



Annual Report 2023-2024

Hope Begins at Home: Housing for
Safety and Recovery





Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc. is located on Kombumerri country and we stand in footsteps millennia old.

We acknowledge the traditional owners, the Kombumerri Saltwater people, whose culture and customs have nurtured, and continue to nurture this land, since women and men awoke from the great dream.

We honour the presence of these ancestors who reside in the imagination of this land and whose irrepressible spirituality flows through all creation.

We pay our respects to the Elders of the past and present and look with hope to the leaders of the future.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our country who have made positive contributions to sustaining First Nations People's voice, knowledge and connections.

Ngulungmay nyanyahbu jimbalang.

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Domestic Violence Prevention Centre

OUR VISION

Everyone is safe to live with justice, freedom and hope in their family, community and country.



OUR MISSION

ADVOCATE relentlessly to achieve change.

COLLABORATE to improve safety and to build and share our specialist experience and knowledge.

INNOVATE by listening to those most impacted by domestic and family violence, and by working with them to explore the options to create radical and positive changes.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

PEOPLE: A culture that enables and supports a skilled and sustainable workforce that is resourced, informed and adaptable.

SERVICE DELIVERY: Our service actively engages with clients and stakeholders and is informed by, and learns from, the experiences, expectations, wants and needs of our clients. In our delivery, we prioritise the safety and wellbeing of women and children.

ORGANISATION: We operate a sustainable and scalable service founded on sound governance and decision-making practices that enable us to manage and grow our resources so we can deliver quality services to clients both now and in the future.

ADVOCACY: we build strong partnerships and influence decision-makers to contribute to positive change that will end the impact of domestic and family violence. We actively contribute to, and participate in, activities that increase awareness and understanding of domestic and family violence.

DVPC Board



Melissa is the founder and CEO of Affinity Communications, which has served small and mid-market companies and not-for-profit organisations for the past 13 years. As a strategic brand builder and communicator, Melissa has supported clients to navigate significant changes in their industries and markets, both in Australia and internationally.

Melissa is widely acknowledged as a leading strategist and innovator in building highly valuable brands and high performing, engaged teams in her multi-decade career. Melissa's focus is on spearheading transformations in the approach to, and implementation of, communications, brand and marketing in dynamic, rapidly changing environments.

Melissa joined the DVPC Board in November 2018 and has held the roles of Treasurer (2020), Deputy Chair (2021) and Chair (2022 - 2024).



Marie Cone is a Project Director for Halcyon (creators and managers of over 50's lifestyle communities) where she has been responsible for overseeing the delivery of projects on the Gold Coast and in Brisbane. In this role, Marie has played a lead role in the delivery of sales, construction, community management and budgets of circa 100 million.

Marie has also held roles as Group Sales Manager and Resales Manager. Marie was also the lead in creating Bellas Sanctuary – purpose-built transitional accommodation for Domestic Violence victims and their children. This project was a joint venture between Halcyon / Mirvac and DV connect.

Marie has been a member of the Qld State

Government's Corporate Round Table since 2020. Marie stepped down from the Deputy Chair position in August 2024.



PETER
SMALES

Secretary
July 2023 - April 2024

Peter was born and raised in Southport and spent most of his working life on the Gold Coast. He spent almost 40 years working within the Federal Government and Queensland Government. Most of this was in Senior Executive positions including Corrective Services, Child Protection, Youth Justice, Housing and Homelessness and Disability Services.

Peter is pleased to be able to give back to the community in which he resides by being a Board Member of the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre. He also holds another Board position in an organisation supporting older Australians and Veterans to receive much needed care in their homes.



