



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



mental health
foundation
ACT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is my privilege to present the third report as Board President of the Mental Health Foundation (ACT) for the year covering July 2023 to June 2024.

This has been a time of consolidation for MHF. Our Chief Executive, Chris Ward, has continued to provide sound leadership and improved processes to ensure that our small organisation can support our participants and make a difference in their lives.

The board sets the direction for MHF, and during this period we reviewed and published our new strategic plan for the next five years. This important and accessible document sets out the framework to align our work under three strategic pillars:

- ➔ providing a community dividend
- ➔ offering community leadership
- ➔ ensuring a sustainable organisation.

Another highlight included achieving re-accreditation with both the National Disability Insurance Scheme Quality Standards and the National Standards for Mental Health Services. These two processes noted high levels of client satisfaction about our services, but did identify some gaps in documentation from past years which have now been rectified.

While our focus will always be on providing front-line assistance to our participants, this can best be achieved with well-managed and

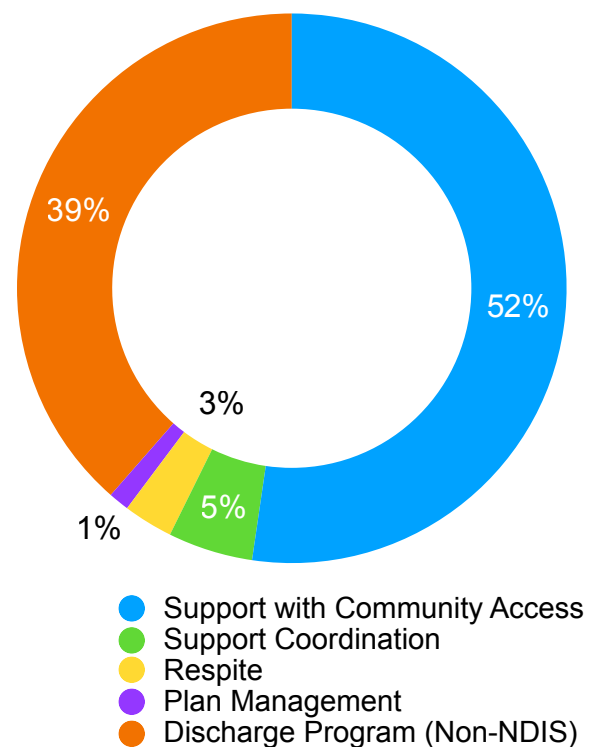
documented systems that are now in place.



During this period MHF continued to provide accommodation and support for patients discharged from the Adult Mental Health Unit at the Canberra Hospital. This program

Another highlight included achieving re-accreditation with both the National Disability Insurance Authority and Mental Health Standards Audit.

Support Services Provided



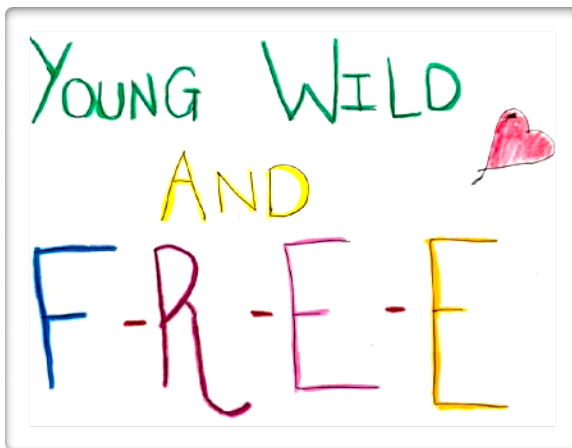
funded by the ACT Government has prevented homelessness for nearly 200 of our fellow Canberrans and I hope that it can continue.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Nonetheless, the bulk of our revenue still comes from providing NDIS-funded services such as accommodation, support coordination and recovery coaching, community access, and NDIS plan management.

The NDIS has changed lives and empowered so many Australians, but it has also been in the news as the government wrestles with issues about its scale and cost.

