



# Annual REPORT

2020-2021



**COVER IMAGE:** The new Cooinda Health & Wellbeing Hub features a Reflective Space with an original Indigenous installation artwork by Josh Muir entitled *Layers of Country*. This series of curved and coloured pathways is central to the contemplative space for clients and staff.

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our sites are located.

We are a Rainbow Tick organisation and welcome people from all cultures and backgrounds to our service.

BCH acknowledges the financial support of:

- Australian Multicultural Education Service
- Ballarat Foundation
- Berry Street
- Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs
- Commonwealth Department of Human Services
- Commonwealth Department of Industry, Innovation & Science
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
- Commonwealth Home Support Program
- Dental Health Services Victoria
- Medicare Australia
- Victorian Department of Education
- Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing

- Victorian Department of Health & Human Services
- Victorian Department of Justice & Community Safety
- Victorian Department of Premier & Cabinet
- Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation.

BCH also thanks the individuals, families and community groups we have received donations from this year.

headspace Ballarat funders –

- Commonwealth Government & headspace National COVID-19 Rapid Response grant
- Department of Education Enhancing Mental Health in Secondary Schools Program
- Victorian Government Healthy Equal Youth (HEY) Partners Funding
- WestVic PHN.

headspace Ballarat is supported by a consortium which includes Ballarat Health Services, Uniting, CatholicCare, CAFS, BADAC and is led by Ballarat Community Health.

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# From our **Chair & CEO**

**Our country, state and region have again this year, faced an enormous challenge in protecting our communities from a lingering pandemic.**

BCH supported an extensive health response, not just providing COVID-specific interventions, particularly to the most vulnerable, but adjusting our services in response to public health directions from both State and Commonwealth Governments. Our shift to telehealth provision in most areas of clinical care was perhaps the most evident change.

The pandemic had a significant impact on our capacity to deliver health and wellbeing care to our community. While some programs and services were scaled back, we utilised our system capability to pivot into online treatment, supporting virtual connections with our clients and their families. We appreciate that many of our clients could not receive support and treatment in the form they might be used to. We thank our clients, families and sector partners for their patience and acceptance of the measures needed to continue to provide high quality care through this difficult time.

As well as dealing with the operational challenges of the past year, BCH Board, Executive and

staff continued to focus on the future with the development of our *Strategic Plan - 2021 & beyond*. In line with our new plan, BCH will strive for impactful outcomes for our clients, to reach and support the most vulnerable members of our community and to deliver services in a sustainable way. We will continue to address the social determinants of ill health and to advocate for equitable and accessible health services for all members of our community.

As we look to the future it is clear that the health sector continues to change rapidly (e.g. rural health service mergers, investment in mental health) which creates both challenges and opportunities for us. In navigating this evolving landscape – which also includes significant sector reform and aggregation – we will continue to actively engage governments, sector partners and clients to understand and adjust our services accordingly.

Thanks to our dedicated staff who have lived our values this year. Their resilience and compassion was evident as they continued to deliver high quality services to our community. Thanks also to our Executive team: Danielle Walker, Darlene Henning-Marshall and Joanne Gell for their work to ensure continued service delivery and future focus. We also acknowledge David Stevens, Katherine Cape and Jane Measday, our previous General Managers, for their valuable contributions to BCH.

At the 2021 AGM, John Laursen, finishes up on the Board after six years. Thanks to John for his contribution, particularly as the inaugural Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee. Thanks to Michelle Stares who also finishes.

## Strategic Plan 2021 & beyond

### Our Purpose

Health and wellbeing for all with a commitment to the most vulnerable.