SUSAN
BEATTIE

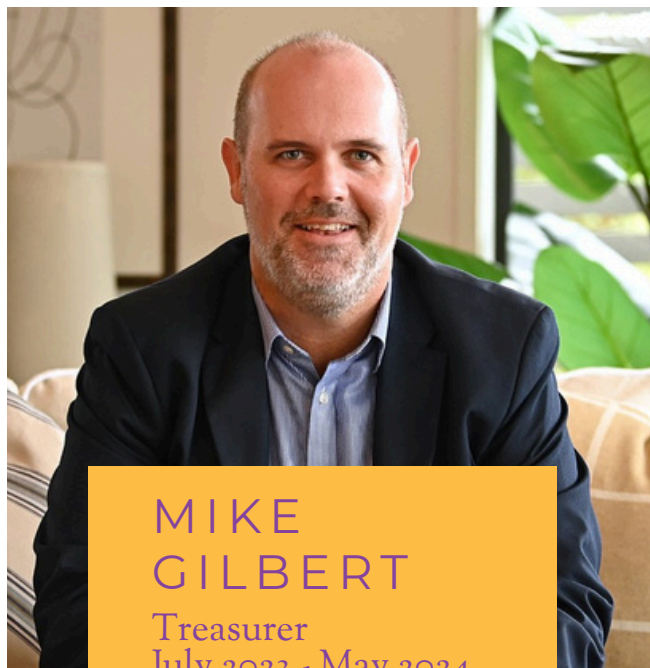
Secretary
April 2024 onwards

Susan has held multiple senior management roles across the public service and community sectors, focusing on driving cross-system improvement and reforms.

She has extensive experience working in statutory and independent oversight mechanisms, including in supporting the establishment of the domestic and family violence death review process in Queensland, and more recently while working with the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence.

With a passion for good governance and continuous improvement in practice, Susan joined the DVPC Board in 2024 as Secretary.

She is also a non-Executive Director for a number of other community organisations and holds a Masters in Forensic Mental Health, and a Bachelor of Behavioural Science (Psychology).



MIKE
GILBERT

Treasurer
July 2023 - May 2024

Deputy Chair
August 2024 onwards

An experienced hands on executive, Mike is a strategic business developer who, after commencing in public practice, transitioned to the corporate sector over 20 years ago. Mike assists organisations on the path to stable and rapid growth, while also bringing a heightened level of governance and organisational structure. Mike has held leadership roles within multiple industries and listed organisations across both Australia and Europe, and more recently held Chief Executive positions in the property and retail sectors.

A Gold Coast native, Mike holds a Bachelor of Business from QUT and has been a member of Chartered Accountants Australia & New Zealand for over 25 years.

Mike joined the Board in June 2022 in a non-executive capacity, with a desire to bring perspective gained from working across five continents.



TONI
LAMB

Treasurer
May 2024 onwards

Toni is a seasoned business owner with 20 years of experience in the financial industry. As a resilient and experienced leader, she empowers everyday people from all walks of life to achieve better financial stability and structure. With a strong presence in both the Australian financial sector and the international arena,

Toni's influence is far-reaching. Her engaging, inclusive, and collaborative approach inspires everyone to participate in their journey toward positive and secure financial outcomes.

Toni holds an Australian Credit License and proudly serves as the Treasurer of the DVPC Board since May 2024.



CATHERINE
HAND
Non-executive Director

Catherine Hand has 22 years of senior management experience in government and non-government sectors. She has made significant contribution to the criminal justice sector serving on multiple boards and committees including Domestic Violence Integrated Response, Queensland Parole Board, Drug Court Reference Group and Serious Offenders Committee. She has had oversight of the development of management practices that respond practically and therapeutically to the effect of violence.

Catherine has an incisive understanding of the intergenerational effect domestic and family violence has on women and children.

Through the DVPC Board she is committed to supporting DVPC in their mission to position

women and children at the very centre of this complex issue and amplify their voices and lived experiences.



MICHELLE
TEIS
Non-executive Director

Michelle is the Managing Partner of GWI, a National management consulting firm specialising in Information and Data, ICT Advisory and Strategy and Public Policy. In this role Michelle is responsible for the development of a team of up to 50 consultants solving complex problems for clients across Australia.

With a wealth of experience spanning over three decades, she has successfully orchestrated high-impact enterprise-level initiatives for clients aiming to harness the power of information and data. Her extensive professional journey is underscored by a proven history of enhancing business results. Michelle's achievements include the strategic preparation of organisations for a digitally empowered future driven by data, all

while prioritising security and data protection. In 2021, Michelle was awarded by Women in Digital as the National Data Leader of the Year. Michelle is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors (MAICD) and joined the DVPC Board in January 2023 as a Non-Executive Director.