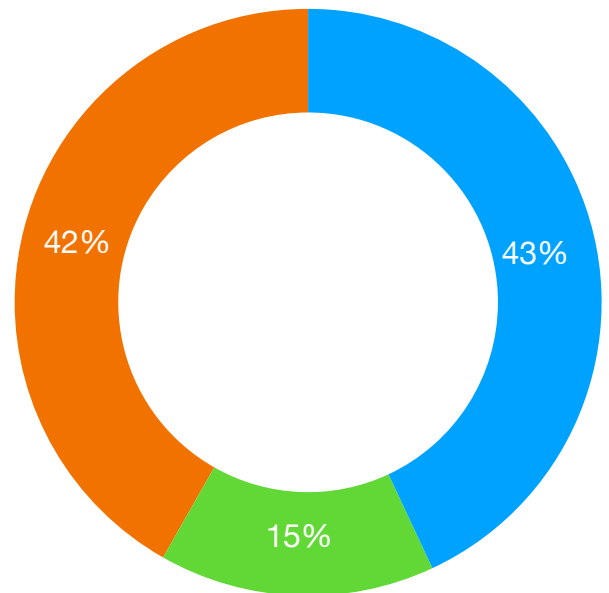
What is less reported is that many of these NDIS services are often provided by small, not-for-profit community organisations such as MHF. The challenge for us is that NDIS payments do not provide enough margins to attract and retain suitably qualified and experienced staff and we note that some of our fellow providers in the Canberra Region have stopped offering NDIS funded services.



While the MHF Board is currently committed to supporting our NDIS-funded participants, we must also diversify our revenue base, and the board worked with the CEO during the year to identify new business opportunities to commence in

2024-25 that will complement our existing suite of programs.

Participants Supported



- NDIS Participants
- Accommodation Residents
- Discharge Program Participants

During the year, the Board has continued to work in a productive and collegiate fashion. Two of our directors foreshadowed that they expect to retire in the forthcoming year after nearly a decade of distinguished service, so a recruitment process commenced as part of our succession planning.

I thank my fellow directors for the generous provision of their skills, expertise and good humour undertaking this important work supporting MHF in the Canberra Region community

Brien Hallett
President

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the 2024 Treasurer's Report.

A continued focus of revenue diversification was the primary driver for our FY 2023-24 budget strategy. This strategy included a focus on maximising service delivery efficiency in NDIS services, a continued successful partnership with the ACT Government's Mental Health Discharge Program, and analysing and developing a business case to diversify

