

ANNUAL REPORT  
2020-21



# Looking to the Future





## Looking to the Future

Meeting the changing needs of vulnerable Victorians in the years ahead.

After what have been a challenging few years for MCM and our sector more broadly, we are excited to turn our focus to the future.

As we near the end of our current 5-year strategy, we are looking forward to moving into a growth phase in the year ahead. This has been made possible by strong efforts over the last two years to return MCM to a state of financial sustainability and operating profitability, allowing us to reinvest in programs and support for Victorians.

In building for the future, we will be drawing heavily on learnings and innovations that emerged from our successful operational response to COVID-19 restrictions.

This report will outline our vision and ambitions for the years ahead across three broad areas.

### Support for the future

### Places for the future

### Ideas for the future

Thanks to the hard work of our wonderful teams, the future is looking bright for MCM and the people and communities we support. We hope you enjoy reading about all the inspiring things to come.



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### Acknowledgement of our Land

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work, and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the culture, dreams, and aspirations of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are the true custodians of the land upon which we live and work.

# MCM Board

Our Board establishes our Purpose, Philosophy and Values; provides strategic direction; maintains governance and ensures that MCM maximises outcomes for all the people and communities we serve.



Di McDonald  
Board Chair



Leonie Boxtel  
Deputy Chair; Chair Board Nominations & Remuneration Committee



Joe Carbone  
Member Board Nominations & Remuneration Committee



John Jeffreys  
Chair Board Finance Investment & Audit Committee



Jonathan Mortimer  
Chair Board Quality Safety & Risk Committee; Member Board Finance Investment & Audit Committee



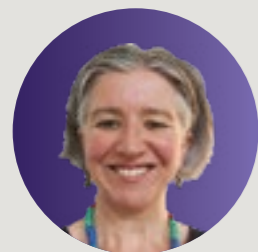
Marion Hemphill  
Member Board Quality Safety & Risk Committee; Member Board Nominations & Remuneration Committee



John Russell  
Former member Board Quality Safety & Risk committee; Member Board Finance Investment & Audit Committee



Paul Scroope  
Chair of Board Finance Investment & Audit Committee



Caroline Sheehan  
Member Board Nominations & Remuneration Committee



David Rennick  
Member Board Quality Safety & Risk Committee



Stacey Ong  
Member Board Quality Safety & Risk Committee

# MCM Executive Team

The team puts the Board's strategies into action, so our staff, volunteers, partners and suppliers can all work together to deliver high quality and effective services, programs and solutions that support people to live their lives, their way.



Vicki Sutton  
Chief Executive Officer



Andrea McLeod  
General Manager, Disability, Early Years and Palliative Care



Wayne Merritt  
General Manager, Homelessness, Justice & Family Services



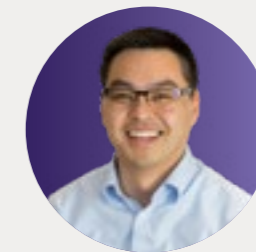
Sally Lasslett  
Principal, The Hester Hornbrook Academy



Fiona Prestedge  
General Manager, People, Quality & Safety



Andrew Sherri  
General Manager, Corporate Services



Ray Ngo  
General Manager, Strategy & Engagement

# Board Chair and CEO Report

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A warm welcome to our 2020/21 Annual Report as we wrap up another extraordinary year at MCM. Despite the turbulence of the unusual year that was 2020/21, MCM has much to celebrate as we continued to move forward and established foundational pieces that position us for the future.

### PLACING CLIENTS AT THE CENTRE

Centring our organisation around our clients continues to be our passionate focus, and this year some major projects were completed, or significantly progressed, to further orient our organisation around the people we support.

#### Healing oriented practice

This year we launched our MCM Healing Oriented Framework, a comprehensive practice framework which we are using to embed a culture of healing-oriented care within every part of our organisation. The 10 principles that make up our Healing Oriented Framework will be reflected in every aspect of our work, including within our systems, structures, processes and physical spaces once fully implemented.

#### Outcomes focus

We continue to progress on our ambition to define, measure and report on outcomes for all programs across MCM and Hester Hornbrook Academy. This year our outcomes framework was introduced in the form of pilots within key programs. Our learnings will inform our organisation-wide outcomes framework currently under development.

### Advocacy for systemic change

This year our advocacy efforts focussed on systemic change, especially within youth homelessness. Our 'Reimagining Social Housing for Young People' report, launched in May 2021, called on the Victorian Government to ensure young people are receiving adequate and age-appropriate housing as the state invests in its Big Housing Build. The MCM Board approved advocacy priorities and our team is preparing for further advocacy initiatives with a focus on the issues facing young people experiencing disadvantage.

### Systems that support client focus

In line with our strategy, in recent years we have been investing significantly in our IT systems to enable staff to spend more time with clients. This year we began implementing 'Passport', which has transformed the way we gather and manage our client information within our Homelessness and Family Services portfolio. Our aim is for our clients to tell us their story only once, to promote healing and avoid further trauma. Staff are thrilled that we now have a tool to enable this, in a system that also ensures we protect the information that we hold.