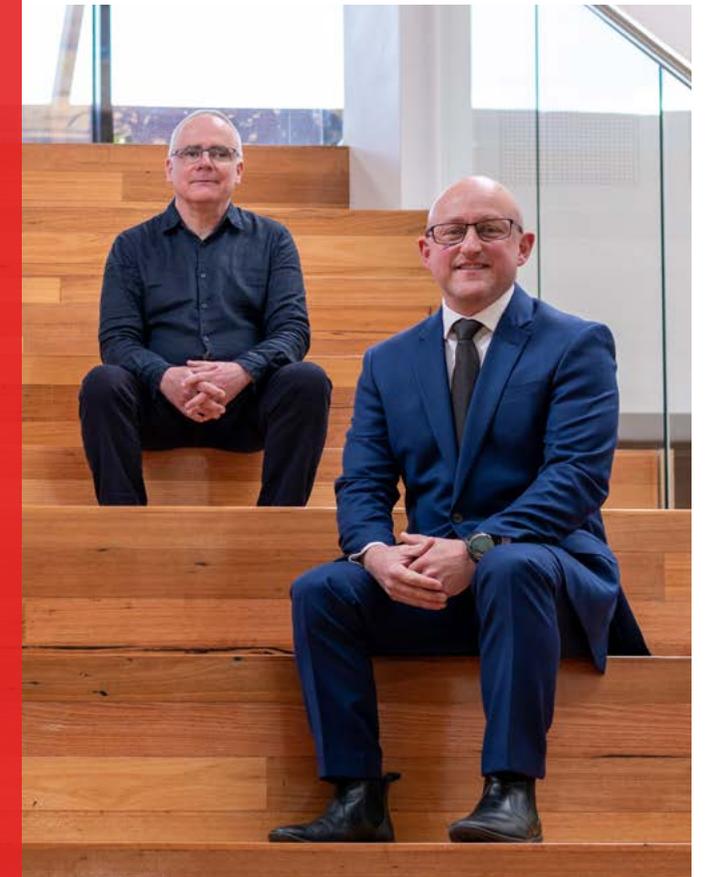
### Our Leading Principle

A driven desire to maximise impact and be sustainable.

### Our Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Courage
- Resilience
- Responsibility
- Optimism

A thank you to our partners, funders and sector colleagues who are essential to service delivery. And finally, thanks to the community members who utilised our services this year. We look forward to the year ahead as we recover from the pandemic and continue to deliver impactful services that assist people in their health and wellbeing.



We are pleased to present this Annual Report for consideration of our members.

**Paul Ryan**  
Board Chair

**Sean Duffy**  
CEO

# Improving public health outcomes

Despite restrictions imposed by the pandemic, we continued to promote behaviours that enhance health & wellbeing across all life stages.

Over the past year, our public health strategy has been to work in partnership with other key health service providers and our community to implement measures that protect from COVID-19.

Through testing, vaccinations and community awareness campaigns, our role in the unified effort against COVID-19 was to reach the most vulnerable, marginalised members of our community.

