



**ABORIGINAL
COMMUNITY
ELDERS
SERVICES INC.**



**2020/2021
ANNUAL
REPORT**

Report Artwork:
Connection to Elders

The artwork on the cover of, and throughout this report represents the connection we have with Elders.

The tree in the crimson section represents connection to Country, kinship and land.

The yellow section with the figures represents Elders guiding, teaching and sharing their knowledge.

The orange section with the blue circles connecting with curved lines represents the Community and family feeling that Elders make you feel.

The dark orange section with the hill formations represents all the Victorian mobs Countries and Lands.

The curved crimson river flowing throughout the artwork represents ACES. It's a place of Connection, care, respect and Community feeling.

Artist Emma Bamblett
WEMBA WEMBA, GUNDITJMARA,
NGADJONJI AND TAUNGURUNG.



**WE ACKNOWLEDGE
AND PAY RESPECTS
TO THE TRADITIONAL
OWNERS AND FIRST
NATIONS PEOPLES
ACROSS VICTORIA.
WE PAY OUR RESPECTS
TO ELDERS PAST
AND PRESENT.**



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In this report we have presented a summary of our activities for the twelve months to the end of June 2021. We also offer you a pictorial view of ACES as an organisation. A service with the wonderful and rich cultural heritage and dedicated staff who ensure we function 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and most importantly provide a home for our Elders. ACES is also much more than this.

ACCESSIBILITY

We are committed to providing accessible services to all our community members. If you have difficulty in understanding this report, contact us on 03 9383 4244 and we will arrange assistance for you.

DISCLAIMER

This report contains images and names of people who have passed away.

CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

John Brown
ACES CHAIRPERSON

It seems like only yesterday that I was writing my 2019-2020 statement for that year's annual report. It's extraordinary that we have spent another year under locked down conditions.



We have all felt the strain of these times, although having had a dress rehearsal in 2020, we have established operations under these conditions and it has not felt as difficult.



Operating an aged care service in these circumstances is challenging for all concerned. I regard our Elders, their families and loved ones as being a part of the ACES Family service operations. Elders need to have continued contact and interaction with their families to lead comfortable and settled lives in our care. ACES is their home and a place they live, but it is not everything in their lives. Their sense of wellbeing is maintained by their sense of remaining connected to their loved ones and the past.

I know these months have not been easy on our Elders and their loved ones and I want to say how sad it makes me to know that we have had to restrict the movement in and out of ACES for an extended period.

We have of course had to conform to State and Federal Government regulations and make decisions about access that have the health and safety of our Elders and our staff at the top of our priorities. I am pleased to say in this regard that we have successfully kept COVID-19 out of ACES. I want to thank all our staff for the extra effort they have made in keeping our Elders covid-safe over the last two years.

We are still in a rebuilding period at ACES and the last year has been relatively successful in fundraising. We have been well-supported by the Andrews State Government and have a good foundation on which to build our support services for Elders in the community, especially during COVID-19. I want specially to mention the \$5.8 million infrastructure grant we have received for refurbishment works from the Department of Health Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund.

"I want to thank my fellow Board Members for their continued dedication and commitment to ACES and the staff and their families who have worked so hard throughout the pandemic."

- John Brown, Chairperson

CEO'S REPORT

James Atkinson
ACES CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The past year has been another one where COVID-19 has dominated our lives and affected the operations of ACES. The “stop-start” nature of lockdowns and the associated rules around vaccination and COVID-safety has meant we have had to initiate and implement what we thought were temporary measures.



Keeping our Elders safe, who are arguably the most vulnerable people in our community, has required visitor and excursion rules which have often been more rigorous than the general rules made by the Chief Health Officer. In this regard, I want to extend my thanks and sincerest appreciation to Elders and their families and loved ones.

We have not had any option, given we had to implement measures to keep our Elders and staff COVID-free. We managed, through these measures to keep ACES covid-free for another 12 months.

Apart from the regular adjustments to visiting and excursion rules, we have vaccinated all our staff and Elders with three Pfizer doses including the booster dose.

During the last period, we have strengthened our service activities and outreach to Elders in the community. It has been a difficult time for those who live independently and for those who are living in family settings.

ACES has been diversifying our funding base and our income now includes significant income from the State Government of Victoria. This will mean that we will be able to do more around the core issue of care for our Elders through increasing our engagement with Elders in the community as well as improving COVID-19 safety, social and emotional health and wellbeing, and other activities.

We aim to position ourselves more strongly in the advocacy space as well. I have been very engaged with State Government governance structures giving greater prominence to Elders' issues.

I want to thank all our staff for their resilience and commitment to their work and our Elders through these difficult times. ACES through its residential aged care facility, and outreach and connection program service is an essential service and with ACES residential aged care facility operating 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Many of our staff cannot work from home and are more exposed potentially to COVID -19 than most. We have continued to operate ACES over the last two years without any COVID infections.

The coming year will see us continuing to grow and rebuild ACES to bring us up to speed with our facilities, much of which was built over thirty years ago.

ACES will continue to advocate for the needs and rights of our Elders and work towards getting them their entitlements in terms of the life course and ageing well across the aged care and carer support sector.

"I want to thank the Board, Staff, Elders and especially their families for their support and continued commitment to ACES and our Elders.

- James Atkinson, CEO





Uncle John Brown - Chairperson

Descendant of the Wiradjeri people and the Dja Dja Wurrung people. John has served on the ACES Board for 13 years in various positions including Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

John has been an active member of the Melbourne Koori community all his life. Other Aboriginal Community controlled boards he has served on include, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Yappera Children's Service. He has been involved in various advisory panels on Koori education in Universities and TAFEs.

John has coordinated various Koori Basketball Carnivals (including Regional and State-wide). John was involved in the Thornbury Basketball Club where he held the position of president for 20 years.

He served with the Australian Army for over 15 years and reached the rank of Sergeant. His employment experience in the Aboriginal community includes the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service; Yappera Children's Services and the Dandenong Aboriginal Cooperative. John is currently an ACLO for Victoria Police.



Auntie Fay Carter OAM - Vice Chairperson

An Elder of the Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung people. Following in the footsteps of her Elders, Fay has been involved in the struggle for rights for her people over the past 30+ years. She has held a variety of positions in both government departments and Aboriginal community organisations, always with a commitment to self-determination.