### GROWING OUR IMPACT

This year our independent school, the **Hester Hornbrook Academy**, celebrated two very exciting developments. First was the opening of a new, purpose designed campus in Sunshine, which deservedly attracted an Australian Interior Design award nomination, and has significantly increased the capacity of Hester Hornbrook Academy to support almost 400 students across three campuses.

The campus opened in time for the launch in early 2021 of our ground-breaking **Living Learning** program, which is supporting young people facing mental health barriers to stay engaged with and complete their education at Hester Hornbrook Academy. It is Australia's first education focussed social impact bond and it is in partnership with the Victorian Government under their Partnership Addressing Disadvantage program. We are grateful for the support of philanthropic investors Gandel Foundation; Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation; Helen Macpherson Smith Trust; Paul Ramsay Foundation; and The Ross Trust who have joined us on this journey.

This year we also commenced delivering the new **Homelessness to a Home** program with consortium partners Unison and Cohealth.

This new program, funded by the Victorian Government, is supporting many people who are homeless to move from hotels, where they have sheltered during the pandemic, into their own homes.

In our disability services, we launched our new **Recovery Coach** service, providing NDIS funded support to people living with a diagnosis of psychosocial disability. The program is offered both face-to-face and via Telepractice across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

### Some goodbyes

During the past year we made the difficult decision to close both our **Compass Clubhouse** and our one-on-one **Community Support** program in disability services. Each of these programs was significantly impacted by the pandemic, which decreased participation at the same time as NDIS pricing challenged our ability to sustain these programs. We farewelled staff and participants of both programs, linking them into other organisations as appropriate.

### PEOPLE LIKE YOU

As we continue to look to the future, we are incredibly grateful for the generous support of the many donors, volunteers and members of the wider community, who help us to do our work every day.

We are especially grateful for the amazing staff of MCM and Hester Hornbrook Academy, who have stretched themselves to continue to provide the best possible support to our clients, participants and students, under the most challenging circumstances in a second year of pandemic restrictions.

Our staff and their dedication, professionalism and resourcefulness during this time have ensured that MCM has been there, just when our community has needed us the most. As we look to the future, we have great optimism for what MCM, and the people we support, will achieve.

Di McDonald (Board Chair) and Vicki Sutton (CEO)

### PS A FINAL NOTE FROM DI

In November 2021, I step down from the MCM Board, and my role as Board Chair, having reached the maximum term allowable after ten wonderful years of service. I leave the organisation in capable hands, after an extensive handover to incoming Chair Jonathan Mortimer. I will continue to support this inspirational organisation, through my ongoing role as a director of Hester Hornbrook Academy.

**Di McDonald**  
Board Chair



*Di McDonald*

**Di McDonald**  
Board Chair



*Vicki Sutton*

**Vicki Sutton**  
Chief Executive Officer

# 1 Support For The Future

## Living Learning

Supporting vulnerable young people facing mental health conditions.

**Living Learning** is a ground-breaking and innovative program designed to help young people overcome barriers to engaging with education. It was inspired by a growing awareness that a high number of Hester Hornbrook Academy students were experiencing significant mental health challenges, which impacted on their learning and outcomes.

Intake data revealed that more than 60% of Hester Hornbrook Academy students had become disengaged from education because they weren't getting the mental health support they needed. This lack of support puts young people at greater risk of long-term disadvantage, limited employment opportunities and even homelessness.

By providing students with flexible learning options combined with mental health support, **Living Learning** is empowering them to take charge of their own futures. **Living Learning** is available at no cost to those aged 15-21 who live with a mental health condition and have attended 10 or fewer days of school in the last 90 days. The program runs over a five-year period, providing 3 years of support to each student, with post program support available.

### A NEW FUNDING AND OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT MODEL

**Living Learning** is funded under the Partnership Addressing Disadvantage (PAD) program with the Victorian Government. The PAD provides performance and outcome-based measurement for the program and the opportunity to introduce a private capital investment model known as a Social Impact Bond. This represents a new way of working for MCM, and provides an exciting opportunity for us to look more deeply at the impact we are having on the young people we support.

By using evidence and data to inform the program, we can better assess whether we have achieved the outcomes that we set out to achieve with **Living Learning** participants. That will help us make greater progress towards solving complex social issues like those that impact the people we work with.

Special thanks to our important philanthropic investors who allowed this program to get off the ground:

- Gandel Foundation
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation
- Helen Macpherson Smith Trust
- Paul Ramsay Foundation
- The Ross Trust

### Feedback from Living Learning students after two terms



**81%** feel positive about finishing school



**78%** think their teacher believes they can be successful



**73%** look forward to going to school



### A FLEXIBLE AND CARING APPROACH

**Living Learning** builds on the student-centred education and wellbeing support models, already working so well at the Hester Hornbrook Academy. With both a teacher and youth worker in every classroom, students are supported to work at their own pace towards their own learning goals – in all aspects of their lives.

