – only he didn't know it. He thought that agreeing to be monitored via phone and social media would strengthen their connection. On a weekend away, James and his partner had an argument where his partner said hurtful things in front of their friends, including threatening to throw him out of the house and deleting contacts from his phone. When James caught up with those friends a week later, they shared their concerns about his safety. James approached Thorne Harbour to gain a greater understanding of his experience and to extricate himself from his relationship. Through the support of the Family Violence team, James was able to get legal advice and support for obtaining an intervention order. James continued to access counselling and case management services, and received a flexible support package to help him rebuild his life.

*Name changed for privacy.

7 We Hear YOUTH

Thorne Harbour Country delivered *We Hear YOUTH*, an innovative and dynamic six-month training and work experience co-design project for a group of diverse young people from across the Loddon area (central-northern regional Victoria). The youth participants reported the project helped improve their confidence, developed their skills across a wide range of competency areas, increased their capacity and work experience history, and contributed to building educational and employment pathways. When asked to capture their experience with a single word, participants used terms such as: "Empowering", "Educational", "Passionate", "Life-changing", "Bonding" and "Non-tokenistic".

Participants have since been supported to set up a new regional consultancy to amplify youth voice and run co-design processes, called *Amplify Youth Voices*.

One participant said, "Being part of this was everything that I was promised. Everything that was said would happen, has...and it was just fun."

8 The Bent Spoon

The Bent Spoon is our online cooking series that aims to connect us all through the joy of food.

Each week, the series showcased a traditional cultural dish from First Nations or multicultural communities from around the world. Hosted by Miss Katalyna, each episode featured a community member who shared how to make a dish from their cultural background as well as a personal interview where they explored issues they had faced being from a multicultural or multi-faith background, and their experiences of intersectionality. With 13 episodes featured across the first two seasons, the web series has had over 75,000 views and counting. *The Bent Spoon* demonstrates the organisation's growing commitment to work with and celebrate our LGBTIQ+ multicultural communities.

9 NDIS - Susan

Susan* transferred her NDIS support to Thorne Harbour Health in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her previous provider had stopped supporting her due to resource problems. Susan needs daily assistance due to movement impairment and an inability to function independently at home. Our NDIS support coordination staff helped her get her plan back on track, unlock unused funding for daily care, and link to therapists to manage pain and function issues. She now receives the supports she needs every day, has reconnected with her friends and family, and is planning a small holiday in 2022.

*Name changed for privacy.

10 RISE Beyond the Binary

Peer education workshops have been delivered online during COVID-19. A workshop that has grown in the virtual space is *RISE* - specifically for non-binary people to share their experiences and connect with others. Peer facilitator Zi Largiader said, "Hearing other's journeys can sometimes be super reaffirming to your own existence and helps to build solidarity. Just having the opportunity to express yourself in a space without judgement where others 'get' you can really help bolster one's sense of identity."

While non-binary and gender diverse participants are regularly a part of Thorne Harbour's other peer education workshops, having a workshop outside of the binary brings a different atmosphere and a unique opportunity to connect.



JESSE

Life in lockdown has been... interesting to say the least. I've learnt so much about myself over the past 18 months; through dealing with pandemic-related worries and managing my triggers, as well as discovering new and dormant passions that helped me get through it. I started playing my ukulele again, picked up writing casually, and had the time to brush up on my rusty, long-forgotten Mandarin Chinese language proficiency. Also thanks to the wonders of technology, I was able to still stay involved in the AppReach program and facilitate a few of our peer education workshops online. My partner and I spent a lot of time exploring all the beautiful nature spots and walking trails within our local 5km radius. Plus, we even got ourselves a little pandemic puppy!



stories from our community

11 Virtual World AIDS Day

COVID-19 restrictions threatened our annual World AIDS Day Remembrance Ceremony to commemorate and celebrate those we have lost over the years to HIV and AIDS. Keeping in line with our community's history of fighting back against deadly viruses, we weren't deterred and instead took to pre-recording our memorial for the first time. After more than two months of planning, filming, and editing assisted by monumental contributions from community volunteers and staff, we were able to embark on a new, digital journey to present the event. Hundreds of people across Victoria and greater Australia were able to tune in live on December 1 to witness the premiere of 2020's World AIDS Day Memorial. In fact, it's still available to stream on Thorne Harbour Health's YouTube channel.

12 Community Support - David

David* became a client of Community Support just before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. He had recently moved into stable housing after many years of homelessness and paying little attention to his health. Throughout the long lockdown, staff organised medical supports for David and made weekly phone calls to check in. A volunteer regularly called for social support while in-person support was suspended. Other Community Support volunteers took him to medical appointments and delivered meals every fortnight. As a result, David has improved his health and well-being despite the stress of the lockdowns. He now receives weekly help from the Thorne Harbour Home Care team to support him at home and build his independence.