Fay has been involved with ACES from its beginning and worked as manager for many years. She sees these years as very rewarding, allowing her to give something back to the Elders who paved the way through their struggle before her. She sees the Elders' leadership role as one of Aboriginal society's greatest assets and is keen to see that role strengthened today.

In 2001, Fay received a Centenary Medal. She was inducted to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2004 and made patron for VACCA'S Child Abuse Conference the same year. In 2013, she appeared in a campaign to launch the First Peoples exhibit at Melbourne Museum's Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

VACCA Life Member, Fay was appointed a Medal of the Order of Australia, an OAM in 2019 for her services to community.



Auntie Patricia Ockwell - Public Officer

Respected Elder and proud Wurundjeri woman who has served her community through her work in hostels, housing and justice.

For over 30 years Pat has also played a major role with the Aboriginal Housing Board of Victoria, (now Aboriginal Housing Victoria) serving on its board and various committees and assisting with policy matters.

Pat is currently Public Officer of the Aboriginal Community Elders Services (ACES), an organisation committed to maintaining services for elderly members of the community. It is important to Pat that 'the sick and elderly are warm and happy and well cared for' and she encourages young members of the community to visit and engage with their Elders. Pat is a Senior Elder and Life Member of the Wurundjeri Tribe Land and Compensation Cultural Heritage Council.

Now in her seventies, Pat's passion and commitment for her community is undiminished. She continues to work tirelessly for fairness and justice and provides inspiration for all.



Auntie Linda Bamblett - Treasurer

Proud Bangerang/Wiradjuri woman. Linda is the Chief Executive Officer at the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL). She has worked at Bert Williams Aboriginal Youth Services as well as VACSAL Family and Children's Services. Linda has her Certificate IV and a Diploma of Youth work.

Linda sits on many committees and is also a founding member of Yappera Children's Services. Linda is a long serving member of VAEAL. Linda is Secretary on the Board of Management for VAHS and Treasurer of Fitzroy Stars Football club. Linda is the current Chairperson of North Metro Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee and had been acknowledged for ten years commitment to the Aboriginal Justice Forum.



Aunty Muriel Bamblett AO

A Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung woman who has been employed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency since 1999. From 1998 to 2008 Muriel chaired the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC), the peak Australian agency for Indigenous child and family services and was re-appointed as Chair in 2018.

Muriel is active on many boards and committees concerning children, families and the Indigenous community, including the Aboriginal Children's Forum; the Dhelk Dja Family Violence Partnership Forum, the Aboriginal Justice Forum, the Treaty Assembly and the Aboriginal Community Elders Service.

Muriel's contribution to her community and Victoria has been recognised in many awards. In 2019 Muriel was awarded an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in the Australia Day Honours for distinguished service to the Indigenous community in Victoria as an advocate for the self determination and cultural rights of children. Muriel has been inducted into the Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll and the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.



Uncle Lionel Bamblett

A Wiradjuri/Yorta Yorta/Bangerang man, Lionel has been involved in Koorie education for 30+ years. He is the General Manager of the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) and was first appointed in 1985.

Lionel has seen VAEAI established as the peak body for Koorie education and training in Victoria, and as an equal partner with the Victorian Government in Koorie education and training since 1990. He has also overseen the development of the successful Wurreker strategy which formalised the equal partnership with the vocational education and training sector in Victoria.

Lionel has provided advice to successive governments in Victoria on measures to improve education and training opportunities for Koorie people. He has played a prominent role in promoting Indigenous education and training issues at a local, State and National level.

He was a member of the National Aboriginal Reference Group which played a key role in the development of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy (AEP) in 1989, which is still current today.



Aunty Margaret Clarke

A Muthi Muthi woman, born and raised in Victoria and lived in South Australia (S.A) for many years. Margaret was married in S.A. and her only child was born there. As many girls born to working-class families, she left school at 14 and was sent to work. She returned to school as a mature-age student in 1979. and in 1990/1991 completed a (coursework) Master's Degree in Education. She returned to Victoria in 1993 and has worked in Victorian Aboriginal (metro) community organisations for around 25 years.

The last 10 years Margaret has worked in Aboriginal aged care, both at the Aborigines Advancement League and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). Her passion for genealogy in particular, her Aboriginal family history. She has a need to find out who her ancestors are who for her determined her Aboriginality, culture, spirit, morals and of course her genetics.

In the last 25 years she was a Board Member of VACCA, Stolen Generation and ACES. In June 2018 Margaret was asked to again join the ACES Board and gratefully accepted to serve our Elders.



Michael Graham

Dja Dja Wurrung, Yorta Yorta and Wiradjuri man. Proud father of ten children (inc. two out of home care placement) and grandfather of 21 grandchildren.

Having a large family has instilled a passion in improving outcomes for his people. He been an active contributor to the wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples for over 30 years.

Michael's career in the sector has been extensive. He has worked with VACCA (Victorian Aboriginal Childcare Agency), VALS (Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service), VAEAI (Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc), FSAYCG and VACSAL (Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Ltd) the Victorian Department of Education in the Koorie Education Workforce, and VACCHO (Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation).

He represents his Community on the Board of Directors for VAHS (Victorian Aboriginal Health Service), and Fitzroy Stars Aboriginal Community Youth Club/Gymnasium. Additional to this he was director for VACCA and the Lowitja Institute. Michael is currently a Director on the Board of NACCHO (National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation), VACCHO, ACES (Aboriginal Community Elders Service), Yappera Children's Services and Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation.

Since 2016 he has been the Chief Executive Officer of the VAHS.

ORGANISATION CHART



ACES
Where Respect, Culture,
Knowledge and Wisdom
come together

ACES
Where Care, Compassion
and Kindness are one



AUNTY FRANCES GALLAGHER AWARDED THE 2021 AGEING WELL AWARD

Nominated by: CITY OF DAREBIN, TREVOR GALLAGHER, AND SUPPORTED BY ACES AND THE ABORIGINES ADVANCEMENT LEAGUE

Aunty Frances Gallagher is a respected Elder who was born in Bendigo in 1926 and embodies the principles of ageing well and living life to the full. Highly respected for her work as an Elder, in both supporting and mentoring young people, and in advocating and caring for Elders.

