

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

## Strengthening migrant women's health and wellbeing for 45 years



## Acknowledgement of Country

Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) acknowledges and pays respect to the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, on whose land this Annual Report was written. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their ancestors and Elders, both past and present and acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. As migrants to this country, we benefit from the colonisation of the land now called Australia. We have a shared responsibility to acknowledge the harm done to its first peoples and work towards respect and recognition.

## Who we represent

MCWH is proud to advocate for the rights to health and safety of all migrant and refugee women, non-binary and gender diverse people living in Australia. We include temporary migrants, permanent residents, asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, migrants with citizenship and people who identify generationally as part of a migrant community, and who are subjected to intersecting forms of discrimination. We stand beside all people who face health inequity and seek a world free from all forms of discrimination.

## About Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

MCWH is a national, community-based organisation, led by and for women and gender diverse people from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

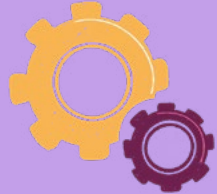
## Our Vision

Migrant and refugee women are free from all forms of discrimination, have autonomy over their lives, and experience health equity, wellbeing, and safety in society.

## Our Purpose

We advocate and educate to strengthen the health, wellbeing, safety and leadership of migrant and refugee women in Australia.

## Our Approach Is:



### Intersectional feminist

We see the many ways in which women's lives, health and decisions are impacted by overlapping social and institutional forces.



### Women-led

Since 1978, we have worked for the recognition of migrant and refugee women as leaders, experts, agents for change, decision makers and active participants in their health and wellbeing.



### Evidence-based

We build a clearly communicated evidence-base and dispel assumptions around migrant women's health. This is central to increasing all women's opportunities for better health and access to better services.



### Collaborative

Together we are stronger. We build relationships with partner organisations to add value to existing work and open more doors for migrant women. We are proud to be part of the Victorian Women's Health Services Network.



## From the Board Chair, Dr Tamara Kwarteng

This year the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health celebrates 45 years of continued leadership, advocacy, education, and the delivery of quality health prevention programs across Australia.

One significant example of this expertise and leadership is the national recognition MCWH received within the 2023 Senate Inquiry into Universal Access to Reproductive Healthcare. The Senate Committee report identifies MCWH's Health in my Language program as an important national platform to deliver sexual and reproductive health education to communities across Australia. We look forward to seeing that recommendation accepted and implemented by government over the coming year.

We are increasingly called upon to be on Ministerial advisory committees, such as Victorian Government's Mental Health Ministerial Advisory Committee (MHMAC). Representing the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health on the MHMAC has provided me with the opportunity to present the perspectives of migrant and refugee women on the mental health care reform agenda. This provides MCWH with an influential platform to provide advice and shape reform on mental health care in Victoria.

MCWH's Strategic Plan 2022-26 focuses our work on impact areas that are priorities for migrant and refugee women: sexual and reproductive health, mental health, gendered violence, COVID-19 and workplace health.

One year into this plan, we have made significant progress in strengthening our business model by delivering over \$184,000 of fee-for-service programs to private business and not-for-profit partners. High demand for our training expertise and health promotion services demonstrates that this will be an important growth area for our income generation over the years ahead.

This year's achievements have been made possible by the vast experience, expertise and ongoing dedication of the team at MCWH, under Dr Adele Murdolo's leadership. I thank the team and my fellow Board members for their insight, tenacity and lived experiences that drive our vision to achieve health equity, autonomy, wellbeing and safety for migrant and refugee women across Australia.



## From the Executive Director, Dr Adele Murdolo

This year was significant for MCWH's Health Promotion work, with 2023 being the first full year since COVID-19 lockdowns where we were able to re-engage with our partners in the food manufacturing and hospitality industries to resume face to face in-language education sessions. This is a vital opportunity to reach the many migrant women who are not digitally connected or who do not use digital means to access health information. We were also glad to be able to return to the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, where we provide much needed in-language preventative health information and education to women.

MCWH shared our specialist expertise via a range of capacity building programs, training programs and specialist communities of practice. We are pleased that almost 120 health and primary prevention practitioners were able to join us for tailored training this year to build their skills and knowledge and deliver a more inclusive, intersectional and equitable service. In addition, we were proud to welcome an additional 79 PACE women to our active PACE network, which is a unique asset to our established leadership program, and one specifically tailored to migrant and refugee women.