*Name changed for privacy.

OUR FLAGSHIP SEXUAL HEALTH CAMPAIGN, *THE DRAMA DOWNUNDER* WAS ON THE STREETS AGAIN IN 2021 WITH EVEN MORE DIVERSITY IN OUR RANGE OF MODELS

13 TGD Health for GPs

As part of the *Transgender and Gender Diverse in Community Health* (TGDICH) project, an in-depth General Practitioner training course was developed and accredited with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. The Contemporary TGD Health for General Practitioners course was co-designed and co-delivered by Dr Julian Grace, a non-binary primary health care practitioner, with GP allies Dr Michelle Dutton and Dr Ruth McNair. A total of 44 GPs were trained in the last year, with 40 per cent of GP participants from outside of metropolitan Melbourne including areas such as Mildura, Castlemaine and Wangaratta. We are excited to see these eager GPs take their newfound knowledge back to their local communities, so that TGD people can have safer, positive experiences with the healthcare system.

14 A New Season for *Drama Downunder*

The Drama Downunder revisited its popular 'seasons' campaign reminding everyone to get tested four times a year - summer, autumn, winter, spring. Joining the diverse cast of community models was Florin - the first trans man featured in the campaign's 13-year history. When asked about the experience of wearing just a pair of white briefs for a sexual health campaign, Florin replied, "Honestly, I have no issue showing off my body at all. I would be nude all the time if it was allowed. Top surgery was expensive, so I always embrace any opportunity to show off my ten-thousand-dollar designer chest."

15 HIV Peer Support - Ahmed

Ahmed* grew up in Iraq and had been living in Australia only a few months when he met with a Community Support HIV peer staff member during a clinic at Royal Melbourne Hospital. He had been recently diagnosed with HIV and had not talked to anyone else who was positive. Ahmed was surprised when told that the staff member had been positive for 10 years, and said: "But you don't look sick." This led to a long discussion that encompassed HIV medication, side effects, U=U, and the importance of his relationship with medical support. He also talked about cultural expectations in Iraq, family pressures, and asked questions about life for gay people in Australia. Ahmed left the meeting relieved and reassured.

*Name changed for privacy.





JACOB

Life in lockdown had been tough for everyone. The biggest challenge for me was not being able to see loved ones and those in the office that you see every day. For me, everyone who I cared about or loved was outside my 10-kilometre radius, so it was difficult. I was grateful to still work online and be a support for other LGBTQIA+ young people. That was my way to help the community. Running a program, connecting to organisations like Thorne Harbour Health, and having social events like watching a film and unpacking it via the online Melbourne Queer Film Festival was a godsend, not only for me but all other queer young people I was working with. All these and more really helped to prevent social isolation and get through the lockdown.



stories from our community

16 Women in the Early Response to HIV

Women played a vital role in the early response to HIV and AIDS - as nurses, counsellors, doctors, and community leaders. We invited a panel of women who found themselves at the frontline back in the 1980s in various capacities - including Maureen O'Brien, Sue Stone, Auntie Bev Greet, Liz Crock, and Edwina Wright. Their discussion looked back on the early days of the epidemic and reflected on the progress we've made over the last four decades. The online forum offered a unique opportunity to gain a female perspective on those early days as well as tap into the wisdom they garnered from their collective experiences. The forum recording is available online at Thorne Harbour's YouTube Channel.

17 The Grove of Gratitude

As part of ChillOut 2021, the *Grove of Gratitude* was introduced at Daylesford. The new initiative was set up to honour various individuals from across our diverse collection of communities. With the inaugural trees planted on Wednesday March 3, 2021, Thorne Harbour was given the opportunity to dedicate three trees. The organisation honoured three legends no longer with us, including community ally Trevor Williams, who set up the David Williams Fund in his brother's honour to support people living with HIV. We also dedicated a tree to Deborah Gilles, co-founder of Positive Women Victoria. The final tree was dedicated to Daylesford local Prof. Jim Hyde for his years of staunch activism and advocacy both for people living with HIV and our LGBTIQ communities more broadly.

18 AOD Counselling - Taryn

After she lost her job during COVID, a long-term and violent relationship upended Taryn's life. She watched her life unravel - with Child Protection removing her two young children and police taking out an IVO against her violent partner. Feeling isolated and facing discrimination in the courts as the non-birthing parent of her children, Taryn started drinking heavily to numb the pain. She reached out to Thorne Harbour Health and was able to link in with an Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) counsellor. Together, they explored the links between drinking and her experiences of family violence, internalised homophobia and trauma. They were able to make big changes in how she used alcohol and help Taryn work towards caring for her kids. Taryn has continued to meet with her counsellor, is seeing her kids regularly, and feels proud of the change she has made.