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Nominated for her continual contribution to Aboriginal living culture and community over her immense 95 years, Sophie Kahl from Bundoora Homestead Ars Centre said 'her vast life experience, unwavering sense of justice and wellspring of initiative as a remarkable example of the principles of ageing well'.

A dignified Gunditjimara woman who grew up on the Framlingham Mission in western Victoria, at a time when education opportunities for children were very limited, Aunty Frances moved to Hamilton at 16 and worked at a flax mill. From a difficult start, her life has been an extraordinary journey, exemplified by her commitment to culture, social justice and life-long learning.

In the 1950s, Aunty Frances found seasonal work picking vegetables, as many did at that time, forming a community and going where the work was. Surviving the hard times with fortitude, as there were few supports for women, particularly Aboriginal women, around that time Aunty Frances developed her vision to make a difference to the lives of others in their time of need.

Widowed when her first husband was killed in a road accident, leaving her with eight children to raise, Aunty Frances moved to Fitzroy where there was a growing Aboriginal community and found work in a factory in Collingwood. Once again exposed to discriminatory and racist workplace practices, Aunty Frances was not deterred from standing up for what was right.

Her strong commitment to social justice was woven into the fabric of her being through all of these experiences and it was through the 1970s that there was a growing momentum in Victoria to establish Aboriginal community run services to improve the health and welfare, and to advocate for the rights of the Aboriginal community.

Aunty Frances was at the forefront at this time and worked in different areas of social justice – including working for some years at the Marg Tucker Hostel for young Aboriginal girls who were homeless and one step away from being in jail. And in the Elizabeth Hoffman House (now known as the Elizabeth Morgan House) working with young families escaping family violence, isolation, and homelessness.

In the 1980s, Aunty Frances finally had the opportunity to start educating herself at the age of sixty when the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service opened the Koori College in Collingwood to train Aboriginal Community Health workers and she was one of the first to enrol.

ACES WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND REFLECT ON OF ONE OF ITS REMARKABLE ELDERS.

'While the work was not always easy, Aunty Frances delighted in encouraging a sense of personal dignity and pride, while offering understanding and sympathy,' Trevor Gallagher said in the nomination.

One of the very first Elders to sit on the Koori Courts at Broadmeadows when it was established in 2004, justice was an area that interested her greatly and she found satisfaction in helping those young Aboriginal offenders who found themselves in the Justice system.

Aunty Frances also played a major role in the development of ACES (Aboriginal Community Elders Services) residential nursing home, volunteering with their day care centre and hosting Aboriginal Elders in her own home for a cup of tea and a yarn. In 2014, with the help of her grand-daughter Karen and others, they approached the CEO of the Whittlesea Council to help find a place for all the Elders to meet, and the rest was history from that a funded working group was formed and a program called Elder's Making a Difference was born. Her aim has always been to make a difference for those that may not have families, or have no social interaction with other Elders, or they may have health issues that may prevent them from accessing some mainstream programs and avoid loneliness, and Aunty Frances was inducted into the Aboriginal Honour Roll in 2016.

During the next thirty years, continuing her mature aged education, she attained her Diploma in the Arts at RMIT at the age of eighty-seven and received community awards in Aboriginal Reconciliation and was at the Ngarara William Centre at RMIT University, and recognised for her contribution to the Art Industry.

In 2010 her work has been acquired by the City of Darebin, Gumbri White Dove Indigenous Art Awards, and in mid-2019 Bundoora Homestead Art Centre hosted a retrospective of her paintings created since taking up painting in her 80s. Her paintings share the connection to her ancestral memories combined with the significance of place, family connection, spirituality and social displacement. Curator Sharon West says 'they express a strong love for ancestors and Country. Her art 'Features large and colourful landscape narratives of Gunditjamara life, ranging from pre colonisation camp sites to the Framlingham Mission, where she spent her early years, Aunty Frances is a passionate for the welfare of the land, and she continues to inspire people of all ages with her continuing evolution and zeal for life'.

Her son Trevor says she is inspirational to her family and her knowledge culminating in many years of wisdom has, and will continue to be passed down, as will her understanding of life's challenges and the battles she has encountered on her journey of life, 'every week we learn something new from her and she ensures that culture and family knowledge will continue to be remembered and retained by all of us in the family'.

Having 10 children, her family now includes grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren to whom she can pass on her compassionate heart, playful and nurturing spirit.

Aunty Frances typifies the Ageing well spirit through family, community, and the right ageing environment. Well done Aunty Frances.

**ACES WOULD
ALSO LIKE TO
ACKNOWLEDGE
OUR ELDERS
AND LEADERS
IN THEIR OWN
RIGHT WHO
HAVE PASSED
ONTO THE
DREAMTIME**

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Aunty Gwen Brooke
Uncle Colin Blow
Aunty Toni Shaw
Uncle Leslie Harrison
Uncle Brian Birch

RESIDENTIAL CARE

Bhim Boodram
DIRECTOR OF NURSING

The Iris Lovett-Gardiner Centre is home to many Aboriginal community Elders. At ACES, Residential Care offers aged care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait People.

ACES is a 25 bed Aged Care Facility located in East Brunswick. More importantly, we aim to give our Elders an experience that is one of cultural safety and a feeling that they are “at home” and being cared for in a way they would expect.

Over the last year, we have led a particularly stressful time because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Elders have had restrictions placed on their movements and on their access to their families and loved ones because of Chief Health Officer regulations. We have nevertheless managed to keep COVID-19 out of ACES and have kept our Elders safe in this respect.

ACES have used audio-visual technology to try and ease the stress of separation, but we all realise that this does not substitute for direct contact with people.

As Director of Residential Care, I am proud of the work of our team and thank them for their work in these difficult times. I also want to thank the families and loved ones of our Elders for their patience and understanding.

Residents are admitted to ACES with varied complex medical and personal care needs.

ACES is well positioned and staffed with experienced Registered Nurses, Enrolled Nurse and Personal Care Workers on a 24-hour basis to meet and care for residents in this challenging area of health care and under the current Pandemic climate.