The wraparound support provided by **Living Learning** also includes access to clinical mental health professionals, allied health care as well as specialist educational support to address individual

learning needs. The program also includes a therapeutic bush adventure program designed to provide life changing adventure experiences.

We were delighted to welcome our first 48 **Living Learning** students in Term 1 in 2021 (the start date delayed from Term 2 2020 by COVID-19) – and we learnt a great deal through the first cohort intake process.

In line with our commitment to the performance-based funding model, we will continue to use these experiences to improve **Living Learning** so it provides our young people with the best possible support on their learning journeys.

Most Living Learning students live with more than one mental health condition

**70%**

experience Anxiety and Depression

**20%**

have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

**17%**

have Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD)

## Ben's story

When 18-year-old Ben first connected with the **Living Learning** program midway through 2020, he had completely disengaged from school. He was facing multiple mental health challenges including diagnoses of psychosis, gender dysmorphia and anxiety.

Ben identified becoming more independent and managing his own mental health and wellbeing support as key goals he wanted to work on. **Living Learning** helped Ben develop a plan that included school pick-up once a week,

assistance to re-engage with his GP around his gender transition and a referral to an Animal Assisted Therapy program. He has also engaged with **Living Learning's** CORE Personal Training and WILD Adventure Activity program.

After reporting feeling isolated most of the time in his previous education space, Ben says he has enjoyed being able to build strong and meaningful social connections at school. He is enjoying actively engaging with his new friends in and out of school. **Living Learning**

completed an educational assessment, which has aided Ben's teachers in supporting him to use strategies that suit his needs. Ben has shown that with a supportive environment he can engage and develop the skills needed to feel confident in his education.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636.**

# Recovery Coach

Supporting Victorians living with a psychosocial disability.

MCM was proud to launch our Recovery Coach service in 2021. Funded under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), this program provides support for people living with a diagnosis of psychosocial disability – which can arise from a mental illness and significantly impact a person’s day-to-day living and ability to participate in community life.



**We were one of the pioneering service providers offering this type of support to the community, thanks to a growing awareness that our community’s mental health was being deeply affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

People were being confronted with new challenges and daily stressors that they had never faced before.

Under the program, participants are paired with a qualified recovery coach, who helps them take more control of their life and better manage the complex challenges it presents. Combining the principles of recovery-orientated practice with coaching principles, the program helps people build resilience and hope through strong and respectful relationships.

Coaches focus closely on the individual needs of each participant, taking the time to build strong rapport and develop a deep understanding of that person’s circumstances. The coach then works collaboratively with the participant to develop plans and strategies that cater to their individual needs, and assist them to live a full and meaningful life. Participants set their own goals and choose which community settings they wish to engage with.

While the goal is for all Recovery Coaches to meet regularly, face-to-face with participants, COVID-19 restrictions meant we had to roll out the service online using telepractice technology. We look forward to providing more in-person support and building on the success of this important mental health initiative in the year ahead.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636.**



# From Homelessness to a Home

Delivering housing and support packages to those in need.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit communities across Melbourne hard, but few have had it tougher than the 24,000 Victorians without a place to call home. Throughout, MCM has continued its important work providing housing and targeted support for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In February 2021 the Victorian Government announced the \$150 million From Homelessness to a Home initiative. The program aims to assist 1,845 individuals and families who had been staying in emergency hotel accommodation throughout the pandemic to find secure, long-term housing and access wrap-around support to maintain their tenancy. The goal is to find housing for people as quickly as possible and support them to maintain a stable and safe home.

MCM joined forces with Unison Housing and cohealth to form a consortium to deliver the program. The three, long-established not-for-profits were allocated 348 packages to support people and families in the north and west of the city. Under the partnership, MCM brings expertise in homelessness support and case management. Unison provides property and tenancy management within homelessness services, while cohealth provides allied health services.

Two types of support packages are available to eligible clients: Targeted and Tailored Support and Intensive Support. Both packages ensure recipients have access to

housing and long-term support from specialist homelessness, health and human services so they can address the issues that have contributed to their situation and get the help they need to rebuild their lives. Those that have been provided an Intensive Support package are able to access all of these supports internally.

By June 2021, 348 packages had been allocated and 152 people and families had been re-housed by MCM and the consortium.



**348**  
packages allocated  
by June 2021



**152**  
people & families re-housed  
by MCM and the consortium

# 2 Places For The Future

## Sensory Rooms

Supporting young children to develop and thrive.

This year we were excited to open new sensory rooms at our Early Learning Hubs in Brunswick and Doreen.

With the aim of connecting children to their learning environment and the people working with them, the new sensory rooms were designed by renowned interior design experts, KLD.

Purpose-built, play-based, fun environments, each room contains a range of stimuli such as tactile surfaces and moveable objects, which help children engage their senses, with particular focus on hearing, touch and movement. Children are supported to interact with the materials in the space, as well as with other children and adults in the room. Through this experience, children can learn how to process sensory information from their environment and continually develop new skills.

MCM General Manager, Early Years, Disability & Palliative Care, Andrea McLeod says the sensory rooms are an excellent addition to MCM's Early Learning Hubs.