19 Down An' Dirty Live

As we were thrust into lockdown, the Sexually Adventurous Men's (SAM) Project hosted *Down An' Dirty LIVE*. The regular online series of Zoom sessions connected the SAM community while venues and kink spaces were not accessible. The sessions reached over 1,100 participants across metro and regional Victoria. The sessions also garnered international guests from the kink and fetish global stage including contestants and winners from *International Mister Leather* (IML) and beloved adult film stars from the bear community. Sessions covered topics such as social isolation, stopping and restarting PrEP during lockdown, consent, douching, anxiety and mental health, harm reduction for alcohol and recreational drug use, and esoteric sex practices. *Down An' Dirty LIVE* continues at downanddirty.org.

20 Opening of 200 Hoddle St

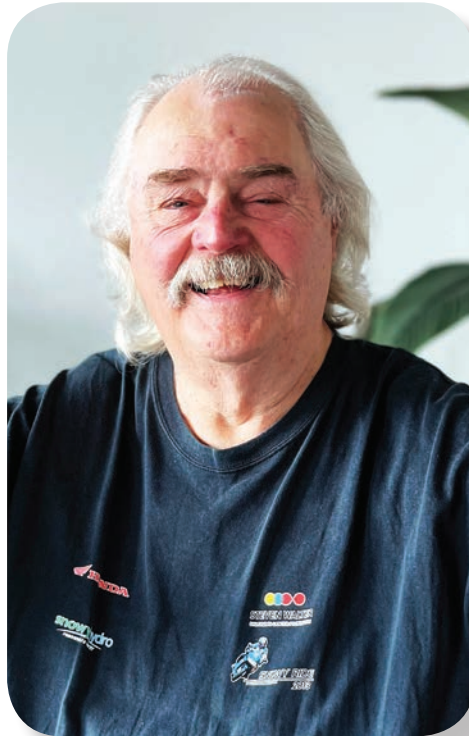
After a brief delay due to the February snap lockdown, we finally got to welcome the community to our new home at 200 Hoddle Street in Abbotsford. The official opening event saw small groups escorted through the new premises and visiting a number of checkpoints throughout the building to interact and learn a bit about the contemporary offerings from across the organisation. The event finished with attendees able to enjoy a sausage sizzle and mingle under the night sky in the building's backlot. It was also an opportunity to present awards to community members who were unable to previously receive their awards and life membership due to lockdown restrictions.



THE GROVE OF GRATITUDE SEEKS TO HONOUR INDIVIDUALS FROM ACROSS THE COMMUNITY IN A LIVING MONUMENT TO THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS



OUR NEW PREMISES AT 200 HODDLE STREET, ABBOTSFORD OPENED IN 2021



PAUL

My role as a volunteer driver for people living with HIV has continued through all of Melbourne's COVID-19 lockdowns since many medical appointments were still needed in person. The work gives me enormous satisfaction, and I hope I have been able to make a difference in the lives of my clients. The highlight for me is meeting new people and overcoming challenges such as language barriers to build a good relationship. I am always happy to look out for them. COVID restrictions and hospital policies have affected my role, as I have not been able to escort the clients to their appointments, which is sad as I like to provide additional support and perhaps have a coffee after their appointment. I am looking forward to things getting back to normal, and I hope to continue this work for a while yet.



stories from our community



LIFE MEMBER
Dr Richard Moore

Working in HIV medicine for over thirty years, Dr Richard Moore commenced working with people living with HIV at the Carlton Clinic - at that time, the largest high HIV caseload GP practice in the state. Very quickly Richard became known as a compassionate doctor and fierce advocate for the health of people living with HIV. He developed both the Carlton Clinic and later the Northside Clinic as centres for excellence in HIV medicine and, over time, to generalised health services for the LGBTI community more broadly. Richard has been at the forefront of clinical practice and continues to serve our communities with passion, energy, and commitment.



SPECIAL SERVICE
Paul Hoffrichter

For the past decade, Paul has been a volunteer with Community Support. As a volunteer driver, Paul has provided hundreds of transports to medical appointments for vulnerable clients. As a member of the Mulgrave volunteer team, he has organised many group social activities as well as individual support for clients. Despite the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, Paul has continued to provide regular transport help, ensuring clients can manage their health at a difficult time. He is a trusted and reliable volunteer, often making himself available at short notice to meet client needs. Paul's work demonstrates the volunteer spirit that has been the backbone of Community Support's work since the beginning of the program.