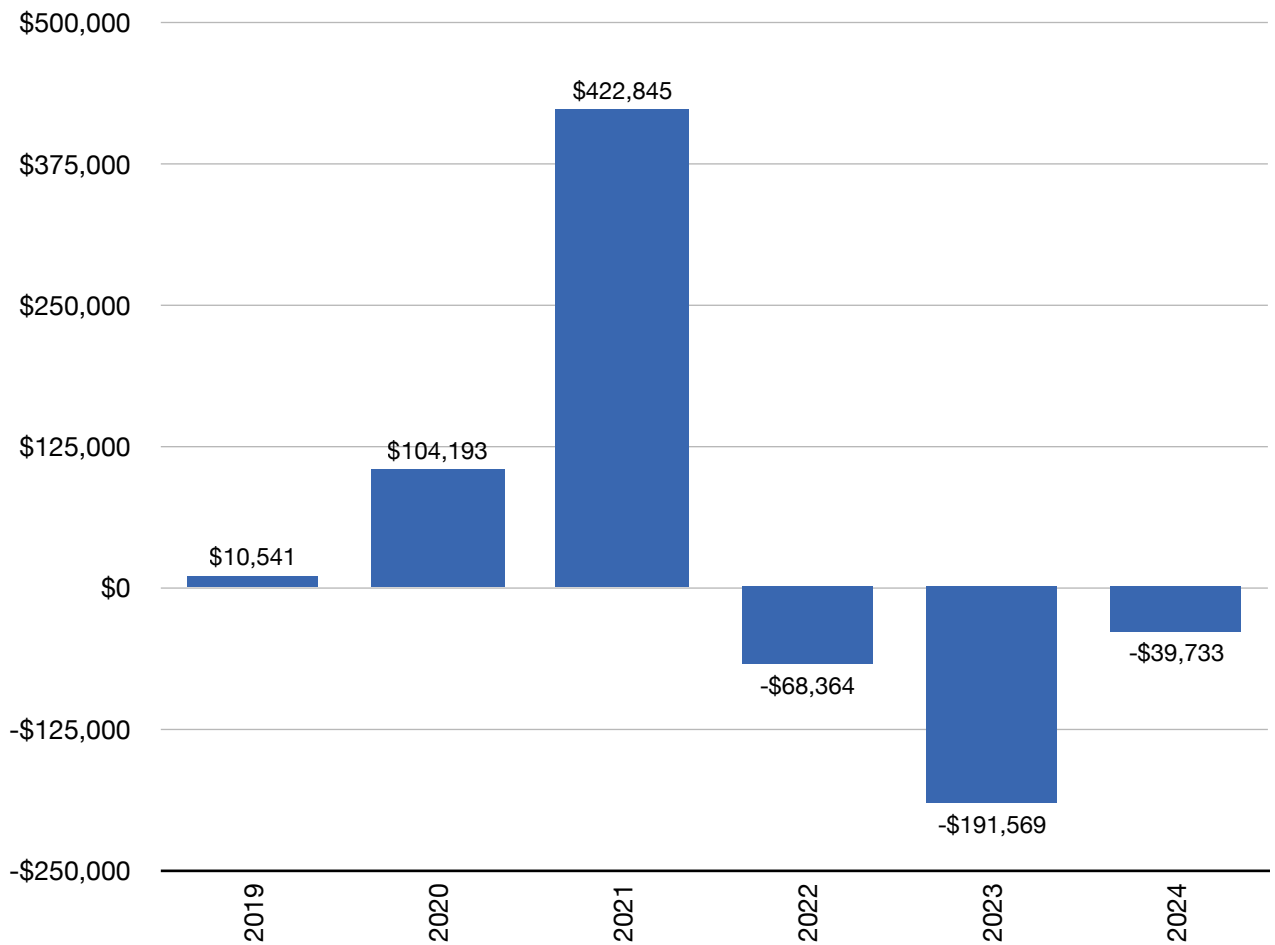
services into a Clear Path Counselling Service program. In addition to service delivery, the Board has continued to invest funds in high interest, term deposits.



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In FY 2023-24 MHF recorded a loss against the agreed budget. The loss was primarily attributed to lower demand for services, resulting in revenues

Financial Performance



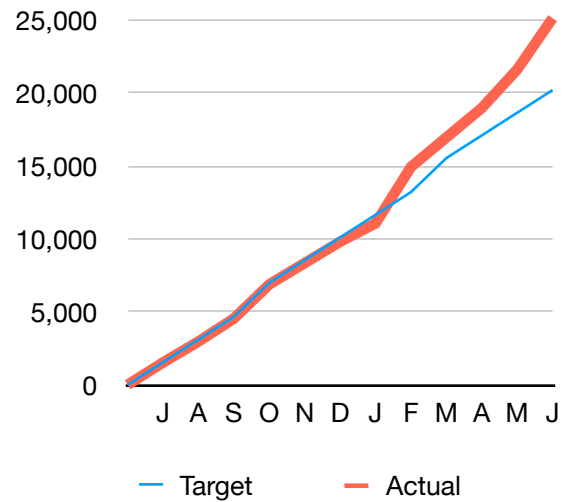
TREASURER'S REPORT

being lower than budget. Noting, the MHF ACT team proactively managed expenditure during the year, including effective personnel and resource management, reducing the level of recorded loss for the year. The audit report for FY 2023-24 presented an unmodified audit opinion. However, an Emphasis of Matter – Going concern was identified on the basis that MHF ACT has recorded three years of consecutive losses and the ACT Government’s Mental Health Discharge funding has significantly been reduced after 30 June 2024. These trends and negative cash flows from operating activities may indicate the Company is unable to continue as a going concern. The audit opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

