

2022 - 2023 Annual Report

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.

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In the spirit of reconciliation, Heartbeat Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. We issue this report acknowledging country.

Heartbeat Victoria

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc. [Heartbeat Victoria] is an association incorporated under the Association Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic). It is a charitable institution and is endorsed as a deductible gift recipient. Heartbeat Victoria is the umbrella organisation for Heartbeat Victoria Affiliates and Branches that provide heart peer support across Victoria. Heartbeat Victoria is run exclusively by volunteers.

As a leader in community-based peer support for those living with heart related conditions, we seek to raise awareness of the importance of community-based peer support in improving the quality of life for those living with heart related conditions.

Our Vision

To be an excellent and well recognised peer support organisation which assists in improving the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of people living with heart disease or a heart condition.

Our Mission

To advise and promote associated support groups in conducting peer support activities for people living with heart disease, to ensure they have a better understanding of the impact of their heart disease or condition, how they might seek ongoing services and support in their local area; and how to raise funds to improve cardiac services.

President's report



I hope that all Heartbeat members, their families, and friends have had a prosperous and healthy year! Over the past twelve months we have all become accustomed to our new post-COVID 'normal' daily life. For my part, as a Cardiac Nurse Practitioner, I am experiencing first-hand some of the effects of the lockdowns, cancelled surgeries and procedures, and the lack of face-to-face care. My patients are presenting a lot sicker than they were before. Mostly though, I am aware of the need for kindness and caring, in a health system that seems to have lost some of these amid the pandemic. What a pleasure and privilege it is for me to

provide in-person, individualised and patient-centred care (there is THAT word again), even though no-one can see my smile beneath the mask that I must still wear whilst I am at work in the hospital.

I feel the same privilege and pleasure in representing you all in my role as Heartbeat Victoria President. Over the past year your committee has been busy rebuilding and bringing stability to our organisation. A generous bequest has afforded us some breathing space to make considered choices, as well as to learn our roles. In the year to come we will be moving forward, bigger and better with our new website. This will enable our members to really connect with each other and share our stories and experiences, as well as providing access to some wonderful resources. More than this, it will increase our presence and visibility to Federal and State Government bodies, and other reputable research organisations.

This will enable us to honour the Heartbeat legacy left to us by dedicated past and present Board Members, as we explore opportunities for sustainability and funding through partnerships with these organisations, who finally value consumers. A number of them are seeking Heartbeat members input at policy level. Whilst it is only early days, you can expect to hear more about this in the coming months as we ask those who can to share your experiences as cardiac patients and carers. Ultimately this means health service provision that truly meets the needs of people with heart disease and their families. Regardless of where they live, their ethnic background, income or age.

The only other thing that I ask is that you let us know if there is anything at all that we can do to support you in the wonderful work that you do. In August, I attended the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand annual conference. It struck me as odd that quite a few delegates were talking about this important thing called 'peer support'; something that you have all known about for a long time!

Linda Macaulay
President

The Board

President	Linda Macaulay
Secretary	Barry Nixon
Treasurer	Karen Saccuzzo
Assistant Treasurer	Tamieka Snowden*
Board Member	Mark Braybrook
Board Member	Robyn Fennell
Board Member	Gail Newton
Board Member	Christine Rees*
Board Member	Kevin Reid

* New Board members since the last Annual Report

Board report

Since last year's annual report there have been several changes in Board membership and positions. In early 2023, the Board Secretary Amanda Adams moved to the Northern Territory and as a consequence the Board President at that time, Barry Nixon, took up the position of Secretary and Linda Macaulay (previously Assistant Treasurer) took up the President's role. In addition, in early 2023 two new members (Tamieka Snowden and Christine Rees) were appointed to the Board.

The Board was very disappointed that the Members' Gathering planned to take place in Bendigo in October 2022 was unable to go ahead due to the disastrous floods but hopes that there will be a further opportunity for members to meet in person.