This year I have been privileged to represent MCWH on the Commonwealth Department of Health National Women's Health Advisory Council, and as Chair of the Safety Sub-Committee of the Council. I am also proud to extend MCWH's national influence to the Commonwealth Department of Health Ministerial Advisory Committee on Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections. At state level, the expertise MCWH has provided as a member on the Victorian Department of Health Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Health Advisory Committee is making significant change for culturally responsive equitable healthcare for the almost one-quarter of the Victorian population who were born overseas.

It has been a privilege to work with MCWH's amazing and growing team and the Board to make a difference to migrant and refugee women and gender diverse people's health, safety and wellbeing.



# 2022 – 2023 in numbers




We empowered new leaders

**67** graduates of our PACE Women’s Leadership Program

**12** graduates of our PACE ‘Let’s Advocate’ media training program

**71** participants in our fee-for-service training

 **47 participants** of **15 accredited training modules** for the Health in My Language Program.

We built a strong evidence base

 **5** research collaborations

 **3** submissions to government inquiries

 **2** public hearings

**2.6m+**

We represented an important and growing demographic

More than 2.6 million women and girls in Australia were born in a non-main English-speaking country.

\*Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021)

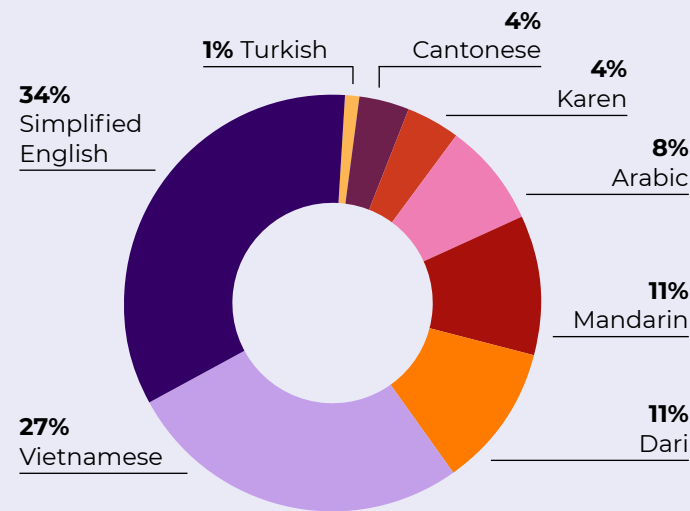


We reached communities through health education

The Health in my Language program engaged with **1,474 groups** and reached **15,873 people** across Australia.


Our Victorian women’s health education program contacted **7978 women** from **53 cultural backgrounds** and ran **420 sessions**.


**Most requested languages in 2022 – 2023**





5


We raised awareness


 **19** national media features


 **1,555** newsletter subscribers


 **9,600** social followers, including 1,600 new followers


 **29,984** website visitors, including 3,984 new visitors

 **4,297** downloads from our website

 **78** new health videos added to our YouTube channel

 **112,506** views of our YouTube video content

 **2230** YouTube subscribers, including 1,310 new subscribers

 **37.28%** increase of first-time visitors to the NETFA website (National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting Awareness)




We provided quality multilingual resources


**5230** health resources in 85 languages added to our new Multilingual Resource Health Educator Portal


**712** subscribers to the SNAPSHOT digest

Our expertise was valued

**23** paid expert consultations

 **7** joint advocacy campaigns with **12** Victorian Women’s Health organisations

 **48** committees and **8** high level roundtable consultations

 **50+** meetings with government and high influence stakeholders

**31** public speaking presentations

We care about Reconciliation

 **83.87%** of our Reflect year Reconciliation Action Plan goals met

 24 staff completed **Indigenous Cultural Awareness training** and

 41 staff participated in **training with Koorie Heritage Trust**.

We have completed year one of our four-year **2022-2026 Strategic Plan**.

Please [click here](#) for a WCAG compatible description of this infographic.

YEAR 1

YEAR 2

YEAR 3

YEAR 4



## PACE Leadership Program

*Funded by: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victorian State Government*

PACE (**P**articipate, **A**dvocate, **C**ommunicate and **E**ngage) has strengthened the way migrant women and gender diverse leaders take the lead within their workplaces, communities and everyday lives by building their leadership capacity and their leadership networks.



In 2022 - 23 our PACE alumni network increased by almost four-fold (**383%**) and now reaches **280** people across Victoria.



We ran **13** tailored leadership workshops



**205** people attended PACE events



**17** women attended our Let's Advocate program



**219** people shared our Set the PACE best practice guide

## PACE Leadership Fee-for-Service Training

*Funded by: Hobsons Bay City Council and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre*

Throughout 2022 - 23, the MCWH Training team delivered PACE Leadership training modules with Hobsons Bay City Council, for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and for the National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation or Cutting Awareness program.