LIFE MEMBER
Keith Stodden

Keith Stodden has been a member of Thorne Harbour Health since 1985 (then VAC/GMHC). For decades, he has been a peace activist, a gay activist, and an HIV activist. Being an avid collector, Keith has made considerable donations to the Australian Queer Archives. He was involved in Society Five (the Victorian branch of CAMP Inc) early on, including as Vice-President. Following the long campaign for marriage equality in Australia, Keith married his partner, Glenn Bray, in 2018.



SPECIAL SERVICE
Nathan Senevirathne

Nathan has volunteered in numerous positions, including reception, community support and events. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, our usual World AIDS Day activities were not going to be able to stay the same. Our annual street appeal was going to be cancelled for the first time in history. Hoping to produce an innovative solution in response, Nathan responded to our call to create a World AIDS Day app. Nathan led the creation of an app from concept to market - a process that would typically take over a year. However, Nathan worked tirelessly to achieve this in less than two months. Nathan volunteered his expertise and time as well as recruited developers to do the same and make the app a reality.



PRESIDENT'S AWARD
Dr Michelle Telfer

Associate Professor Michelle Telfer is a paediatrician and adolescent medicine physician. She is currently the Director of the Department of Adolescent Medicine at The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Melbourne. She is also the Director of the RCH Gender Service, where she's been instrumental in the development and expansion of their clinical and research programs. As an advocate for improved access to medical treatment, Michelle was central to the achievement of federal legal reform, with trans and gender diverse young people now being able to access hormone and surgical treatment without the need for approval by the Family Court of Australia. She is also the lead author of the *Australian Standards of Care and Treatment Guidelines* for trans and gender diverse children and adolescents.



SPECIAL SERVICE
Abdurahman (Boudie) Katamish

Abdurahman came to Australia from Egypt in 2019 to study and avoid personal adversity. While in Egypt, he volunteered in local underground LGBTIQ support groups and at Islamic holy events to distribute food parcels. Here in Australia, he's continued to generously volunteer his time for a number of LGBTIQ organisations, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although COVID-19 presented many challenges for Abdurahman as an international student, he sought to help with his own self-care, while helping others in more precarious situations. In a short space of time, he has made a big impact on the volunteer program and embodies our organisational values of leadership, diversity, inclusion, justice, courage and optimism.



SPECIAL SERVICE
Jenny Whelan

Jenny has been the constant within *Oz Showbiz Cares* since the early days of the epidemic - showing creativity, persistence and leadership. As part of the arts community, Jenny has lost countless peers and colleagues to HIV/AIDS. Driven by this devastating loss, Jenny is among those who took action. Over the years, Jenny has overseen theatre fundraising and has maintained the important threads of community connection. Through *Oz Showbiz Cares*, she helped raise over \$238,000 for Thorne Harbour Health's various programs - part of the over one million dollars raised for the HIV sector nationally through the initiative.



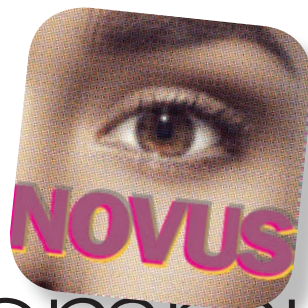
GREIG FRIDAY AWARD
Maxi Xie

Maxi became a volunteer in July 2020 to undertake COVID-19 AppReach through online gay hook up apps. Maxi enthusiastically took on the role when there was a critical need for volunteers to take to apps such as Grindr and Scruff to provide information and answer questions community members had about sexual health and COVID-19. Since then Maxi has become one of the most active volunteers in AppReach. His demeanour and approach to volunteering is always caring and happy, lifting the spirits of the fellow volunteers and punters he encounters. Beyond Thorne Harbour Health, Maxi is a dedicated student who shows great passion and drive for helping others.



RICK

This year has been a momentous period of opportunity and growth. I took the opportunity to get more involved in the community online. It has been a wonderful year for *NOVUS* - the monthly workshops for trans women at Thorne Harbour. We have grown from strength to strength and have had many women attend. I was so excited to facilitate online seminars to share ideas and interview a wonderful group of people from across our community via YouTube. As a proud, emerging Transgender First Nation Media Sociologist, I am overwhelmed with the breadth of resilience and talent our community has to offer. 2021 is a year of deep reflections and new beginnings. I am still affirming my identity, and the face mask has provided me with a visual reminder that I need to unmask my true self to the world and believe I am a valued human being.



stories from our community

STATEMENT OF APOLOGY TO ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES



PHOTO COURTESY PETER WAPPLES-CROWE

To all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, your families and communities

We, the Board, staff, volunteers and members of Thorne Harbour Health, say sorry for the injustice, generations of discrimination, marginalisation and human suffering experienced as a result of colonisation.

We acknowledge that the removal of children devastated individuals, families and entire communities and that the intention of those policies was to assimilate Indigenous children and erase their histories and their culture. We recognise these policies of erasure as systemic and deliberate.