During the year, Heartbeat Victoria has been contacted on several occasions in relation to providing speakers for community groups or by research organisations seeking participants in heart related research. Board members have also represented Heartbeat at several conferences including Christine Rees and Barry Nixon who attended a training day for the Australian Cardiovascular Health and Rehabilitation Association Victoria (ACRAVic) in Melbourne.

The Board's project to review and update its website is nearing completion and members and the new site is expected to be launched very shortly. During the past year, the Board also received valuable feedback from members to inform the development of a new three year Strategic Plan which will also be finalised in the coming months.

The Board acknowledges the passion, commitment and great work delivered by affiliates and branches for their respective communities, particularly in these still challenging times when community support and connection is vitally required. The Board thanks members for all they have done during 2022-2023 to assist those with heart-related conditions.

Our affiliates and branches

Ballarat	Bendigo (Affiliate)
Goulburn Valley	Grampians
South Gippsland	Sunraysia (Affiliate)
Latrobe Valley (establishing)	

As Covid restrictions have eased during the past year, our affiliates and branches have continued to provide much needed peer support for members with heart related health issues through meetings, social, physical and fundraising activities. For some however, access to hospitals continues to be restricted.

Heartbeat support and activities

In particular, affiliates and branches have continued to provide:

- Information and discussion sessions covering topics of relevance to members' health issues and sharing their stories.
- Tailored newsletters addressing heart-related community information.
- A point of contact (by phone) or email for people experiencing heart related health issues for the first time.
- Volunteering at cardiac rehabilitation programs to raise awareness of peer support available in the local community. However, access to these programs continues to be somewhat compromised due to Covid.
- Walking exercise programs support exercise for heart health and maintaining motivation.
- Fundraising through a range of initiatives, for example, can collection recycling, Bunnings sausage sizzles and raffles.
- Social activities to support and connect members and share information.
- Regular dinners, meetings and forums with a variety of specialist speakers covering health and community issues.
- Donations to community facilities and local hospitals of equipment including defibrillators, holter monitors, sets of scales, treadmills to support cardiac services.

Ballarat

Heartbeat Ballarat has had a very successful year and the Heartbeat Ballarat Committee is very happy with the way the branch is functioning for the members and by the members.

Membership is up, members wellness continues to improve, and members disease burden has reduced. The weekly walking programs, monthly meetings with guest speakers, and social connection activities remain well supported. Sunday movie and meal, visits to Phantom of the Opera and the Sound of Music, Christmas in July, and our upcoming December Christmas Cruise to Tasmania have all proved popular.

Patients self-refer or are referred to Heartbeat Ballarat Walking Groups on completion of cardiac rehabilitation. Each week four walks are offered, with a total of 74 regular participants. Since the program commenced, nearly five years ago, a total of 6324 walks have been achieved.

Ballarat Heartbeat actively reaches out to new cardiac patients through Lived Experience Educators speaking at all three Ballarat Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs about the availability and benefits of cardiac peer support, not being sedentary and joining in regular social connection activities.

Three Heartbeat Ballarat members have also been cardiac consumer advocates with Grampians Health actively participating in the planning of cardiac service delivery and the review of patient printed information and materials.



New in 2023 has been the embracing of ‘wake, wee, and record’ for Grampians heart failure patients. Heartbeat Bowls Tournament funds were utilised for fridge magnets and Heartbeat Ballarat is currently running its third collection campaign for bathroom scales. A simple bathroom scale is a weapon in preventing unwanted heart failure emergencies and hospital readmissions. Two hundred scales are needed annually.

For 2024 Heartbeat Ballarat is looking forward to increasing access to peer support by creating a working referral system via GP and cardiologists. The proposal is for members to be trained in providing peer support, inducted, and ultimately visit on the wards of both Ballarat Hospitals. Initial steps have commenced, and grant funding is being sought for training.