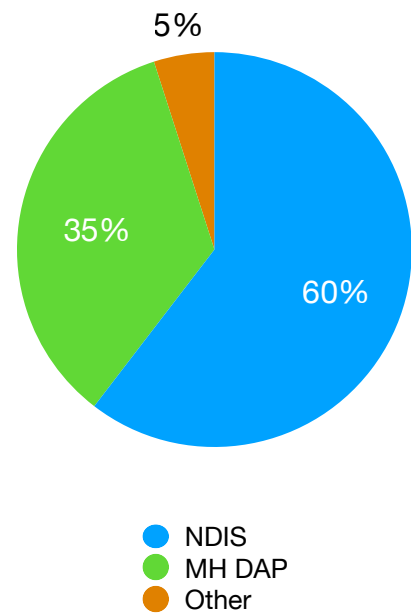
I would like to commend MHF’s finance manager and team for their continued drive to improve financial practices and controls. Thank you again to the Board, the Chief Executive Officer and broader MHF team for your dedication. Your continued support and quality service provision ensures MHF continues to make valuable impact across our community and we continue to identify opportunities to diversify services to meet evolving community needs

David Talbot
Treasurer

Community Dividend Hours of Support



Revenue Diversity



MHF by the Numbers

Revenue	\$2,257,115	Total Assets	\$1035,153
Expenses	\$2,297,048	Total Liabilities	\$276,375
Deficit	\$39,733	Total Equity	\$758,778

CEO'S REPORT



Working with the team at MHF has been an such a pleasure this year. The Mental Health

sector is a challenging space to work in, but having such dedicated and caring people to share the journey with makes all the difference.

We started this financial year with the goal of resetting. We knew there was a lot of tricky decisions to make and work to do in order to put MHF in a position where it can grow its community dividend in a sustainable and purposeful manner.

We achieved this objective and set about looking for opportunities to do more community good.

A shining light during the year was the steady expansion of the discharge program. This initiative supports people from the Adult Mental Health Unit at Canberra Hospital with short term accommodation and support. These people would otherwise be discharged into homelessness, so the direct impact is enormous.

During the year we expanded the service from 1.2 beds nights per day to capacity of 5-6 bed nights at year end. An extraordinary outcome.

NDIS supports continued to struggle. The entire concept of psychosocial supports within the NDIS is under pressure. Year to year, service payments grow slower than costs. In some instance payments have not increased in 5 years.

MHF continue to support this area despite the difficulties. It does however stress the need to ensure we diversify and broaden our revenue base in coming years.

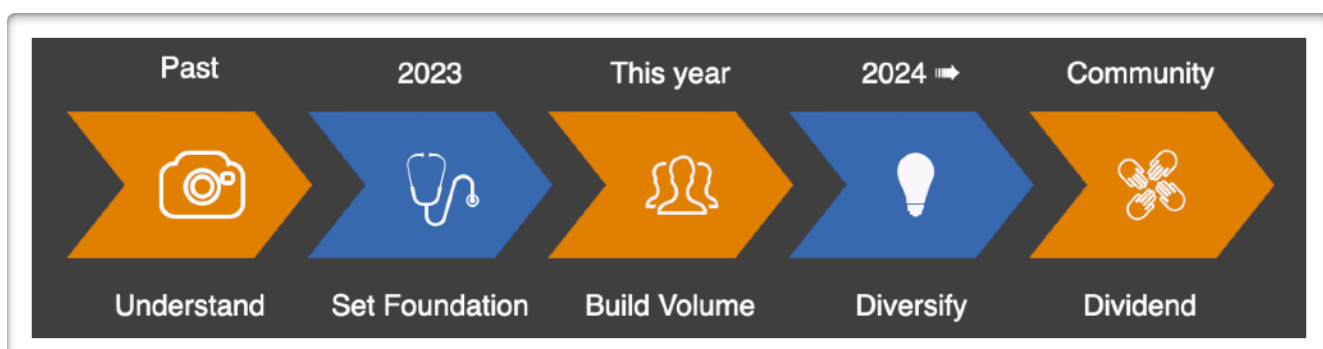
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MHF have modest cash reserves which generated a small revenue stream during the year. MHF is also the recipient of the proceeds of the l'Anson Trust as well as other small donations.