Some of our Care staff have been working at ACES for 10-15 years. The Team is led by Director of Nursing Bhim Boodram. ACES is well supported by Medical Doctors, Geriatrician, Physiotherapist, Activity, House Keeping and other allied health services.

Residents have individualised holistic care plans that are developed in consultation with residents and their families. We at ACES maintain a very high standard of individualised care to our residents based on best practice.

All care provided to residents are based on the 8 new standards of care, as introduced by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission and which came into effect as from 1st July 2019.

Respecting and maintaining the dignity of our residents is at the forefront of the care team at ACES.

"Elders at ACES are well cared for in a welcoming and homely environment."

- Bhim Boodram,
Director of Nursing



Assessments for Residents are done on schedule and when changes to care occur. We continue to achieve 100% of assessments. Care consultation with Resident/family were done as scheduled and we manage to achieve 100%.

All resident's information such as assessments, care plans, consultations are housed on a computerised system. We are continually eliminating paper-based documents.

We monitor and report on the following indicators: incidents; infection; medication errors; restraint – physical and chemical; pressure injury; unintentional weight loss; and falls/with major injury.

Quality & Safety

2020 to 2021 we minimised:

- the number of incidents
- infection rates, 1-2 infection per quarter
- influenza infections - nil
- COVID-19 infections - nil
- pressure injuries – nil
- unintentional weight loss - nil
- falls resulting in injuries* - nil

We collect data and conduct regular audits which assist us to monitor our performance and maintain the high standard of care for our residents and our continuous improvement plan.

There have been changes as a result of the Royal Commission into Aged Care. We instituted the changes as recommended by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

We have enhanced our Clinical Policy and Procedures to reflect the changes.

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We are looking forward to a period of eased COVID-19 restrictions however, given that many of our Elders are extremely vulnerable because of health issues, we will continue to need additional safety measures as far as visitors and excursions is concerned.

CULINARY SERVICES

Wayne Azevado CHEF

The purpose of the culinary services and hospitality program is to supply the Elders and visitors of ACES with food and service that meets their personal and dietary needs.



The team consists of 1 catering manager and three food service assistants. We are looking to hire one more food service assistant to help run the kitchen operations more efficiently and smoothly. Our Culinary Services Team also regularly consults a Dietitian. In keeping with the Australian Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission, we provide aged care catering services to comply with the Australian Quality Standards.

As a part of our ongoing development, we are always striving to improve our food and service. We have been consulting with our Elders and taking on board the feedback and recommendations that come our way. This has allowed us to create better menus that meet the dietary and personal preferences of our Elders. We also ensure that the Elders birthdays and seasonal holidays are celebrated.

We are also doing evaluations on our staff and their positions to ensure we are performing as well as we can and are assisted in any area that may need improvement.

The Catering committee meetings are a very effective way of communication regarding any improvement or suggestions that the Elders might have regarding the menu, food, and service in general.

Regular discussions with care staff have also been able to give suggestions for improvements. E.g., asking the care staff for feedback after every meal service.

There is a potential of a local council food safety visit, for the renewal of the registration. Making sure all the paperwork, food safety logs etc are always maintained and up to date.

Highlights

- Old kitchen equipment that has proven to be faulty or not in good condition has been replaced with new equipment.
- Request has been put in to hire a new staff member, so we don't need to rely on agency staff when any of our staff members are unavailable.
- Jaymak has been contracted to do a quarterly, thorough ceiling to floor clean of the kitchen.
- Elders feedback and preferences regarding food are actioned immediately.
- Kate Powell one of our Food service assistants has very efficiently taken up the role of weekend chef and is continuing to do a fantastic job.

"We have been consulting with our Elders and taking on board the feedback and recommendations that come our way."

- Wayne Azevado, Chef

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE

Nat Ellis
FACILITIES MANAGER

The maintenance team checks, repairs and updates our gardens and buildings to ensure they are safe for all residents.



The maintenance team provides ongoing maintenance to all ACES gardens and buildings. The team is responsible for ensuring all outdoor and indoor areas are safe and clean for all residents, visitors and staff. The maintenance team are also responsible for the implementation of the external preventative maintenance program. Working as a team, maintenance ensures all programs are up to date and have been logged. The team also works together to ensure all programs are meeting all areas of quality assurance. Maintenance conducts regular audits and checks onsite to provide a high quality environment for all residents, staff and visitors.