Bendigo

With fewer interruptions due to Covid this past year we have been able to hold regular meetings again and to build up our social calendar. Unfortunately, we have yet to be able to access the local hospitals and cardiac rehabilitation programs in the same way as pre-Covid.



Our social activities continue to be very popular with our members and include regular lunches, coffee catch ups and musical events – and of course our annual Christmas in July and Christmas celebrations. A very special event this year was a high tea to commemorate the coronation of King Charles.

Trips to Melbourne for major productions and day trips to a range of other places around the State have resumed and this year we have been able to join with other community groups to ensure the viability of these outings.

Three of our long serving Social Committee members retired at the end of the financial year and the members of Heartbeat Bendigo acknowledge with gratitude the huge contribution they have made over many, many years to the establishment of an extensive program of social events that members enjoy immensely.

Our fundraising continued during the year with a Bunnings Sausage Sizzle, participation in the Rotary Club Trailer Raffle and regular meeting raffles. We were also thrilled to receive \$1000 from Commbank for two awards in the Commonwealth Bank Community Donations Program. We are looking forward to making further donations in the coming financial year for cardiac related equipment for local hospitals.

Goulburn Valley

This financial year has been successful with our members able to participate in a full year of the planned calendar of activities, with no interruptions from COVID outbreaks. Members confidence to be out and socialise again has increased and they value being able to meet together and receive the individual benefits of heart peer support.

We are proud to be in our thirty seventh year of continuous operation. Over this time many people with heart conditions in the Goulburn Valley have benefited from being a member of our Branch, sharing experiences, insights, and information from health professionals to manage their heart condition and improve their quality and enjoyment of life. In addition, assisting families and carers is an important aspect of the peer support available.

Roles shared by many volunteers who work so well together on the Committee all contribute to providing a program with a variety of activities which contribute to the health and wellbeing of members. Our welfare Coordinator visits those who are unwell - cards and phone calls play an important role in maintaining connection to our members. A monthly newsletter has provided valuable communication and information about branch activities and heart health related articles.

Some members are part of a team of volunteers who are on a roster to attend Cardiac Rehabilitation weekly and we also provide information packs about our Branch. This provides the opportunity for those attending to meet some Heartbeat members and to learn more about the Branch.

A Can Collection Program is our main fundraising project, in addition to donations. The funds support Goulburn Valley Health with Cardiac or Emergency equipment. During this past year six Blood Pressure Holter Monitors have been purchased for the Clinical Diagnostic Unit. We value and appreciate the strong partnership we have with Goulburn Valley Health and acknowledge the staff and Dr Jenniffer Coller Cardiologist, for their commitment to the continuance of Heartbeat GV Branch.

Raising awareness of heart peer support in the community, enjoying fun and fellowship together, while focusing on maintaining our health, continues to be a core focus of Heartbeat Victoria Goulburn Valley Branch.



Grampians

The Grampians Branch has been experiencing the impact of Covid and the ongoing ill health of some of its Committee members and is currently in recess.

The Board wishes them well for the future and is keen to support them as much as possible.

Latrobe

The formal re-establishment of the Latrobe branch has also been impacted by Covid and the Board looks forward to providing assistance with that in the coming year.

South Gippsland

The last few years have been very difficult for our members as we have lost quite a few, either through going into care or passing on. Activities are greatly reduced as the rest are ageing and it is not made easy by the fact there is no cardiac hospital in the area.

We still meet on the third Friday of the month and follow this with a lunch at the local hotel. At these meetings we hold a small raffle amongst ourselves which brings in a little money.

We have just held a raffle at the local IGA in which the 1st prize was a trailer load of wood and 2nd a knee quilt rug made by one of our members.

We have recently also made donations of \$500 to three children's Heart Clinics (which are all in Melbourne).

Sunraysia

Well, 2023 has been a year of no COVID interruptions and all of our members have really enjoyed being able to socialise and have life back to almost normal.