Whilst these reserves are small, they provide us with capacity to explore new initiatives without the need to borrow.

I look forward to changing gears next year and building on the recent successes.

Chris Ward
Chief Executive



Accommodation Services

During the year, MHF oversaw 7 properties that are made available to people suffering mental ill-health. The homes are located throughout the ACT and in a period where accommodation and affordable rental options are scarce, they meet a direct and urgent need in the local community.

Most of the properties provide some form of supported accommodation. Residents of the homes live somewhat independently, with occasional support from the MHF team. These supports vary and depend upon each individual's NDIS Plan.

Many of the residents are long term participants of MHF which is a testament to the standard of supports they receive.



Our Accommodation Services section also delivers the Mental

Health Discharge Program.



In partnership with the ACT Government, MHF provide emergency, short term accommodation for patients being discharged from the Adult Mental Health Unit who have no other accommodation options.

This program grew steadily throughout the year and is operating at capacity. Additional funding could see this program expanded

“This program grew steadily throughout the year and is operating at capacity”

significantly and MHF are waiting for the next round of tenders to be

announced so we can put forward our case for expansion.

As a pilot program this year, we have recently made one of our properties available to a family rather than individuals. Mental health needs remain the focus of the program. This new approach was to investigate alternative service models with a preventative angle. Our first family took up residence in June and we will monitor how the program tracks across the next 12 months.

Community Connection Services

Whilst MHF has traditionally had a focus on providing accommodation

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

for people, a roof is only a part of the solution.

MHF has around 100 active participants at any time, so most of the people we support live in their



own homes.

All these people have an NDIS Plan and MHF, as a registered NDIS Provider, deliver these community connection services.

The volume varies from a few hours per month to over 25 hours per week.

Assistance with Access and **Assistance with Daily Life** activities enable participants to directly connect with external agencies and other social engagements. This is truly valuable services, enables people to take part in their community as well as attend appointments.

MHF offer **Respite Accommodation** for people needing to ‘get away’ from their normal world for a few days.

Support Coordination services navigate and find supports for participants, giving them clear options about the services they receive and the providers who deliver them.

Likewise, **Recovery Coaching** focusses on building participant’s levels of independence to undertake daily living activities.

The discharge program’s objective is to facilitate smooth transition for participants into longer term accommodation in order to build self confidence and autonomy.

Our People

MHF cannot do the amazing work it does without an amazing workforce.

“It’s the job. It is what we do and why we choose to work in this sector”

The 25 frontline staff are the most valued resource MHF has and the feedback from our participants continues to praise their efforts.

The work is often difficult, often emotional and often confronting.

We strive to ensure our staff put their own health at the forefront of their thinking. If our people are not at their best, they will not be able to perform at their best.

It’s the job. It is what we do and why we choose to work in this sector.



Acknowledgements

Mental Health Foundation ACT acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and sovereign Custodians of this land. We acknowledge this land was never ceded and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We are committed to providing inclusive and appropriate support for First Nations people, their kin and community impacted by mental health concerns.

MHF ACT also acknowledges people with lived and living experience of mental ill-health and recovery. We acknowledge and value the experience of people who have been carers, families, or supporters.

We are committed to our vision that all people live with hope, choice, control and good mental health.