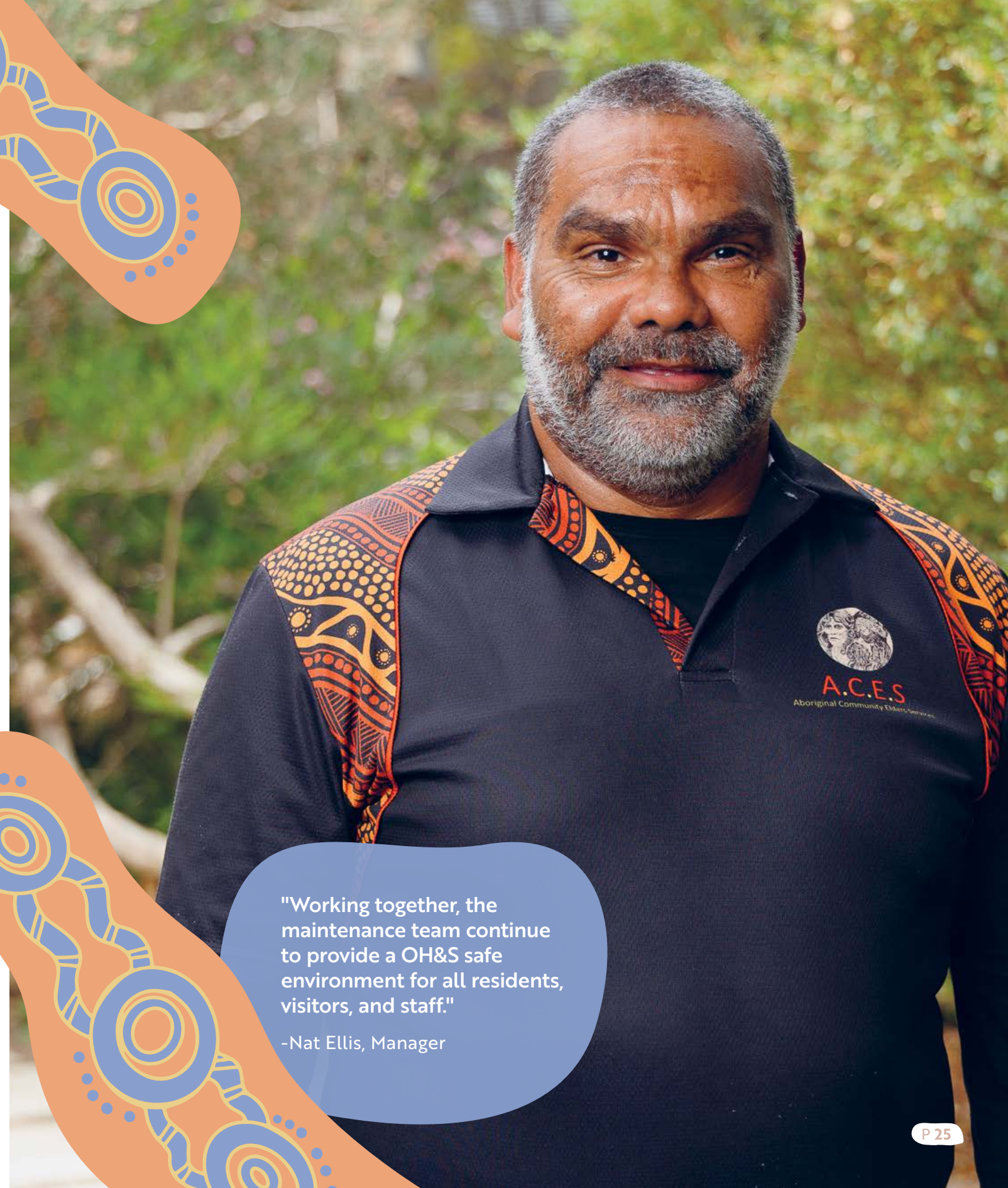
Maintenance is also responsible for the internal work requests which are logged using ACES internal work request forms. All requests are completed in a timely manner to continue to create a safe area for all. With the maintenance team's proactive workplace audit the team have been able to reduce the number of requests that have been logged over the past twelve months.

Due to the changes over the last year, the team have established new cleaning rosters to create a safe coronavirus environment and follow all guidelines introduced by the Department of Health. The team attends regular training to provide a high-quality service to all residents, visitors and staff.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus epidemic, the maintenance team have been unable to complete further projects at this time.

Highlights

- Maintenance team have remodeled the PAG area to accommodate a safe working environment during coronavirus epidemic. The team relocated wall cabinets to accommodate the installation of the interactive white board. The team then repainted the room and erected new desk for the ACES team to utilize.
- Working with external providers, maintenance overlooked the removal of dangerous trees on the ACES site. The removal of trees ensured the safety of residents, visitors and staff attending ACES



"Working together, the maintenance team continue to provide a OH&S safe environment for all residents, visitors, and staff."

-Nat Ellis, Manager

KCACP - KOORIE COMMUNITY AGED CARE PROGRAM

Michelle Duncan
ACTING MANAGER

ACES provides safe and culturally appropriate home care services that help maintain the independence of Elder's to remain living at home in good health as long as possible.



KCACP is funded through the Department of Health and Ageing. The aim is to provide a range of care services to assist and enhance Elder's quality of life and to maintain their Independence. This will assist them to remain living at home independently, in good health if possible, with culturally and safe home care services such as: Home And Personal Care, Advocacy, Respite Care, Home Maintenance, Social Activities, Prepared Meals, Medical and Hospital Liaison, Case Management, Transport Assistance, Aids and Equipment.

The KCACP – Co-Ordinator/Manager supervises the KCACP Case Managers in their daily and ongoing assistance and support to their delegated Elder's

In response to COVID-19 restrictions:

- KCACP staff have adhered to new policies and procedures. Staff have maintained ongoing care and support through telephone calls and home visits. The home visits enabled staff to check-in on our Elder's. Doing this face-to-face helped address any isolation, anxiety and depressive issues.
- KCACP Acting Manager - Michelle Duncan with assistance from Case Manager - Michael Manger were able to assist Elder's with an Essential Box through Woolworths Online – these Essential Boxes were delivered to our Elder's, and the grocery items ordered would assist them with day to day living which was very much appreciated by Elders.
- KCACP also provided ongoing support to our Elder's with ongoing deliveries of Aces – COVID-19 Packs, the packs were greatly appreciated, they contained Face Masks, Hand Sanitisers, COVID-19 Information Booklets, Puzzles, Jigsaw's, Sanitised Wipes.
- Michael Manger officially transferred from PAG to KCACP as a Case Manager, he has been amazing in this support to the acting manager. His relationship building and work ethic has been greatly received by our Elder's.



"Home visits enabled staff to stay connected with our Elder's. ACES recognised that doing face to face visits would help to address any isolation anxiety and or depression."