We recognise you as a sovereign people who have never given up sovereignty of this, your land and we acknowledge that treaties have never been signed.

We collectively share a sense of outrage related to racist policies in this country and we acknowledge your human right to self-determination.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have specific and unique needs in relation to HIV and we are sorry that for nearly 40 years we have often failed to consider these.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are part of the oldest living culture on earth and we are sorry that in LGBTIQ communities this rich culture has often not been respected or affirmed.

We commit to working in solidarity with you in ways that you choose and determine.

We are part of, and work with many communities who are affected by disadvantage, prejudice, poverty, violence, marginalisation, trauma and social circumstances out of their control. We understand the long-term damage and trauma to communities when these issues are unacknowledged and unaddressed.

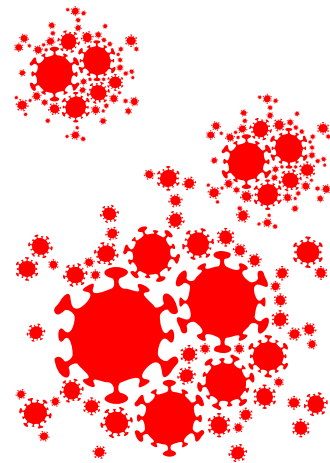
We recognise and value your leadership, we honour your visions and we join with you in your hopes for your future and for a better future together.





LUKA

2021 might not have been a good time to start a degree in the health field. I started my first year of my Master of Occupational Therapy, which has brought unique challenges of trying to learn a very hands-on field, mostly from home. There have been some in-person classes, with masks, social distancing, and more than enough hand sanitiser to go around. My first placement was at RMH in their acute mental health ward during lockdown #6. An N95 mask and face shield gets in the way of creating a therapeutic relationship, and the underlying level of anxiety as COVID cases came closer and closer to the hospital, and then within the hospital itself, meant that both the staff and patients were beyond fatigued - exhausted. They say that we're getting great experience being students on the front line during this pandemic, but all I can think about is how I have my whole future ahead of me, and I'm already burnt out.



stories from our community

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

Thorne Harbour Health's work is founded in our connection to our communities. With the organisation continuing to grow, engagement with our communities is key to ensuring we continue to deliver the services that our communities want and need. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the meaningful involvement of people living with HIV and reconciliation with Australia's first peoples. Whilst we continue to recruit and employ as diverse a staff group as possible, that is representative of the communities we serve, our governance structures such as our Boards provide limited opportunity for diversity. As such, we seek out further ways to ensure we maintain a strong voice in our organisation from the broad diversity of our community. We do this by inclusion into our Community Advisory Groups, several of which have met directly with our Boards. We now have targeted community advisory groups focusing on trans, non-binary and gender diverse communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with lived experience of disability, the meaningful involvement of people living with HIV and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. With the recent launch of our Women's Strategy, we look forward to developing our work with women in partnership with our LGBTIQ Women's Advisory Group that we are in the process of establishing. In the coming year, we intend to draw the work of these groups under a new community engagement framework that will report to our Boards.

The collective work across our advisory groups serves to provide real time input into the development, design, delivery and evaluation of our programs and services. These groups offer an opportunity for community members to influence the work of THH and ensure that the particular needs of the communities they represent are recognised.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) has been meeting regularly to develop our second Action Plan to advance reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This draft plan was recently finalised and we are currently consulting with

First Nation's people for input and feedback. The RAPWG is confident that it will submit its plan to Reconciliation Australia before the end of 2021. The RAP focuses on containing measurable and meaningful strategies to increase cultural safety, purposeful partnerships, employment opportunities, and service accessibility. We look forward to implementing further actions aligned to our new RAP early in 2022.

Thorne Harbour Health released a Statement of Apology during National Reconciliation Week in May this year. Our Sorry Statement was made in recognition of the harms caused to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples since colonisation. The Statement reflects our commitment to working in solidarity with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in ways that uphold self-determination. The statement can be found on page 22.

MEANINGFUL INVOLVEMENT OF POSITIVE PEOPLE

Our Meaningful Involvement of PLHIV (MIPA) framework encourages the involvement and active participation in all aspects of our service provision. This empowers people living with HIV to shape and inform the organisation's policies and practices. Decisions regarding operating services remotely for much of the last 18 months have been taken in partnership with people living with HIV. In addition to our community advisory group, decisions are made in partnership with Living Positive Victoria, Positive Women Victoria, Positive Life South Australia and the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia. In the coming year, we will meet the Victorian African Health Action Network to ensure our HIV services are meeting the needs of African communities.

DISABILITY

Thorne Harbour is working hard to create equitable access and opportunity to engage for all members of the community and this year we developed our first ever *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*. This Plan provides a framework to drive innovation and improvements to our services, structures and activities to ensure that needs of people with disability in our community are addressed and equity of access supported. We thank the Disability Advisory Group for their support in developing the plan.