These **tailored modules** covered topics such as the Australian political system, public speaking, healthy relationships, family violence and workplace culture and rights and gender equality.



**19** PACE modules delivered



**43** fee-for-service participants of PACE training modules

PACE is where I have felt seen and heard for the first time in a long time. It made me a better citizen, an involved citizen. I have the courage and skills to engage with my community for a better world and a better life.

*A PACE Leadership participant*



These are great resources. I share the Racism and mental health video with people who are newly arrived migrants to Australia. I like the perinatal mental health video as the style is honest and conversational.

*A MCWH bilingual health educator*

## Mental Health Media Program

*Funded by: The Victorian Department of Health*

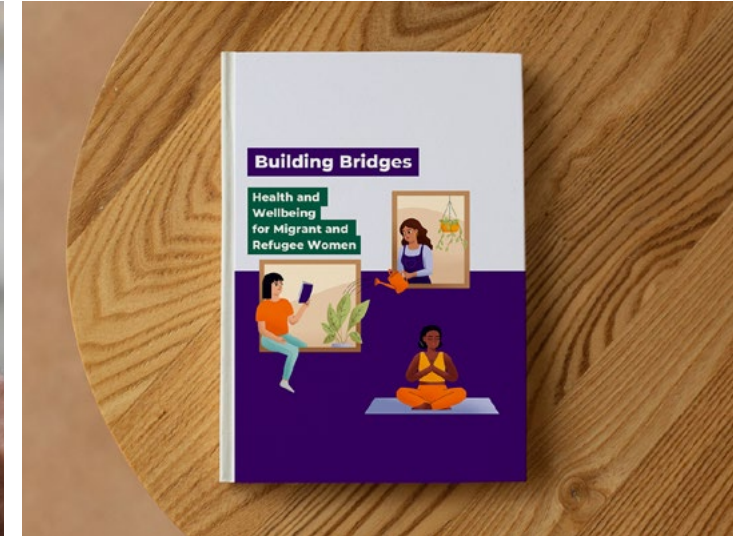
This project grew MCWH's thriving suite of multilingual **audio-visual health resources** by creating quality videos on the subjects of: perinatal mental health, racism and mental health, and promotion for the new Victorian Mental Health & Wellbeing Local service. We also produced a series of 15 information briefs on topics including: menopause, endometriosis, pelvic floor, cervical cancer, breast screening and polycystic ovary syndrome.



**50** new video health resources created in twenty languages.



**107,320** views of our project resources in 12 months.



## Building Bridges

*Funded by: The Victorian Department of Health*

This advocacy and research **project** enabled migrant and refugee women to participate in the mental health reform process through community conversations called 'Share Circles.' Qualitative evidence was generated through focus groups with migrant and refugee women and consultations with key mental health and community-based organisations. Through this project we have been invited to advise on the Diverse Communities Blueprint and Framework, which falls under Recommendation 34 of the Royal Commission into Mental Health. We have led the way in advocating for an intersectional approach to the reform and are currently developing policy recommendations to publish in the third quarter of 2023.



We spoke directly to **99** migrant and refugee women and worked with **8** stakeholders.



Research was conducted in **8** languages: Arabic, Dari, Nepali, Punjabi, English, Karen, Mandarin, Vietnamese.



We reached women from **21** different cultural backgrounds and **18** different countries of birth.



**77%** of our participants were from Greater Melbourne, and **20%** from regional Victoria (3% did not respond to this question)





## Universal Access to Reproductive Healthcare Senate Inquiry

Dr Adele Murdolo, MCWH Executive Director was invited to give evidence at the May 2023 Senate Inquiry into Universal Access to Reproductive Healthcare.



**Two of the 36** recommendations directly referenced MCWH in the **'Ending the Postcode Lottery: Addressing barriers to sexual, maternal and reproductive healthcare in Australia'** report.

- The Senate Inquiry recognised the success of MCWH's National Health in My Language program and recommended the expansion of a bilingual workforce that can provide services in-community and in-language.
- The Senate recognised MCWH's long term concerns that visa status can prevent migrant and refugee women's access to Medicare, PBS subsidised medications and reproductive healthcare and recommended options should be considered to expand reproductive healthcare for all, irrespective of visa status.