- Michelle Duncan, Acting Manager

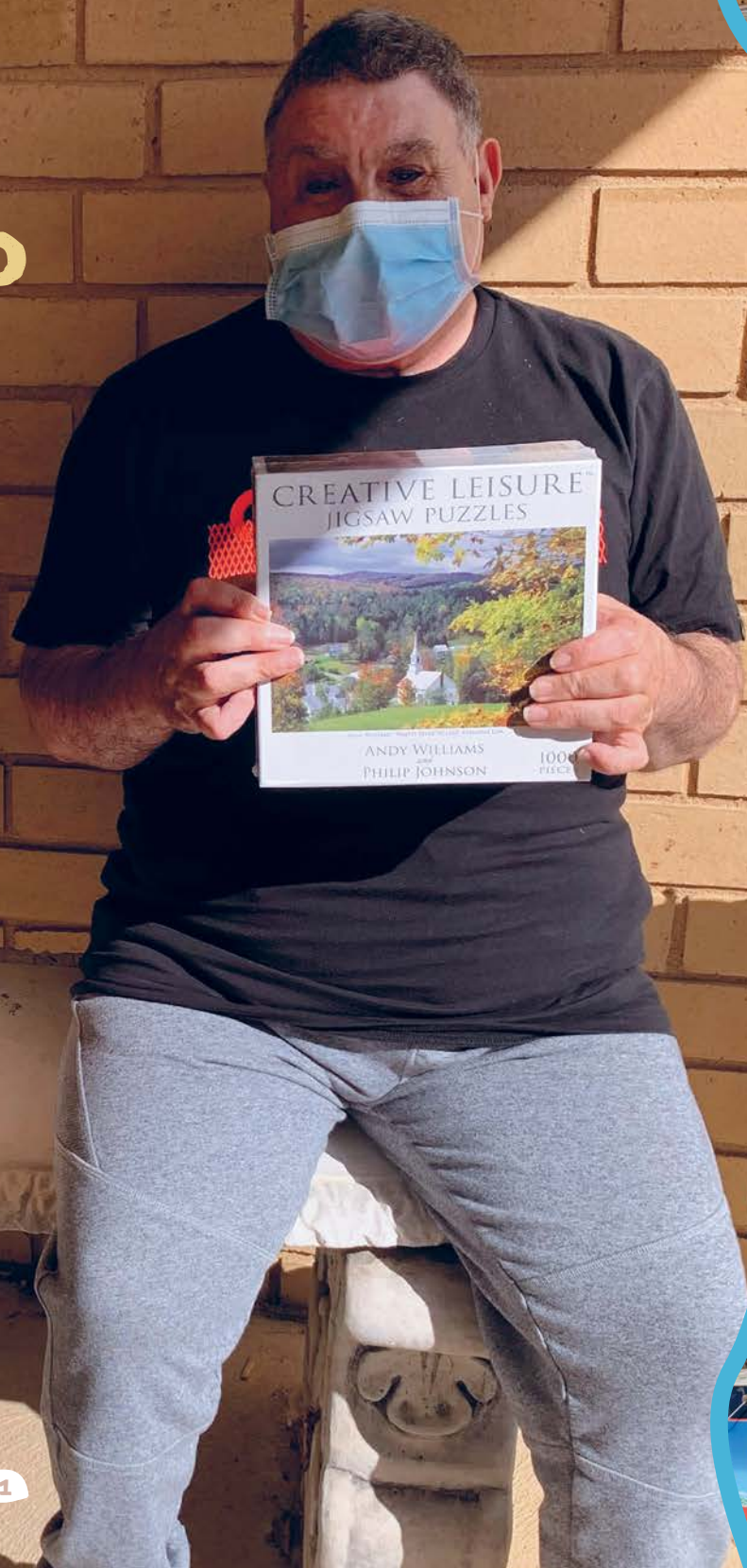


PAG - PLANNED ACTIVITY GROUP

Rhonda Watson
PAG/HACC MANAGER

"Staff made up COVID safe packs, puzzle word book and jig-saw puzzles and did woollies boxes for all clientele, whilst we were in the COVID restrictions"

- Rhonda, PAG/HACC Manager



ACES encourages a 'Wellness and Reablement' approach for our Elders /clients at our planned activity group.



The planned activity group (PAG) is a service for Elders and people with a disability living independently in the community. It is a program of activities offering opportunities for social contact outside of client's homes. The program of activities is designed to meet individual, cultural, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social needs. The program also aims to enhance client's well-being required for their independent living.

The program is based at ACES and is a mixture of on-site and off-site programs also outings.

Since COVID-19, ACES planned activity group, had to change the way we were operating:

- Modified program was engineered through a multiple medium in the active engagement by ACES.
- ACES staff contacted and visiting participants to enable their movement in home visit.
- Contact was maintained with the participants twice a week through the Victorian level staged restrictions.
- Active movement in-home visits and to ensure that they were well supported with nutritious meals and staple food supplies.
- Hours have dropped in our recording statistics from 2021 due to COVID-19 and in the way we were able to keep our contact with each individual participant.
- All 2020-21 data and reports are up to date.
- We have had great feedback from the clients from getting their Woolworths grocery packs.
- We have done a separate folder with an updated client cover file paperwork for all clientele, now we are in the process of updating all care plans..



HUMAN RESOURCES

Anna-Maria Adamadis
HR ADVISOR

I commenced my role as HR Advisor at ACES in February 2021 under the weekly supervision of Gary Seppings HR who has been engaged by ACES on a contractual basis.

While ACES is a relatively small organisation with 50 staff, HR services are always in need. Our staff, especially in the care and services area are predominantly female and diverse.

HR services provide the following support:

- Communicating through policy, training and the recruiting process the organisational values and principles
- Providing assistance to management in managing, recruiting, and selecting candidates for positions
- Collaborate with Line Management by reviewing the need in the department for recruitment and rostering matters
- Liaising with Finance Department reviewing payroll reports, anniversary dates, update every fortnightly calendar and passing on employment starter kits for all new employees.
- Updating ACES Enterprise Agreement.

Recruitment: We have recruited ten new positions, including: two Personal Care Assistant Ongoing, two Personal Care Assistant Maternity leave, Housekeeper Maternity leave, Policy Officer, Catering Manager, Engagement Worker, KCACPS Case Manager, PAG PYP HACC Manager.

Enterprise Agreement: After the negotiations with the Unions, ACES expects to have a new Enterprise Agreement early 2022.

Maternity leave Plans: Four of our staff members are expecting and some already are on Maternity leave. HR assists with the process of staff transition out of and back into work.

Performance Development Planning (PDP): In April 2021 Gary Seppings, Anna Maria Adamadis worked with the line Managers of all ACES Departments completed their PDPs including Nursing, Culinary, Planned Activity Group, Koori Community Aged Care Program. The PDP meetings with Departments were impressive and well presented reflecting on the roles, the values of ACES, meeting and delivering the 8 Age Care Quality Standards.

"As an Aboriginal service with expectations of cultural care and safety for our Elders, having a care workforce that is culturally aware and sensitive is essential."

- Anna-Maria Adamadis, HR Advisor

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Tim Salter, Finance Manager

"The finance team contributed to ACES overall management of the challenges posed by COVID-19 through collaborative work with all other program areas and management of COVID-19 funding available."