Our members have enjoyed our monthly Cuppa catch ups which are a great social get-together for us all to discuss any health issues happening to any of us and to give support.

The monthly meetings are still being held at Irymple Hotel. After our meeting we all enjoy a meal and chat together. We have had a guest speaker come along and we plan to do more next year.

Two of our members are still attending the Cardiac Rehabilitation Education program at Mildura Base Hospital every 9 weeks.

At present we are in the process of purchasing a 'Probe' for the Emergency Department at Mildura Base Hospital, and also plan to purchase a defibrillator for a local volunteer group.

This year we have had a couple of new members join our group and it would be wonderful to have a few more members become involved.

Hopefully during the next 12 months we can keep going with our fundraising and will really be back to pre-COVID activities again.



Our financial report 2022 – 2023

These accounts are the final accounts for the 12 months ending 30 June 2023 for Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc (HBVCI).

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc – Alone accounts, not consolidated

	30 June 2023	30 June 2022
Income/Receipts		
Revenue from Government grants	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
Donations and bequests		
<i>Vic Super (Aware Super)</i>	\$ 510.00	\$1,010.00
<i>Donations</i>	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
<i>Bequests</i>	\$77,950.50	\$0.00
Other Revenue/receipts		
<i>Membership & Insurance Levy</i>	\$ 1,215.00	\$0.00
<i>Sale of merchandise</i>	\$ 0.00	\$100.00
<i>Other</i>	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
Other income (incl interest)	\$ 342.91	\$0.00
Total Income	<u>\$80,018.41</u>	<u>\$1,110.00</u>
Expenses/Payments		
Grants/ donations made in Aust	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
Other Expenses		
<i>Insurance</i>	\$ 1,692.74	\$1,604.74
<i>Hall Hire & Catering</i>	\$ 250.00	\$0.00
<i>Postage and Printing</i>	\$ 217.80	\$144.00
<i>Travel expenses</i>	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
<i>Grant disbursements</i>	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
<i>Other (Administration Costs)</i>	\$ 533.89	\$604.00
<i>Other (Web design)</i>	\$ 3,250.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 5,944.43</u>	<u>\$2,352.74</u>
Net surplus / (deficit)	<u>\$74,073.98</u>	<u>(\$1,242.74)</u>

HBVCI is reporting a surplus of \$72,831.24, compared to a loss of \$1,242.74 for the previous year. This is due to a large sum being bequeathed to HBVI in 2022/2023.

A 12 month term deposit was opened on the 19th of May 2023, with \$95,000.00 being transferred from the general account into the term deposit with the monthly interest being credited to the General Account.

Vic Super (part of Aware Super) staff Workplace Giving Program continued its long-standing practice of donating \$60.00 per month to HBVCI up until the 18th of January 2023 when these deposits ceased. The Board is very grateful for their support over many years.

Membership and insurance levies are down again from the previous year due to the reduced number of members.

Balance Sheet

	June 2023	June 2022
Raffle Account & Cash Reserve Account	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
General Account	\$ 25,927.06	\$ 46,883.08
Term Deposit	\$ 95,000.00	\$ 0.00
Merchandise	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Current Assets	\$ 120,927.06	\$ 46,883.08
Equipment	\$ 0.00	\$ 100.00
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 0.00	\$ 100.00
Total Assets	\$ 0.00	\$ 100.00
Creditors and accruals	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Borrowings	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Provision	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Net Assets	\$ 120,927.06	\$46,983.08

Total cash reserves are \$ 120,927.06.

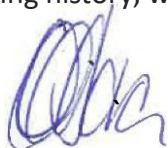
HBVCI continues not to incur any debts or liabilities.

Net asset position of \$120,927.06 continues to be very strong.

Statement of Solvency

That based on our current level of cash holdings and current knowledge of future costs and in line with our spending history, we have adequate funds to pay our obligations and be trading solvent.

Karen Saccuzzo
Treasurer



Robyn Fennell
Board Member