## Reproductive Justice Webinar

Funded by: Commonwealth Department of Health

MCWH led this **national webinar** to discuss some of the most pressing issues in achieving reproductive justice in Australia. This included migrant and refugee women's experiences of abortion access, reproductive coercion, and access to services following intimate partner and sexual violence.



Moderated by Dr Ruth De Souza, Writer, Podcaster and Researcher and promoted by Aileen Moreton-Robinson, renowned Australian author.

A welcome address by The Hon Ged Kearny MP, Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care.



**210** registers and **160** attendees



**187** views of the webinar recording



## Health in My Language

Funded by: Commonwealth Department of Health

Health in My Language is a national health education program for migrant and refugee communities, to address barriers to vaccine literacy and uptake, and increase vaccine confidence, by delivering accurate, multilingual information from a professional workforce of bilingual health educators across Australia.

- 65** bilingual health educators, coordinators, and support staff in our current Health in My Language workforce who speak 35 different languages.
- We ran **248** health information sessions in Victoria and **1,400** nationally in 12 months.
- Our Impact of Health education** video has been watched **500+** times in **6** months.

I got confused with too much information and fake news on the internet and was not sure which one is the correct one. Thanks for giving us this opportunity to know where to get the correct information.

A participant in our COVID-19 information and cyber abuse session.

## Health in My Language Multilingual Resource Support

One important component to the success of the Health in My Language program is our ongoing support for our bilingual workforce. We run regular communities of practice for our national team of bilingual health educators (BHEs) and have a dedicated program support team who source and disseminate the latest trusted resources on COVID-19 and a range of other health topics.



We added **39** new bespoke resources to our Health in My Language portal page



We supported **104** new information requests from BHEs



We responded to **11** COVID-19 updates in 12 months to ensure that our bilingual workforce was aware of the latest announcements made by the federal government





## Strengthening our collective knowledge

*Funded by: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victorian State Government*

This co-design and leadership program built the capacity of six migrant and refugee women to become champions of violence prevention activities within their communities. We synthesized the latest research and best practice approaches to prevent violence in multicultural communities in culturally appropriate, accessible, in-language, user-friendly formats.

- **4 Thai language short videos** on financial abuse, spiritual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse, and migration related violence
- **1** English language video on the barriers for accessing services experienced by migrant woman living with a disability
- **3** podcasts in Hindi on healthy relationships, gender equality, family violence and mental health
- **3** podcasts in Farsi on healthy relationships and gender equality
- **20** Dari speaking women aged between 20 and 60 years old participating in information sessions on healthy relationships, gender equality, family violence and Australian law.



All women who attended training and induction sessions to build capacity on the prevention of violence against women and the National Change the Story Framework reported that it 'helped them in an extreme way.'

## Safety and Support in My Language

*Funded by: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victorian State Government*

This project delivered bilingual health education sessions in Arabic, Chinese and Hindi to 35 women on the topics of gender equality, healthy relationships and family violence. We also conducted follow-up interviews and focus groups in-language. The findings were clear:

### All

Arabic and Hindi speaking participants preferred education in their language rather than in English.

### 69%

of all participants said the lack of bicultural workers in the family violence system is a major barrier to accessing support and information.

### 55%

of all participants said that health information delivered in English or with interpreters was difficult to follow.

### 86%

of all participants learned that family violence is not only physical but can also be emotional and financial.



The **Bilingual health education: An essential tool to prevent violence** against women report and the related **four-page summary** show that receiving information in languages other than

English strengthened migrant and refugee women's understanding of family violence and healthy relationships in a culturally safe and empowering way. Migrant and refugee women were better able to make the links between gender inequality and family violence and recognise the early signs of violent or abusive behaviour.



## MCWH Health Education Program

*Funded by: The Victorian Government*

MCWH's annual industry visit program is part of the **Victorian Women's Health Program** (VWHP) and delivers health education in workplaces where the majority of the workforce are women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

The program runs for 6-8 weeks and covers the following selected priority health topics: 1) sexual and reproductive health; 2) Mental health and wellbeing; 3) Gender Equality; 4) Prevention Violence Against Women; 5) Women in changing society; 6) Occupational Health and Services. High impact 30-minute sessions are timed to run during employees shift breaks, where our bilingual health educators are skilled at building rapport and delivering quality health information.

- **5** partners organisations: Turosi, SisterWorks, The Langham Melbourne, Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, Max Solution
- **420** in-language health education sessions delivered to people between age 20 to 60+ from **54** cultural backgrounds in **13** LGAs where migrant and refugee people work, live, play and celebrate.