OUR SERVICE-WIDE REVIEW MEANS THAT OUR SERVICES WORK WITH DISABLED STAFF AND CLIENTS WILL BE ENHANCED, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE.

TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE

With generous funding from Trans Gender Victoria's *SPARK* program, and with the support of our TGD advisory group, we have expanded peer support offerings to the trans, non-binary and gender diverse communities. The groups include *NOVUS*, for trans women, *PACE*, for trans men, and *RISE* for non-binary people. We received additional funding to continue providing TGD training to health professionals and featured our first transguy in *The Drama Downunder* campaign this year.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Despite the ongoing success of the LGBTIQ Women's Health Conference and continued advocacy for funding for women's health services, we struggle

to advance as quickly as we would like. To address this Thorne Harbour Health has released a Women's Health Strategy highlighting the needs in this area and created an ongoing women's health role within the organisation. We look forward to ensuring the needs of LGBTIQ women and women living with HIV are met.



TOM

I'm a volunteer and the coordinator of the HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC). At HALC, we've never run remotely before! So the lockdowns in Melbourne represented a significant challenge. However, we persevered. We took on a new team of paralegals, introduced eight new immigration lawyers, expanded our online presence, and helped strengthen protection claims of refugees living with HIV/AIDS. On a personal note, despite being out of work for almost the entirety of lockdown, I finished a Masters in Public and International Law from the University of Melbourne with first class honours, and secured a position that will see me working at the United Nations for the High Commissioner of Human Rights.



stories from our community



OUR POPULAR ONLINE FORUM SERIES, *HIV RESEARCH & THE COMMUNITY* KICKED OFF IN JUNE EXAMINING THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY IN HIV RESEARCH

POLICY, SERVICES & ACTIVISM

Thorne Harbour Health began as an activist organisation and always recognised that achieving our Vision would require both delivering critical community services and pushing the policy agenda. For a period, these functions were separated into two organisations prior to reunifying in the 1990s. Almost 40 years on, THH continues to advance the policy agenda.

HIV RESEARCH FORUMS

This year, THH hosted a number of online forums with the aim of reinvigorating community engagement with HIV research.

The forums included clinical and social researchers in addition to community activists and sector workers to examine where we have been, and where we are headed in relation to HIV research.

The forum topics included:

- The roles of community participation in HIV research

- Prevention research, past, present and future

- Social research and HIV

- The future of HIV research, and

- Molecular epidemiology

The forums were moderated by former president, Chad Hughes and included a broad range of panellists including Professor Sharon Lewin (Doherty Institute), Associate Professor Garrett Prestage (Kirby Institute), Living Positive Victoria CEO, Richard Keane and Positive Women Victoria CEO, Kirsty Machon.

The online forums proved popular and provided the community with the opportunity to engage with the panellists. The policy forum series will continue in 2022.

EMBRACING EQUALITY

embracingequality.com.au

THH worked with Rainbow Health Victoria, and a number of Victorian health and welfare peak bodies to develop an *Embracing Equality Charter*.

Over twenty of Victoria's leading peak organisations joined to embrace equality and work to end the discrimination and inequities experienced by LGBTIQ+ people in Victoria.

The *Embracing Equality Charter* outlines a shared commitment to uphold the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people, ensure LGBTIQ+ inclusive services and education, and build a sustainable LGBTIQ+ community-controlled health sector. The charter commits its signatories to:

- Respect, protect and promote the human rights of Victorian LGBTIQ+ people.

- Continuously prioritise advocating for reforms that dismantle structural drivers of discrimination and oppression against LGBTIQ+ people.

- Ensure all LGBTIQ+ Victorians have access to safe, culturally appropriate, accessible and high-quality services.

- Support and sustainably fund the growth and development of the community-controlled LGBTIQ+ sector and services to enable service provision to LGBTIQ+ Victorians across the state.

- Ensure robust LGBTIQ+ inclusive practice across the service and education system.

- Ensure full participation and shared decision-making of LGBTIQ+ people and their representative bodies in all matters that impact LGBTIQ+ people, ensuring LGBTIQ+ voices are given the opportunity to speak and be listened to.

- Work in partnership to systematically

address the social determinants of health inequality for LGBTIQ+ people.

Build on the research and evidence base for what works to improve the health and well-being of LGBTIQ+ youth and adults.

The *Embracing Equality Pledge*, developed alongside the charter, allows Victorian based service providers to commit to ensuring workplaces are inclusive and affirming places for staff and clients alike.