"Our senses are how we receive information from around us and make sense of the world. Being able to process how our body moves and what we hear, see, feel and smell is vital to all learning and development."

"From time to time, children need a bit of extra support to process sensory information from the environment, and to help them concentrate and learn new skills. For some children this process can be very challenging."

**"For children with developmental delay or learning difficulties, our sensory rooms will provide opportunities to gain new skills in a purpose-built environment"**

All staff in the Early Learning Hubs were given extensive training by occupational therapist Mieke van Brouwershaven, in the Early Childhood Intervention Services team. Through the training, they learnt how to foster each child's individual sensory needs.



MCM decided to incorporate sensory rooms into its Early Learning Hubs after seeing the benefit of the purpose-built sensory room at Frontyard Youth Services, part of the major rebuild of our King Street site in 2018.

The new sensory rooms at the Early Learning Hubs were made possible thanks to the generous support of MCM donors.



## How sensory rooms help a child's development

When a child is born, they first learn about the world and their relationships through their senses. Creative play and interacting with their environment stimulates their senses and creates positive engagement with others.

**Through playing in our sensory rooms, children can develop a range of skills:**

- ✓ Social skills; how to develop and sustain positive relationships with each other
- ✓ Physical development, including fine and gross motor skills
- ✓ Managing emotions
- ✓ Body strength
- ✓ Communication and language skills
- ✓ Literacy and numeracy
- ✓ Creativity and the use of imagination

# Hester Hornbrook Academy – Sunshine Campus

Giving everyone the opportunity to finish school.

We were proud to open Hester Hornbrook Academy's (HHA) brand-new Sunshine Campus for Term 1 2021. Located in one of Melbourne's most culturally diverse suburbs, this state-of-the-art learning hub is fully and uniquely equipped to support our students through every step of their educational journey.

Designed by leading Australian architecture practice, Gray Puksand, Sunshine Academy is a warm, welcoming space which is open and visually connected. It was created to support a spirit of community, encourage inclusiveness and promote interaction.

The building was deliberately configured to provide a sense of safety and home for Hester Hornbrook Academy students. There are seven classrooms, three counselling rooms as well as a fully fitted commercial teaching kitchen. These learning and therapy spaces are connected by generous, circular walkways and surrounded with ample breakout zones and study areas. They give the students the option to meet in groups or enjoy some quiet retreat time to themselves, allowing them to choose how and where they study.

Sunshine campus is also equipped to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing with a specialised basketball court and fitness room located on site.

Sunshine Campus is the third and latest addition to MCM's Hester Hornbrook Academy. Recognising traditional schooling is not for everyone, Hester Hornbrook Academy offers students flexible education options that puts them in charge of their learning. It empowers some of Victoria's most disadvantaged young people to take charge of their own future.

We were delighted when Sunshine Campus was short-listed for an Australian Interior Design Award – Workplace Design category. It was a pleasing reward for all the passion and hard work that went into creating this inspiring space. The nomination recognises excellence in creating an uplifting learning environment for all students.

Construction on Sunshine Campus began in September 2020 and was completed within three months on 18 December. If you would like to take a tour of this cutting-edge learning space, please contact us on 1800 517 218.



“We’ve noticed our attendance levels are higher than they’ve ever been. A big part of that is the building itself, and also the programs we can run inside it.”

Sally Lasslett  
Principal of The Hester Hornbrook Academy

“We aimed to create a sense of openness and freedom throughout our design: a place where students can feel safe and inspired to truly be themselves.”

Mark Freeman  
Partner at Gray Puksand



# Frontyard Youth Services



For Frontyard, the impacts of COVID-19 were significant and had a large affect on how we delivered our youth homelessness services.

To adapt to the pandemic, the Frontyard intake program provided many of its supports over the phone rather than in person at our Frontyard building. Although there were changes in how we operated as we continued to overcome challenges set by the pandemic, our team continued to provide supports to the many young people in need.



Visits to Frontyard by Young People

Frontyard supported 559 young people through the year by providing them access to short-term crisis accommodation. Although this is a lower number of visits to Frontyard compared to previous years, there was a shift to focusing on providing hotel accommodation outside of Frontyard.



Melbourne Youth Support Services Calls Received

We continued to provide many of our intake, assessments and support services to young people over the phone throughout the year when face-to-face visits weren't possible. The phone delivery method reduced the amount of time spent in high traffic areas in the city, on public transport and within the Frontyard building throughout lockdowns.



Nights' Accommodation Provided across 722 stays

Although our access point program worked with a few less people than usual, outside of Frontyard accommodation, there was a significant increase in supports provided for young people experiencing extended stays in motel accommodation throughout the year.