The greatest impact for our students is that MCWH presented very personal topics but in a safe, professional, engaging manner to engage participants in a non-judgmental and familiar environment. Multilingual health education has been vital to the students taking charge of their health. This education not only impacts our current students, but also their friends and families.

*A quote from our partner at Max Solution*

## Health Education Register

*Funded by: Fee for service paid partnership program*

MCWH has a well-established 10-year partnership with Diabetes Victoria. Our fee-for-service health education program has brought important, evidence-based in-language information to women from migrant and refugee backgrounds on topics such as healthy lifestyle, healthy eating, and the prevention of type 2 diabetes. Diabetes Victoria developed multiple in-language resources such as brochures, factsheets and pictorial guides, in close collaboration with MCWH.



We connected with **586** women from Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese, Punjabi, Afghani, Turkish, Filipino, Greek, and Hindi speaking backgrounds, and facilitated 31 education sessions across south, west, north and east metropolitan regions.



Other 2022 – 23 health education register paid partnership partners include: Council on the Aging, Cultural Perspectives, The Heart Foundation, Hume City Council, NEAMI National, Safe & Equal and the Western Bulldogs.





## Connecting Communities

Funded by: The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Victorian State Government

This **capacity building program** co-implemented with Safe and Equal ensured that the 33 grantees of the Multicultural Prevention Program were supported to deliver PVAW projects aligned with best practice, in multicultural and /or faith settings.



**33** organisations participated in **12** community of practice sessions



**78** users registered to an electronic practice network



**7** editions of the Connected Communities newsletter sent out to **88** recipients



All participants agreed or strongly agreed that attending the workshops increased their understanding of best practice principles and approaches in primary prevention and early intervention with multicultural and faith communities.

## Cultural Adaptation of the Safer Baby Bundle

Funded by: The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

This project is an adaptation of the **Safer Baby Bundle** project developed by Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence, in collaboration with Banksia Gardens, Werribee Karen Baptist Church, Wellsprings for Women, Wise Well Women and women and their families from migrant and refugee communities identified as having an increased risk of stillbirth.



Tailored resources in production in **4** languages: Arabic, Dari, Karen and Dinka



**28** women participated in focus groups



Partnerships with **4** organisations from **4** Local Government Areas



## Leaders of the Future: eSafety Project

Funded by: The eSafety Commission

This **youth focused co-design project** was a collaboration between the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Gender Equity Victoria and the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

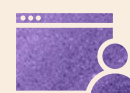
Young women and gender diverse people of colour in Australia experience higher rates and intensities of online harassment due to the compounding discrimination and prejudice based on their gender, race, and ethnicity. We worked with 11 people aged 15 – 18 years old to design strength-based workshops, videos, and social media assets to amplify the capability of young people and their leadership in navigating this space.



**16,300** views of 12 social media assets in 12 months



**71** shares of our suite of eSafety resources



**385** visitors to the project webpage in 6 months



## Bon Iver 2aMillion Campaign

MCWH was selected as the **official charity** of partner of Bon Iver at their Melbourne concert at Sidney Myer Music Bowl on 5th March 2023. The band pledged a proportion of proceeds of their ticket and merchandise sales from their 2aBillion campaign to end gender inequality to MCWH to dedicate to our prevention of violence programs for migrant and refugee women in Australia.

**1,000**

MCWH flyers distributed to Bon Iver fans

**\$8,340 AUD**

of fundraising secured for migrant and refugee women






**Women’s Health Service State Evaluation Project** was initiated in August 2022 to foster a shared approach to evaluation across the 12 Women’s Health Services (WHS) in Victoria, in response to the Victorian Government core additional two-year funding uplift.

- The Department of Health and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing has developed an Indicator Framework; a suite of progress measures to monitor the impact of all WHSs. This Framework will enable monitoring of what the Victorian Women’s Health Program (VWHP), and Women’s Health Services Capacity Building Program (WHSCBP) achieves at the state and service catchment level and is effective from July 2023.
- The project aims to demonstrate sector leadership by identifying additional indicators and measures to demonstrate the unique and pivotal role of our sector in Victoria’s women’s health, gender equality and prevention of violence against women landscape. The Project has submitted the collective impact report **‘Small Change Big Impact.’**

**The State Evaluation Project** has provided MCWH with an opportunity to develop a comprehensive evaluation approach that aligns with the Indicator Framework and our Strategic Plan (2022-26). This approach is being piloted on MCWH’s Health Education Program (HEP). These comprehensive tools will be translated into multiple languages and multiple methods of data collection will be piloted in 2023.