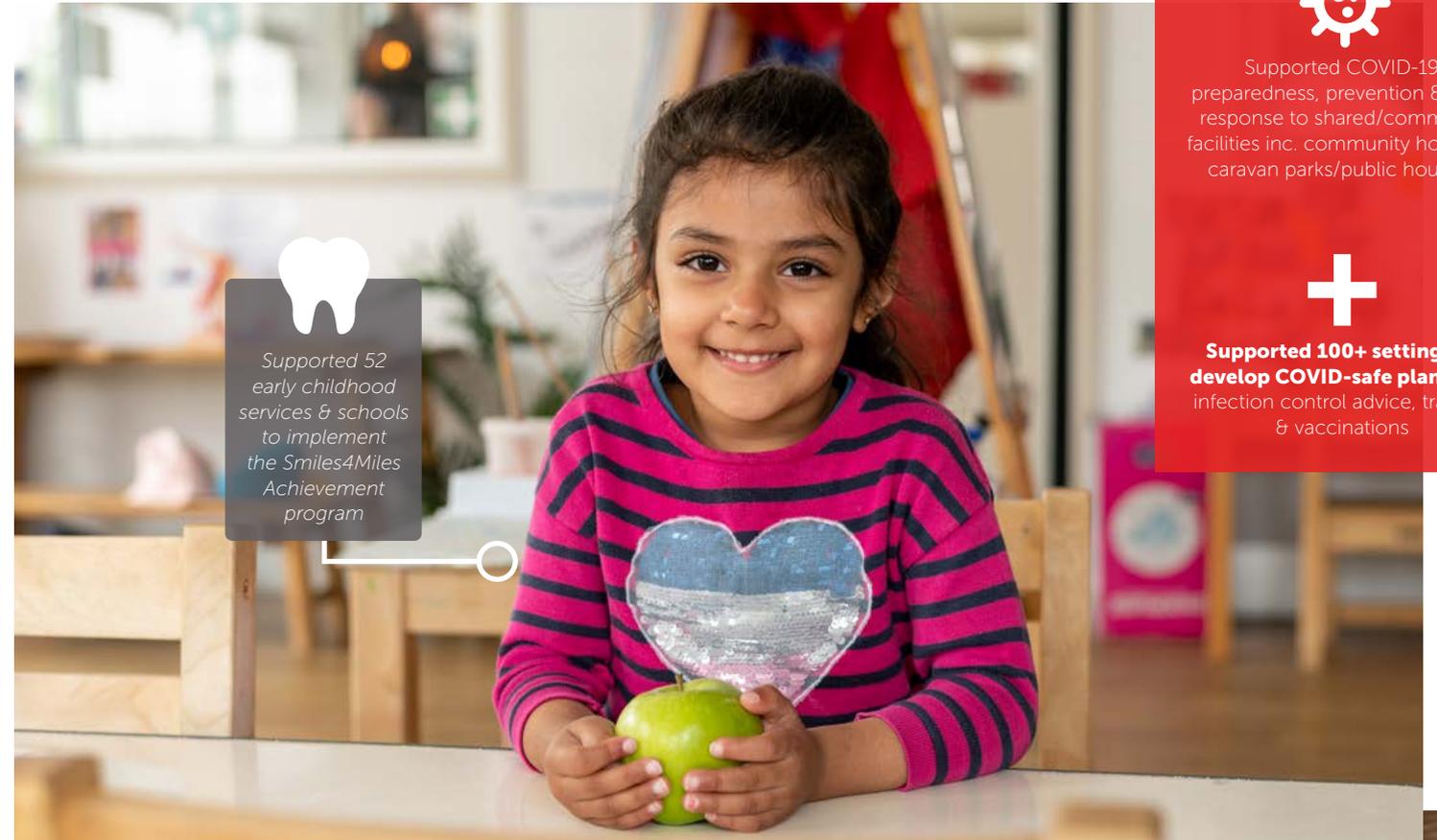
We led the High Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR)

program, working closely with specialised homelessness support and accommodation services providers to reach many thousands of people who may have otherwise struggled to access mainstream services. HRAR has also provided us with an opportunity to extend our health promotion and prevention programs to this cohort.

Despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic we continued health promotion activities across the community, encouraging healthy behaviours that enhance

health and wellbeing across all life stages. In 2020/21 areas of particular focus included:

- preventing elder abuse
- bringing health promotion to children and young people through school and early learning settings
- addressing food insecurity in Ballarat
- reducing the harms caused by gambling
- eliminating risks for refugee and immigrant women experiencing or at risk of family violence.



Supported 52 early childhood services & schools to implement the Smiles4Miles Achievement program



Supported COVID-19 preparedness, prevention & early response to shared/communal facilities inc. community housing/ caravan parks/public housing



Supported 100+ settings to develop COVID-safe plans, inc. infection control advice, training & vaccinations



23,514kg food redistributed from local supermarkets

60+

More than 60 BCH staff contributed to the operation of the Bridge Mall testing clinic, 7 days a week



Vaccination clinics established in three locations across Ballarat



Administered 3,500 COVID-19 vaccinations to Ballarat community members

# Primary health care delivered differently

COVID-19 has required us to support clients in new ways. Telehealth has been an essential component of our care this year.