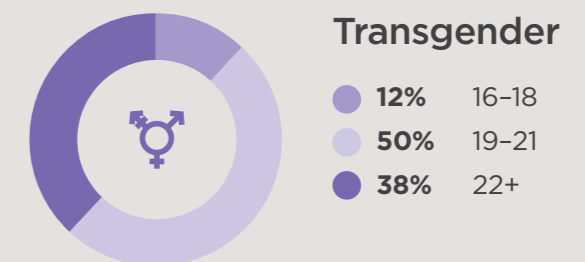
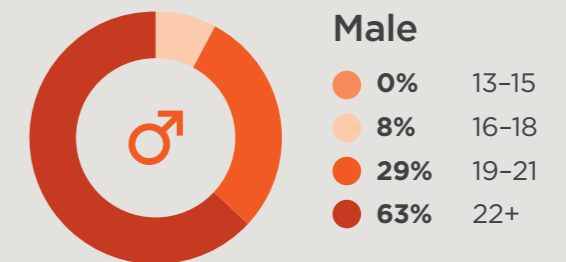
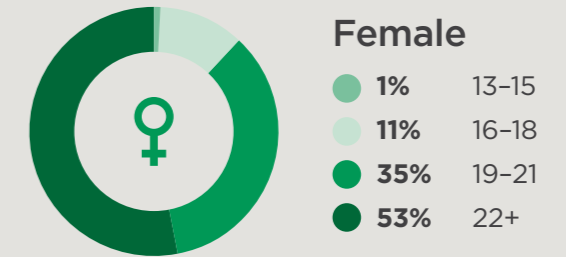


Spent on Accommodation

A significant increase on our accommodation spending when our normal annual budget for accommodation is usually a little under \$50,000. There was an increase in funding provided by the state government to house people during lockdowns, which allowed us to provide further accommodation supports beyond our usual capacity.



## Client demographics



### Country of Birth



### Indigenous Status



# West Refuge

Providing safety and shelter to vulnerable young people in west Melbourne.

August 2021 saw the opening of our new purpose-built West Refuge, designed to break the cycle of youth homelessness in the western suburbs.

This 10-unit refuge was built to replace MCM's existing youth refuge in Footscray. It was inspired by the rapidly rising homelessness rate in the City of Wyndham (an increase of 76% in the five years to 2020).

Built in partnership with the Property Industry Foundation, Hacer Group – and with a generous \$3.5 million investment from the Victorian Government – West Refuge provides emergency and crisis accommodation and 24-hour support for up to 10 young people.

The program will provide young people in the Wyndham and outer Western Melbourne area with support to transition to independence, and other opportunities they have not been able to access. Two of

the ten independent living units are designed to accommodate and support young parents with infants and children.

The modern, spacious facilities at West Refuge include an entry lounge area, social living spaces, kitchen and dining spaces, a children's play area as well as sensory and counselling rooms. Young people can access a wide range of education and living skills programs on site including everything from parenting and housing support to therapy using art, music and animals.

**West Refuge is a crucial step towards getting young people in the west of Melbourne back on their feet, particularly in the current COVID-19 climate.**

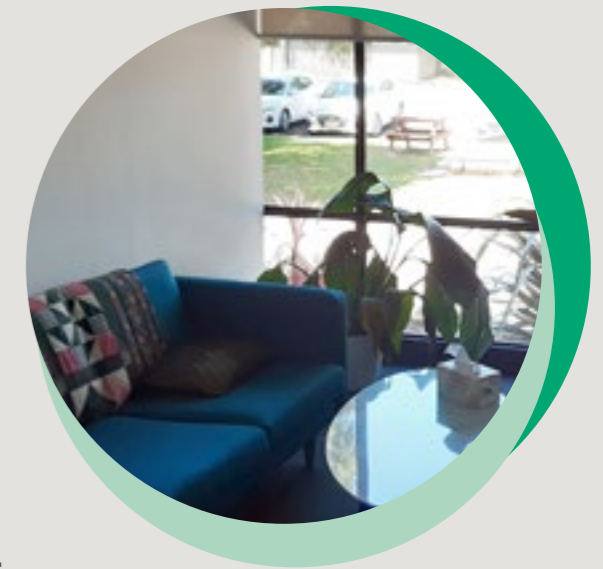
**“This refuge will give young people from the west the opportunity to remain connected with their community during this distressing time, and will have access to MCM’s services, including housing support and therapeutic and mental health programs.”**

Vicki Sutton  
MCM CEO



# Providing Palliative Care for the Future

MCM's palliative care team moved into new, improved facilities in 2021.



Overcoming significant challenges posed by COVID-19 lockdowns, our 60-strong Palliative Care team relocated from North Fitzroy to new, state-of-the-art premises in Thornbury in May 2021. The move was made possible by a \$450,000 infrastructure grant from the Department of Health.

Senior Manager of MCM's Palliative Care Program, John Doran, says the relocation was inspired by a need for more centrally located premises, which are more fit for purpose to support growth, innovation and integration.

“Our new offices have more meeting rooms, new counselling rooms for clients and improved amenities for staff,” John says.

“We also have more tele functions which allow us to connect with clients more easily and get the best out of our Pallcare app, which allows us to better tailor our services to clients' needs.”

John also believes the new premises will enable his team to build on their impressive body of research and innovation.