- Tim Salter, Finance Manager

The finance team works with each of the departments at ACES. Helping with their budget management and the continued success of their operations for the benefit of our Elders and the community.



The Finance area of ACES provides key financial support to the various program areas of ACES to ensure the continued quality services are provided to the Elders and the community alongside managing the payroll of all staff.

During 2020/21, the finance area had a continued focus on streamlining processes through reviewing processes and utilising programs that allow the area to meet the financial needs of ACES as it expands, and allowing more of a focus on value adding and strategic reporting across the organisation.

Overall, ACES finished the 2020/21 financial year in a healthy surplus position of \$119K. This surplus is largely associated with one off ATO cash flow boost, capital grant funding & recovery on staff costs through Family Safety Victoria Grant.

Alongside the challenges of 2020/21, there were many opportunities for ACES and we saw a significant increase of over 200% in one off grants compared to the prior year. This was alongside securing a further \$970K of one off grants to be utilised in the 2021/22 financial year.

Highlights

ACES finished the 2020/21 financial year in a healthy surplus position of \$119K.

- Increasing one off grants over 200% compared to the prior year.
- Securing \$970K in of one off grants to be utilised in the 2021/22 financial year.
- Effectively managing COVID-19 risks through equipping the organisation with high tech facial recognition/temperature testing cameras.
- Keeping the Elders connected through computer labs.
- Adding comforts for Elders such as new outdoor furniture and massage chairs.

I would like to thank James Atkinson for his strong leadership during this challenging year. I would also like to thank the various finance members who contributed to the success of the area: Josh Anathazhath, Maidelilah Tran, Desmond Corteling, and Denice Joseph who gave birth to a beautiful girl during the year.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the Year ended 30 June 2021

Statement of Financial Position	(\$) 2021	(\$) 2020
Total current assets	5,065,423	3,872,443
Total non-current assets	3,883,600	3,875,017
Total assets	8,949,023	7,747,460
Total current liabilities	1,929,446	916,416
Total non-current liabilities	862,956	793,952
Total liabilities	2,792,402	1,710,368
Total equity	6,156,621	6,037,092

Statement of Profit or Loss	(\$) 2021	(\$) 2020
Revenue		
Grant Income for Operations	3,785,676	3,630,526
Residents Fees	356,505	298,769
Capital, Infrastructure & Other Grants	544,141	166,850
Other Revenue	26,296	132,374
Total Revenue	4,712,618	4,228,518
Expenses		
Employee Benefits Expenses	3,254,320	2,804,539
Resident & Client Support	267,579	196,991
Community Aged Care Packages	220,956	304,210
Building Repairs and Utilities	150,819	110,389
Motor Vehicle & Travel	66,890	92,973
Plant & Equipment	0	39,594
Depreciation & Amortisation Expenses	297,970	260,275
Administration Expenses	334,555	431,306
Total Expenses	4,593,089	4,240,277
Net Income	119,529	-11,759



POLICY, RESEARCH AND STRATEGY

Nigel D'Souza, Senior Policy Officer

Over the coming period we will be looking to advocate for the needs of our Elders to better access to aged care support and to carers in the community who are caring for their loved ones.



The role of Senior Policy Officer has involved working on a number of funding applications. We have been able to raise a significant amount for community outreach programs and our work in improving support for Carers in the community. The role includes managing projects, carrying out research, writing briefs, papers and presentations and assisting the CEO on any organisational matters of benefit to ACES. It also includes representing ACES on external committees and liaising with government and non-government agencies.

ACES is aware of the disproportionate access to services and support our community has to aged care and carer support services. Our work in the carer support area has been supported by Merri Community Health who run the Commonwealth funded Carer Gateway.

We will be looking to boost ACES' capacity to advocate for the needs of our Elders and for better, culturally safe responses to the needs of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Aboriginal) people in our area of operation.

We also aim to make Elders and older Aboriginal people visible in terms of government policy and programs, and to ensure that the needs of older Aboriginal people are included in the Closing the Gap framework.

We successfully gained the attention of the State Government through direct contact with relevant Ministers and representation on the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Senior Victorians. At the Commonwealth level, we engaged with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Council which has been focussed on responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care.

The highlight for the year has been securing \$5.745 million from the Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund. This will enable a substantial refurbishment of ACES including:

- Covid-safe entry and exit and passage
- Nursing home residence and social spaces brought up to standard
- Upgraded kitchen which is ageing and requiring regular equipment replacement
- Up to 4 consultation and counselling rooms
- Up to 20 Workspaces in administration area
- Creation of staff amenity including meal and break room

The refurbishment works will commence in the calendar year 2022.



"Joining ACES in August 2020 during one of Melbourne's earlier lockdowns was an unusual experience with much of the time since has been spent working remotely."

- Nigel, Senior Policy Officer

AGEING AND OUR ELDERS: THE YEAR AHEAD AND BEYOND

ACES is not just a residential aged care service. We have outreach services for Elders in the community and crucially we advocate for the needs of our Elders in the same way as many other ACCOs do for the rights of Aboriginal people.



One of the prominent founders of ACES Auntie Iris Lovett-Gardiner's vision was that it would ensure that no Elders would live out their years in isolation and without support. Since that time, the number of Aboriginal services who play a role in Elders' support has grown, but there is a significant gap. Auntie Iris also saw Elders continuing to play their rightful cultural role in the community.

Population figures show us that by 2028 there will be approximately 2000 more Aboriginal people in the 50+ cohort living across Greater Melbourne. Services and support for Elders and their families is poor currently and given the growth expected in the population, there is a need to drastically increase these.

While the current Closing the Gap framework does not specifically address ageing, it does say that, "Closing the Gap is underpinned by the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, programs and services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved. It also recognises that structural change in the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is needed to close the gap." Indeed, the second of the four priority reforms is:

1. Strengthen and establish formal partnerships and shared decision-making
2. Build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector
3. Transform government organisations so they work better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
4. Improve and share access to data and information to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities make informed decisions.