Our primary care services range from allied health disciplines to general practice and nursing.

Our skilled team of clinicians help clients access multidisciplinary care, linking them to internal and external specialist services when needed.

COVID-19 has required us to support clients in new and varied ways.

Telehealth has been an essential component of our care this year, ensuring we remain connected to our clients and support their continuity of care wherever possible.

We recognise that this shift was at times difficult for our community and we thank our clients for their understanding and flexibility during this time.



Held **12,314 GP consultations**,  
7,795 conducted via telehealth



Provided over **700 hours**  
of NDIS services

**1,300+**

Developed **1,350 care plans** (inc. chronic disease management plans)



Provided  
30,677 hours  
of Allied Health  
services



300+ appointments for trans people led by a peer navigator



**New programs this year include:**

- HeadtoHelp mental health support services, with over 700 referrals this year
- Social Connections, helping address social isolation by pairing clients with a Peer Connector to engage in community-based interests
- Suicide Postvention Response Trial, worked with people suffering from suicide loss as well as health and community services, first responders and local government to support people who are impacted by suicide.



# Supporting the mental health & wellbeing of our community

On an unprecedented level we have seen worrying trends in our community. Emotional distress, mental ill-health and increasing online gambling are the hidden issues of the past year.

Our mental health and addiction support/treatment services saw extremely high demand and increasing referrals across the year, with many clients in crisis. We have responded compassionately and worked tirelessly to meet this demand.

We've established additional services, and this year opened Coinda – our

mental health and wellbeing hub in Wendouree. With support from the State Government we re-modeled the old community health building into a state-of-the-art Health and Wellbeing Hub. The re-design includes children and family-friendly spaces, consulting rooms and multi-purpose spaces which support group work. A dedicated Aboriginal Reflective Space has also been created with input from local community leaders, in line with our Reconciliation Action Plan.

We have witnessed a significant increase in requests for support from members of our community

experiencing extreme hardship, mental health challenges and those impacted by complex trauma. Services have been provided face-to-face, via telehealth and via video-conferencing to ensure we are responsive to client needs throughout lockdowns and beyond.

We continued to develop our AOD (alcohol and other drugs) 101 project to build an understanding of AOD issues, their impacts and treatment options and we broadened our scope in the VicRoads-accredited Drink Drive, Drug Drive Behaviour Change programs.



Coinda now includes children & family-friendly spaces, consulting rooms + multi-purpose spaces for group work



Created more than **2,400 mental health care plans**

**300+** 300+ clients seen through AOD services

**3,800 appointments** held with generalist counsellors

# Commitment to children & young people

Our new Strategic Plan recognises that community health services are critical to children and young people's health & wellbeing.

We recognise and acknowledge that for the children and young people of our community, the past year has been extremely difficult, anxiety provoking and incredibly disruptive to their development.

Our services extend from early years through to adolescent programs (such as headspace, youth support and homelessness services) to ensure we care for people no matter their age or life stage.

Our new Strategic Plan emphasises delivering services early in life, early

in episode and preventing illness wherever possible. To this end, the Paediatric Planning Clinic (for children aged 0-5 years who are in contact with Family Services) continued to expand this past year. A specialist room with interactive elements was fitted-out at our Lucas site to better suit these very young clients. And the Power To Kids: Respecting Sexual Safety program worked to reduce the risk of harmful sexual behaviour and child exploitation for children and young people living in residential care.

BCH is pleased to continue to be the lead agent for headspace Ballarat, where the young people of our community receive support and treatment for mental health challenges. headspace Ballarat provided many group programs and resources for parents and young people in 2020/21. When surveyed, a majority of young people (61%) told us their lives had 'significantly improved' thanks to their involvement with headspace Ballarat.