“We've done a lot of work and put a number of publications out around the impact of COVID-19 in the aged care sector and the complex bereavement challenges it has caused.

**“Many of these challenges have been invisible, and we have played an important role in highlighting unmet needs and providing input to a parliamentary inquiry into this issue.”**

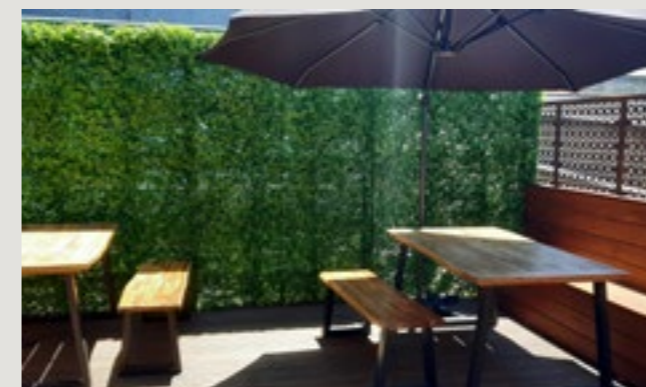
John's team have also conducted ground-breaking research into the provision of palliative care services to asylum seekers and

people with substance abuse disorders. The new facilities will allow more of this critically important work in the future.

As well as the improved amenities inside the building, the Palliative Care team's new home in Thornbury also has a pleasant, relaxing outdoor space onsite and nearby for staff, clients and their families. John says all those who have visited the facilities have responded positively.

“Clients have commented on how comfortable they are, and how the site provides a calm and serene environment.”

Now settled in to their new premises, our Palliative Care team are well placed to continue innovating and delivering sector-leading end-of-life care in the year ahead.



# 3 Ideas For The Future

## Our Future Focus

Driving continuous improvement to the support we deliver.

MCM is committed to ensuring that we keep our clients at the centre of everything we do. It is one of our key strategic goals. Achieving it means considering the people we work with when making decisions across all levels of our business – and it means considering how they will be impacted and how best they can be supported to live their life, their way. Our approach to this critically important aspect of our work is guided by our Healing Oriented Framework.

### HEALING ORIENTED FRAMEWORK

Developed in-house and launched in 2020, MCM's Healing Oriented Framework puts the people we work with front and centre of everything we do. It shapes our mission to establish and contribute to a culture where the values and principles of healing-oriented care become second nature to all staff across the organisation.

Our Healing Oriented Framework was developed to promote the physical, emotional, social, psychological and spiritual health and wellbeing, cultural inclusion and ongoing safety of everyone who interacts with MCM and The Hester Hornbrook Academy – including our staff. It ensures we maintain a holistic view of individuals, families and communities in their ongoing process of healing, and supports our evolution in becoming a healing-oriented organisation.

Through the framework, we are creating a shared understanding about the prevalence and impact

of trauma and traumatic stress on people's health and wellbeing over the course of their lives. We also aim to give people skills and understanding to respond in ways which are helpful.

Our MCM Healing Oriented Framework guides us to focus on strengths and opportunities; to prioritise the re-establishment of safety and trust; to build healing relationships; and to deepen a sense of belonging as we work to increase people's opportunities to meaningfully participate in community life.

**We believe that people are more than their experiences of trauma and traumatic stress, and that healing occurs in the context of safe, collaborative relationships.**



Keeping clients at the centre of everything we do

**Achievements made towards keeping clients at the centre of everything we do, over the last 12 months include:**

- 95% of Homelessness and Family Services staff are now using our new client management system Passport, which supports our clients to tell their story only once, and helps us more deeply understand the people we support.
- 82% of staff across the organisation have completed Healing Oriented Framework online learning modules.

**In the next 12 months, MCM will continue to embed the Healing Oriented Framework in all our programs and services by:**

- further developing our Wellbeing Framework
- utilising workplace champions: people who are passionate about the framework and can continue to embed elements of the framework throughout the organisation
- setting up a practitioner group to enable client facing teams to share and assist each other through practical approaches to how they provide support.

**Instead of asking 'What's wrong with you?' we ask 'What happened to you?'**



# Our Peer Worker Program

MCM's Peer Worker Program is driving innovation in our sector by employing young people with lived experience of homelessness in our Frontyard services.

Peer Workers provide vital support to young people on their recovery journey and help them navigate the challenges of the homelessness system.

MCM Peer Worker Immy, says her own experience of homelessness has helped her better understand the needs of the young people she works with at Frontyard.

Immy says her role is a flexible one, focused on responding to individual needs.

"It takes on many different forms depending on the day. Sometimes it's about listening to someone and helping them work through an issue that's happening for them. Other times it's about encouraging someone to come out of their room and connect with others.

**"The most important thing is making time to make people feel seen. Making them feel human instead of just somebody entered into a system."**

MCM Operations Manager Leanne Nicholson says peer workers have the ability to engage with young people on a more personal level than other team members.

"It can be harder for other staff members to spend that one-on-one time with young people with difficulties that they're facing. It's great for them to work with someone who can genuinely empathise with them."