Summary Income Statement

	2023 (\$)	2022 (\$)	
			MCWH prepares financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. The full Financial Statements for the Year Ending 30 June 2023, accompanying notes and Independent Auditor Report are available at <a href="http://www.mcwh.com.au">www.mcwh.com.au</a> .
			
			Total income for 2022-2023 financial year was \$9,830,967 compared to \$8,714,017 in prior year.
			This includes additional funding received from Victorian Department of Health towards Victoria Women Health Program in supporting the implementation of WOMEhn project and expanded work; Women Capacity Building Program for prevention violence against women and gender equality.
			The \$1.3M surplus is largely due to the timing of the implementation of MCWH’s expenditure program and the accounting treatment of Government appropriation funding which is recognised when received. MCWH seeks to time the implementation of its expenditure program to align with requirements set out in the program guidelines. Those guidelines were finalised midway through the 22/23 financial year.
			MCWH deferred expenditure items it would otherwise have undertaken in the 22/23 financial year. Expenditure in respect to this funding will be incurred in the 23/24 financial year. MCWH continues to take a prudent approach in managing its funding income to ensure it is spent in accordance with the intended purpose.
Grant Funding	9,687,059	8,451,869	
Other	143,908	262,148	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>9,830,967</b>	<b>8,714,017</b>	
Employee benefits expense	4,754,878	3,662,621	
Other	3,728,642	4,624,836	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>8,483,520</b>	<b>8,287,457</b>	
<b>Total comprehensive surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,347,447</b>	<b>426,560</b>	
Cash	5,707,767	8,147,728	
Receivables	60,281	176,258	
Other assets	11,158	-	
Property, Plant & Equipment	28,535	17,007	
Rught of Use Assets (Property)	360,243	477,078	
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>6,167,984</b>	<b>8,818,071</b>	
Trade and other payables	322,782	1,551,291	
Provisions	616,236	580,260	
Income in Advance	1,527,805	4,220,157	
Property Lease Liabilities	407,602	520,251	
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>2,874,425</b>	<b>6,871,959</b>	
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>3,293,559</b>	<b>1,946,112</b>	
<b>Current Ratio</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>1.29</b>	



Thank you to our partners, supporters and the communities of migrant and refugee women and gender diverse people who make our work possible.

- Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities
  - African Family Services
  - African Women’s Federation of South Australia
  - Asylum Seekers Resource Centre
  - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
  - Australian Muslim Women’s Centre for Human Rights
  - Australian Vietnamese Women’s Association
  - Banksia Gardens
  - Benchmark Group
  - Beth Nahrain Assyria Association
  - Bon Iver 2aMillion Campaign
  - Cancer Council Victoria
  - Centre for Multicultural Youth
  - Chinese Community Social Services
  - City of Hume Communities for children
  - Cohealth
  - Dame Phillis Frost Centre
  - Deakin University
  - Gender Equity Victoria
- Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre
  - Hobson’s Bay City Council
  - Immigrant Women’s Support Service
  - IndianLink Radio
  - Ishar Multicultural Women’s Health Services
  - Junubi Wyndham
  - Koorie Heritage Trust
  - La Trobe University
  - Langham Hotel
  - Max Solution Education
  - Melaleuca Australia
  - Melton City Council
  - Monash City Council
  - Monash University
  - MSI Australia
  - Murdoch Children’s Research Institute
  - NEAMI National
  - Reconciliation Australia
  - Red Cross Australia
  - Refugee Health Service
  - Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
  - Safe and Equal
- Safer Families Centre of Research Excellence
  - SisterWorks
  - South Migrant Resource Centre
  - Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre
  - STARTTS
  - Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence
  - Swinburne University
  - The University of Melbourne
  - The University of Wollongong
  - True Relationships and Reproductive Health
  - Turosi Food Solution Groups
  - University of Western Sydney
  - Victorian Women’s Health Services Network
  - Wellsprings for Women
  - Werribee Karen Baptist Church
  - Western Bulldog
  - Women’s Health Matters
  - Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
  - 3CR Community Radio Melbourne





**Multicultural Centre for Women's Health**

Suite 207, Level 2, Carringbush Building,  
134 Cambridge Street, Collingwood, VIC 3066

**P:** +61 3 9418 0999

**E:** [info@mcwh.com.au](mailto:info@mcwh.com.au)

**W:** [www.mcwh.com.au](http://www.mcwh.com.au)

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