CONVERSION PRACTICES

In November 2020, THH facilitated a community webinar and panel discussion on the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020 (Vic)*. The panel discussion was moderated by board member, Adam Bourne and primarily included panellists with lived experience of 'conversion practices'. THH worked closely with the Brave Network, SOGICE Survivors, the Victorian Pride Lobby, and Equality Australia to promote acceptance of the bill.

In February, the *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Prohibition Practices Act 2021* was passed by the Victorian Parliament. The Act is a momentous step forward in preventing and responding to the damage and trauma caused by 'conversion therapy'. The legislation bans change or suppression practices – harmful practices that seek to change or hide an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity – and provides a range of options for preventing and responding to the practices in the future.

MENTAL HEALTH

With the Mental Health Royal Commission occurring in Victoria and a federal Inquiry into Mental Health by the Productivity Commission, there was a great focus on advocating for the mental

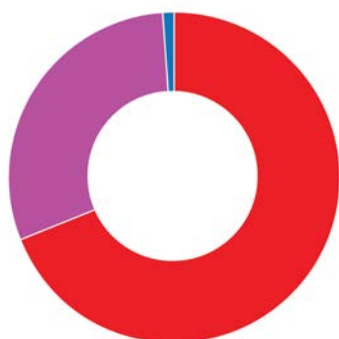
health needs of LGBTIQ+ people and people living with HIV. The release of *Private Lives 3* and *Writing Themselves in 4*, by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS), provided the necessary evidence to support this advocacy. THH worked closely with Switchboard, ARCSHS, Living Positive Victoria and Positive Women Victoria in developing joint positions on our communities' needs. THH continues to work with these partners as well as Transgender Victoria and LGBTIQ+ Health Australia to ensure those needs are met as the Royal Commission's findings are acted upon.

THAT'S NOT ALL...

THH's policy and advocacy work has been supported by a dedicated team of interns and volunteers, who greatly enhanced our organisational capacity. In addition to the above, the team has also advanced the policy debates on sex work law reform, drug law reform, harm reduction, family violence, research ethics, community advisory research structures, trans rights, intersex protections, anti-vilification law reform, spitting laws and access to amyl.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN

Grant income 69%
Operating income 30%
Investment income 1%



Revenue breakdown

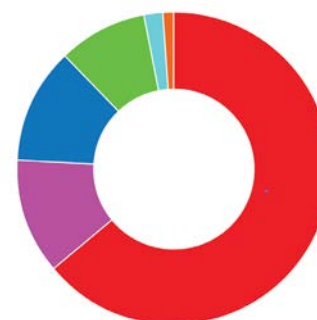
Grant income	11,258,722
Client fees	1,872,155
Donations, fundraising and bequest income	133,957
Goods and Services Income	844,548
Membership fees	2,498
Other revenue	2,296,594
Interest income	60,777
Total revenue	16,469,251

Revenue summary

Grant income	11,258,722
Operating income	4,987,316
Investment income	223,213
Total	16,469,251

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

Operating expenses 12%
Employee costs 64%
Campaign expenses 12%
Client support expenses 9%
Professional expenses 2%
Other expenses 1%



Expense breakdown

Operating expenses	1,792,117
Employee costs	9,178,850
Campaign expenses	1,758,378
Client Support expenses	1,284,004
Professional fees	220,448
Other expenses	108,586
Total	14,342,383

VICTORIAN AIDS COUNCIL INC./GAY MEN'S HEALTH CENTRE INC. (AGGREGATED)

Summary Aggregated Statement of Profit or Loss For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Revenue	16,469,251	14,692,848
Less: expenses		
Operating expenses	(1,792,117)	(2,186,849)
Employee costs	(9,178,850)	(8,603,644)
Campaign expenses	(1,758,378)	(1,186,332)
Client support expenses	(1,284,004)	(1,354,582)
Professional fees	(220,448)	(151,039)
Other expenses	(108,586)	(36,870)
	(14,342,383)	(13,519,316)
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	2,126,868	1,173,532

Aggregated Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	6,687,520	4,039,042
Trade and other receivables	274,248	302,624
Other financial assets	4,626,970	6,472,815
Other assets	172,380	514,764
Total current assets	11,761,118	11,329,245
Noncurrent assets		
Trade and other receivables	3,113	3,113
Right-of-use assets	87,819	271,604
Property, plant and equipment	14,479,986	11,811,180
Intangible assets	49,185	78,885
Total noncurrent assets	14,620,103	12,164,782
Total assets	26,381,221	23,494,027
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	1,044,307	730,112
Provisions	1,373,538	1,275,692
Other liabilities	816,480	279,881
Lease liabilities	40,888	241,853
Total current liabilities	3,275,213	2,527,538
Noncurrent liabilities		
Provisions	173,582	171,239
Lease liabilities	47,452	37,144
Total noncurrent liabilities	221,034	208,383
Total liabilities	3,496,247	2,735,921
Net assets	22,884,974	20,758,106
Equity		
Reserves	240,410	240,410
Accumulated surplus	22,644,564	20,517,696
Total Equity	22,884,974	20,758,106

The above summary financial information has been extracted from the audited financial statements.