42 young people supported through Creating Connections with personal development & living skills



61% young people said their lives 'significantly improved' because of headspace Ballarat

91% said they were happy with the support they received



37

young people who've been in contact with the police were supported to make positive changes in their lives



65 young people supported to increase their independent living skills & find safe, affordable housing



1,179 young people sought help from headspace Ballarat

# Striving for quality outcomes

We evolve & grow with our ever-changing community but will never lose track of the importance of safety & quality.

It is imperative that our clients experience safe, accountable, effective, connected and person-centred care.

Through our Practice Leadership Committee and Quality of Care Board sub-committee we are making significant gains. Our challenge is to hold ourselves to account, improve our data reporting and continually create a culture of enquiry and learning. Through self-assessment and analysis we have advanced our practice in this area significantly.

This year the BCH Research, Innovations and Outcomes Committee turned their focus to strengthening our internal research processes and building relationships

with universities and partners. A number of BCH staff were invited to share their program evaluations and learnings at national conferences and symposiums.

Through all of the recent change that we have seen, Results Based Accountability (RBA) remained a priority. RBA will provide the data we need to improve outcomes for participants and will increase our capacity to make evidence-based decisions. It enables us to be accountable to our community and funders, as well as highlight our achievements and results. We will launch RBA in 2021/22 with five teams, helping meet the reflective practice needs of clinicians.

## RBA will help us to:

- use data as the basis for decisions
- inform reflective practice to deliver quality services
- be accountable to our community and funders
- highlight our achievements and our good results.

It will help us take stock of:

- how much we did
- how well we did it
- if anyone is better off for it

RBA will also help us to measure effect vs effort.



## RBA participant outcomes



Participants enjoy good health and wellbeing



A financially sustainable organisation



Participants are supported by & contribute to their communities



Workforce & service systems support good health & wellbeing



Number of research requests reviewed & supported – 5

Number of BCH staff who have presented at conferences – 5



# Our people: strength & commitment

Like many community health organisations, we've had to evolve our structure of management and our services to ensure we are sustainable and can deliver on our purpose now, and into the future.

In 2021, an extensive review culminated in a change to our executive and organisational structure. We aligned all client services under one executive manager, strengthening our practice leadership with consistency across all BCH services.

We placed greater emphasis on strategy and outcomes, appointing an executive to lead this work across the organisation. And in 2021 and beyond, we will place greater emphasis on reporting capability and demonstrating our impact.

Over the past year our staffing group have seen many challenges. We've had to adjust professional and personal lives to manage through the pandemic and for a majority of our growing workforce, that

meant exclusively working from home or doing so a majority of the time. BCH management asked for creativity, resilience, flexibility and compassion through this difficult time and our staff have been exceptional in delivering these things and so much more. We are proud of our achievements over the past year and continue to deliver on our commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of our community, no matter the circumstances.



We've worked with **55 volunteers** over the past 12 months



**79 new BCH staff** onboarded this financial year inc. 3 students on placement who became staff



**52 students completed 994 placement days** with us - almost half had a mental health focus

# Financial summary

## Statement of Profit & Loss + Other Comprehensive Income For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Operating Revenue	25,738,104	19,504,003
Operating Expenditure	(22,914,064)	(20,157,426)
Operating surplus/(deficit) for the year before other items	2,824,040	(653,423)
Other items	791,748	(35,145)
<b>Total Comprehensive Income/(Loss) for the year</b>	<b>3,615,788</b>	<b>(688,568)</b>

## Statement of Financial Position As at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
Current Assets	10,619,575	12,344,206
Non-Current Assets	21,522,016	18,841,022
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>32,141,591</b>	<b>31,185,228</b>
Current Liabilities	4,488,430	6,828,856
Non-Current Liabilities	769,953	1,088,951
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>5,258,383</b>	<b>7,917,807</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>26,883,208</b>	<b>23,267,421</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>26,883,208</b>	<b>23,267,421</b>

Promotion  
of health.



Prevention  
of illness.



Integrated,  
accessible  
services.