Peer workers are guided by MCM's trauma-informed and healing orientated frameworks when interacting with young people accessing Frontyard services. Immy explains why this is so important.

"Because of the informal way we often interact with clients, they often open up about their history and the trauma they've experienced. It's really important for us to be trauma informed in the way we respond to this.

"We need to make sure everything is done in a way that is safe, while also respecting their confidentiality."

In addition to the key supporting role our peer workers are

playing, Leanne says they are driving positive change across the entire organisation.

"They play an important role in feeding back young people's experiences of our systems, which allows us to respond in a more meaningful way across all MCM teams."

We currently have two peer workers making a positive contribution to our Frontyard services. Leanne hopes the success of the program will see the model continue to grow across the organisation.

"I'd love to see more people with lived experience across all our roles."



# Reimagining Social Housing for Young People

Empowering young Victorians to break the cycle of homelessness.

While a quarter of our state's homeless population are aged between 12 and 24 (making them one of the most over-represented groups), barely 3% of social housing is allocated to this group. The COVID-19 crisis has made a bad situation even worse for vulnerable young people.

Transitional housing systems, which have remained largely unchanged since the 1990s, were created to address the needs of adults and are designed to respond to people in short-term crisis. They are doing little to provide a pathway to permanent housing and independence for young people.

In 2021 the Victorian Government launched the Big Housing Build, a \$5.3 billion initiative to construct thousands of new homes for Victorians in need, along with the development of a 10 Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy. MCM welcomes this unprecedented investment in social and affordable housing, however we recognise that unless some of that funding is allocated to supporting the specific needs of young people, it will do little to address the crisis of youth homelessness.

That is why MCM is working on a pilot program for young people that ensures access to a safe and secure home with appropriate supports in place, providing them with a pathway to independence. We believe there are three critical components to achieving this outcome:

## 1 REMOVE YOUNG PEOPLE'S FINANCIAL BARRIERS

The current business model of mainstream social housing means providers are often reluctant to accept young people due to their low, insecure incomes (including Centrelink and entry level wages). Young people are often seen as risky tenants, left to bounce in and out of crisis support services.

To address this, we are advocating for an adjustment to the social housing subsidy and rent models to remove young people's financial barriers to accessing and sustaining housing and to support them to live in dignity. We also believe a set proportion of social housing constructed under Big Housing Build should be set aside for young people.

## 2 PROVIDING INTEGRATED SUPPORT

Young people who experience homelessness at an early age are forced to take on a range of adult responsibilities without having been given the time and support to develop the knowledge and skills they require. This includes understanding tenancy rights and responsibilities and how to maintain a property.

Providing young people with life skills support and access to education and employment opportunities is key to breaking the cycle of long-term homelessness.

## 3 HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE PAST

Many young people who end up homeless have experienced trauma during childhood or during their homelessness journey. Many have no safe home to return to due to abuse, neglect, family violence or family breakdown. The impacts of trauma can lead to crippling mental and physical health issues and unhealthy relationships with the substances they have turned to in order to cope.

Any successful strategy to help young people transition from homelessness into safe, secure housing needs to incorporate trauma-informed approaches. It must be able to provide young people with therapy and support for healing and recovery and to help them develop skills for managing stress, anxiety and other mental health issues.

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

MCM has taken significant action to contribute to fit-for-purpose housing support services for young people. This includes:

- Developing new and innovative, medium-term supported housing models with potential to be expanded across Victoria
- Releasing the 'Reimagining Social Housing for Young People' report to feed into the Victorian Government's 10 Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy that is under development. This involved policy development and reform recommendations
- Publishing numerous articles in Parity, a national publication by the Council to Homeless Persons
- Bringing together a group of young people with lived experience to consult with Homes Victoria
- Attending a roundtable facilitated by Secretary for Youth (CEO and young person)
- Participating in a moderated discussion panel, "The Future of Youth Housing", run by the Council for Homeless Persons
- Meeting key State and Federal Government Ministers and ministerial advisors as well as executive government officials to influence the development of the 10 Year Social and Affordable Housing Strategy
- Contributing to the Everybody's Home campaign
- Developed lived experience videos and animations to raise awareness from the perspective of young people



## Looking ahead

MCM has ambitious plans to continue our advocacy for better housing and homelessness support for young people. These include:

- Bringing together leading voices in our sector to advocate collectively to Homes Victoria (which is developing a 10 Year Housing Strategy due to be released at end of 2021) and the Office for Youth (which is developing a Youth Strategy to be released later in 2021)
- Partnering with research bodies and industry to address barriers to accessing housing for young people
- Campaigning to make sure youth homelessness and access to supported housing is high on the political agenda as we approach the state and federal elections
- Piloting new and innovative supported youth housing models.



# Outcomes Framework

Using insights from data to further improve our impact.

This year we have continued our focus towards embedding an Outcomes Framework across our organisation. The development and design of our Outcomes Framework aims to provide insightful client outcome information to support the evidence-based approach we value.