No audit opinion has been issued in relation to the summary financial statements. These should be read in conjunction with the audited financial statements that are available to the members on our website www.thorneharbour.org/financials

Aggregated Statement of Changes in Equity for the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2021	Accumulated Surpluses	Asset Revaluation Surplus	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance as at 1 July 2020	20,517,696	240,410	20,758,106
Net surplus/(deficit) for the year	2,126,868	-	2,126,868
Balance at 30 June 2021	22,644,564	240,410	22,884,974
2020	Accumulated Surpluses	Asset Revaluation Surplus	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance as at 1 July 2019	19,344,164	380,410	19,724,574
Net surplus/ (deficit) for the year	1,173,532	-	1,173,532
Revaluation of property, plant and equipment	-	(140,000)	(140,000)
Balance as at 30 June 2020	20,517,696	240,410	20,758,106

Aggregated Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Grants received	11,258,722	10,704,52
Payments to suppliers and employees	(13,982,056)	(12,633,288)
Interest received	67,975	69,619
Dividends received	159,891	134,298
Receipts from customers	6,580,956	3,588,871
Donations and bequests received	133,957	282,063
Net GST paid	(350,319)	(520,221)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	3,869,126	1,625,863
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for financial assets	-	(571,013)
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(3,864,516)	(49,486)
Payments for intangible assets	-	(5,850)
Proceeds from disposal of financial assets	2,917,969	342,528
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(946,547)	(283,821)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of lease liabilities	(274,101)	(902,201)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(274,101)	(902,201)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	2,648,478	439,841
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	4,039,042	3,599,201
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	6,687,520	4,039,042

The above summary financial information has been extracted from the audited financial statements. No audit opinion has been issued in relation to the summary financial statements. These should be read in conjunction with the audited financial statements that are available to the members on our website www.thorneharbour.org/financials

THANK YOU!

ACON
Dr Ada Cheung
AFAO
Alfred Health
Alison Thorne
AQuA
ARCShS
ASU
Austin Health
Australian Government
Ballarat Community Health
Bendigo City
Bolton Clarke
Brave Network
Breast Screen Victoria
Burnet Institute
Cancer Council Victoria
Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health
Centre for Social Research in Health
ChillOut
City of Melbourne
City of Yarra
Colin Krycer
David Owen
Dean Arcuri
Doherty Institute
Dolly Diamond
Dykes on Bikes
Dr Edwina Wright
Enliven
Equality Australia
FPPV
Geelong Rainbow Festival
Dr George Forgan Smith
Gippsland Pride Initiative
GiveOUT
Haven; Home, Safe
Headspace Bendigo
Herbert Smith Freehills
Housing Choices
JOY 94.9
Koorie Pride Victoria
Launch Housing
LGBTIQ Health Australia
Living Positive Victoria
Luke Gallagher
MAC Cosmetics
Melbourne Gay & Lesbian Chorus
Melbourne Polytechnic
Mental Health Victoria
Midsumma
MQFF
Miss Katalyna
NAB
NAPWHA
NWMPHN
Positive Life South Australia
Positive Women Victoria
Relationships Matter
Ro Allen
SEMPHN
Shine SA
South Australian Government
Star Health
St Kilda Legal Service
Switchboard Victoria
The Centre
The Laird
Transgender Victoria
VAADA
VACCHO
VAHS
VHA
Victoria Police
Victorian Government
Victorian Healthcare Association
Victorian Pride Centre
Vixen Collective
Volunteering Victoria
Your Community Health
Zoe Belle Gender Collective



STEPH

During lockdown, I've improved, tested, reflected, grown, and been totally stretched as a person - like most others I'd say. The biggest highlight for me has been igniting a love and appreciation of running. Every part of the process is stressful and requires your utmost focus and attention, but the reward of getting one kilometre further every time is worth its weight in gold - for me, at least.



stories from our community



CHARUNDA

One great lesson this lockdown taught me, or rather forced me to learn, was to slow down. Slow down my never stopping brain, slow down my daily mad rush, and slow down my entire life. It made me stop and look around - appreciate what I have and value whom I have in my life. It was emotional, challenging and bittersweet. I've been working, worrying, studying, panicking, working out, feeling isolated and scared. I wanted to be positive and look at the bright side. I failed multiple times but managed to achieve little things during that time and learnt to be grateful for things I have.

This lockdown taught me that it's ok to slow down and appreciate life as it is. And that changed me for good.



stories from our community

thorneharbour.org