ACES will continue to strengthen its pathway into ageing and Elders support field to ensure that as growth in the population increases so will the needs. ACES will strengthen its strategic position to always ensure the needs of Elders and their families are a priority within the system.



AGEING AND OUR ELDERS: THE EVIDENCE

This article briefly addresses the potential for the growth in our sector.



Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) Report Draft (Unpublished) The Urban Aged Care Strategy for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Elders Technical Paper #4: Melbourne and Geelong Geo-Spatial Demand and Competitor Supply Analysis, December 2020 says that currently:

The majority (over 70%) of Indigenous Elders do not have access to culturally safe aged care through community-controlled providers. Indigenous Elders are mainly spread thinly across multiple mainstream providers with little evidence that culturally tailored services are being promoted or delivered.

The challenge is that Indigenous Elder access to aged care services in Greater Melbourne is poor. For example, an additional 369 to 469 Indigenous Elders would need to receive care just to achieve equity with the mainstream.

ACES is aware that the demand for aged care and hostel services is greater than can be provided.

"Between 1360 and 1460 Indigenous Elders are estimated to be receiving aged care supports (in-home or residential) in Greater Melbourne. Representing an access rate of between 19% and 21% of the eligible Elder population in the region."

There are five ACCHO providers offering in-home care to Indigenous Elders. This includes ACES.

"It is estimated that between 1295 and 1345 Indigenous Elders are receiving in-home CHSP, HCP or NATSIFACP aged care supports in Greater Melbourne. Of the six Indigenous Providers of aged care services in Greater Melbourne, all provide in-home care in the form of CHSP services (IUIH)."*

*NATSIFACP = National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program

Collectively, these providers are estimated to have approximately 28% of the share of Indigenous in-home aged care recipients in Greater Melbourne. The remaining 72% Indigenous in-home care recipients are supported by an estimated 123 mainstream providers.



ACES is the only National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (home) services provider in Greater Melbourne.

The following is observed in respect to CHSP and HCP in-home services:

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

CHSP service provision is overwhelmingly provided by mainstream providers and represents the around half (estimated to be around 55%) of in-home supports provided to Indigenous Elders by mainstream providers. For example, between 92 to 96 mainstream CHSP providers are estimated to support between 723 to 743 Indigenous Elders, which represents around 70% of Indigenous CHSP recipients in Greater Melbourne.

There is a significant concentration of Indigenous CHSP clients in a small number of Indigenous organisations, with just 3 providers estimated to support around 28% of all Indigenous CHSP clients.

- Indigenous clients are spread thinly over the remaining providers, with nearly 75 providers having less than 10 Elders, and approximately 9 to 10 providers having only 1 or 2 Elders.

Home Care Packages (HCP)

HCP service provision is only through mainstream providers, estimated to be between 154 and 158 providers.

HCP represents only a small percentage of in-home services (around 17%) provided to Indigenous Elders by mainstream providers, supporting around 220 Elders in Greater Melbourne. These 220 Elders are spread thinly over the mainstream providers with less than 10 Elders each." (From 2021 Draft Unpublished The Urban Aged Care Strategy for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Elders

Technical Paper #4: Melbourne and Geelong Geo-Spatial Demand and Competitor Supply Analysis, December 2020)



AGEING AND OUR ELDERS: ANALYSIS

Most Indigenous Elders (72%) do not receive service from an Aboriginal community-controlled service.

There needs to be growth in our sector immediately and over the next five years if we are to meet current and anticipated demand. Demand will be for in-home care as well as residential aged care.

This demand will be in regions outside of inner Melbourne and most likely in the East and South-East, the West and the far North of Greater Melbourne.

ACES is wanting to expand its outreach, however, due to system and program limitations in relation to clients services this is some what challenging from a system perspective.

Due to increased demand, needs of our Elders and their community, ACES is wanting to move to a 60 Bed facility. This will take a significant investment. An estimate of the cost has not been done, but would be at least \$25 million. Such an undertaking could take in the region of 5-10 years and will require upfront investment in fundraising, lobbying and planning.

On top of this direct service delivery, there are other indirect and related needs of families and elders which have not been taken into account in most of the discussion we have come across. The discussion about what is needed usually is at the acute end of need and not the spectrum of ageing needs and wishes.

ACES is keen to grow and realises to truly address and meet the Elders needs of the spectrum ACES identified, it will need greater systemic spectrum funding in order to continue to respond and support the needs of our Elders who experience the following:

- More aged care in the home, in independent living settings and supported care or residential care for higher needs
- Alcohol and drug support for 50+
- Mental health and wellbeing support for 50+
- Advice and information for elders and their families about services and support available to Elders and their families;
- Expert advice about geriatric health issues including dementia and healthy ageing and living options
- Connecting up and assisting Elders and their families to receive appropriate support.
- Advice for elders about living at home independently
- Advocacy with and for individuals and families
- Legal advice in relation to any civil and criminal matters they may be affected by:
 - Elder abuse issues
 - Wills and estate issues
- Cultural matters and connection to country
- Carer related issues advice and support
- Sport and recreational activities for Elders

Gratitude

ACES acknowledges and thanks:

The Victorian State and Federal Governments for their continued support for our service.

Aboriginal Housing Victoria.

The Commissioner for Senior Victorians, Gerard Mansour and his team for their interest and advocacy in relation to the rights of our Elders and for their support of ACES.

Ashurst Lawyers for their pro bono support for ACES with all corporate matters especially our significant refurbishment construction works.

Frame IT for their pro bono work on our IT strategy, Raj Ramasamy for his work on our IT systems, and to Minter Ellison Lawyers for their work on our policies.

Richard Blight of Blight and Blight Architects for his work on our successful submission to the Metropolitan Health Infrastructure Fund for ACES refurbishment works

Service Industry Advisory Group (SIAG) for their support through the EBA and other human resource matters.

Helen Kennedy for her work with us on our Mental health and wellbeing project, Matthew Sanderson for his work on ACES Tender for Project Management Services and Jeral D'Souza for his work on our Finance and Governance.

Thank you also to the Elders and staff who volunteered and gave permission for their photographs to be published. In order to protect the identity of our Elders, names in stories have been changed.

James Henry Photography
Emma Bamblett Artwork
Albie Colvin Graphic Design

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