Fundamental to this is the way we collect and analyse data to meaningfully understand the impact of our work. With better understanding comes clearer decision-making across the organisation, and increased transparency of the difference our staff make to the people we support.

We collaborated with program teams to delve into the detail of each MCM service and seek staff insights to develop detailed program logic documents. The program logics are a critical reference to describe the outcome MCM desires and identify key metrics to track short and medium-term data that analyse and evaluate client outcomes.

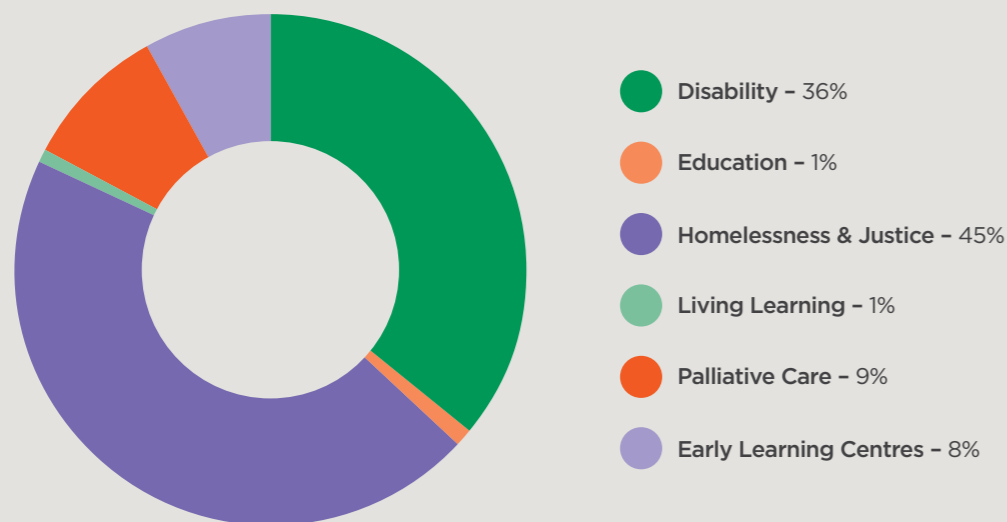
We will continue to work closely with staff to agree the best processes for capturing data consistently, ensuring clients welfare and safety is always our priority.

## OUTCOMES DASHBOARD

Our Outcomes Dashboard reporting aims to provide client and program insights and trends to evaluate client outcomes and overall program performance compared to target expectations and industry benchmarks. Our goal is to influence continuous improvement across all our programs and ensure the sustainability and longevity of our organisation's impact. We hope to share key outcomes of MCM programs more widely into the future to further showcase the positive difference MCM services are making.

We look forward to continuing our outcomes measurement journey as we embed the collection and use of outcomes data across our organisation to further improve our impact.

## Operating revenue



# Thank You

Each year we are genuinely overwhelmed by the magnificent support of our donors and continue to be touched by their loyal support over what's been an incredibly difficult year.

While COVID-19 has disrupted so many things, it has not slowed or mitigated the challenges faced by so many people among us.

The support of our donors shows that we really do live in a strong, connected, and compassionate community.

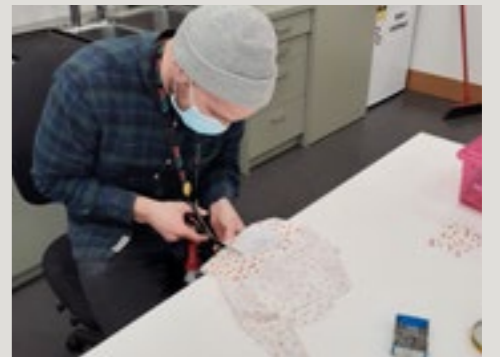
## BUSINESSES DIGGING DEEP IN A DIFFICULT YEAR

In a tumultuous year for businesses and organisations, we were grateful to those who continued to support MCM's vital work.

We put a call out to our corporate supporters to help set up homes for people experiencing homelessness. CGU was one of the many organisations that responded. They donated hundreds of basic and essential items that make a big difference when setting up a new home. Their staff packed these items together to be distributed and volunteered an afternoon to give the gardens at one of our youth refuges a thorough makeover.

Partner organisations supported MCM in many other ways too - through employee fundraising for Sleep At The 'G and by matching generous employee donations in their workplace giving programs, among others. The support of CGU and many others allows MCM to fund vital services for people facing disadvantages where the need is greatest.

# Our Year in Pictures



# Partnerships and Donors

With the support of generous people and organisations, MCM has worked alongside those in need in our community for over 165 years, helping them live the life they aspire to, their way. Thank you very much for your generous support on behalf of the many thousands of people who MCM assists each year. We couldn't do it without you.

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#### **CORPORATE OFFICE**

164-180 Kings Way  
South Melbourne 3205

#### **POSTAL ADDRESS**

PO Box 13210  
Law Courts PO  
Melbourne 8010

#### **CONTACT**

03 9977 0000  
info@mcm.org.au  
**mcm.org.au**

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ABN 56 161 846 149