Chair's Report

I present this year's Chair's report with a profound respect for what we have accomplished, as I conclude my tenure on the DVPC Board.

I will always treasure the immense privilege I've had to serve this organisation, her staff and her clients. I leave confident in the knowledge that DVPC is in a strong position to continue the important work and advocacy for women and children experiencing the trauma and harm of domestic and family violence.

In this year's report, I am returning to a theme that I shared briefly in 2023, that of the impact of homelessness, and of the urgent need to find safe housing for women and children.

DFV is the leading contributor to homelessness for women, with 45% of women and girls who seek assistance identifying domestic and family violence as the cause.*

There are significant challenges in addressing the increasing risk of homelessness faced by these vulnerable members of our community:

- Access to emergency accommodation, specifically appropriate facilities on the Gold Coast. This is exacerbated by the pressure on accommodation during peak tourism periods, such as school holidays.
- Limited vacancy in refuges and the short term, unstable nature of this form of accommodation.
- Availability of housing for men who use violence, which we see as critical to avoiding women and children becoming homeless or, alternatively, feeling pressured to allow men to return home.

DFV

is the leading contributor to homelessness for women with

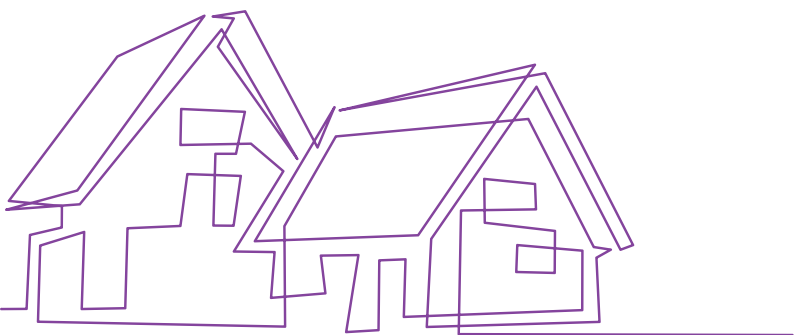
45%

of women and girls who seek assistance identifying domestic and family violence as the cause.

Under the leadership of our CEO, Lucy Gregory, the organisation adopted a mission this year to reduce the risk of homelessness for women and children experiencing violence. This resulted in two successful grant applications, and continuing efforts underway to bring more solutions to the table:

- QLD Gives: \$30,000 Safe Haven Grant offering immediate financial assistance for emergency accommodation, relocation expenses and storage costs; and
- \$45,000 DFV Rent Assist Brokerage Fund: targeted brokerage funds to assist with the purchase of white goods or the payment of rent, rent arrears, rental bonds or water bills.

There have been numerous other highlights in a year which has seen DVPC adopt agile approaches to staff recruitment and retention, professional development and service delivery. All with the single aim of better serving women and children experiencing violence, and having a greater impact across the sector.



Highlights for 2023-2024 include:

- Additional funding: 20% uplift in funding for increased service delivery. Our headcount came close to doubling by 30 full time equivalents thanks to increased funding from the State and Federal governments, including funding under the “National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-2032”.
- Expanded premises: improved facilities and reception services for clients, and a group room designed under trauma-informed principles.
- Co-location pilot: service delivery commenced at Southport and Coomera Police stations under a Federally-funded programme.
- Embedded pilot: we successfully tendered for the embedded DFV specialist practitioner pilot based at Nerang and Robina police stations, with service delivery to commence in the 2024-2025 financial year.
- Intervention programme: we were awarded the Youth Justice Targeted Responses to Youth Crime grant for “Holding Hope Creating Change”. This is an evidence-based early intervention program for young people using violence in their families.
- Conference funding: DVPC secured grants to host two conferences on the Gold Coast in the next financial year: Break the Patterns in partnership with the Domestic Violence Integrated Response, and The Disruption Conference.
- Purple Tent event: re-established this year.

I opened the Board's first meeting of the year with this quote from Adam Grant:

"Your scarcest resource is not your time. It is your attention. The best work flows from paying undivided attention to the projects that matter most to you. Your deepest connections from listening with rapt attention to the people who matter most to you."


It is the leadership, staff and my fellow Board members to whom I pay tribute with this quote and my final report. Because they are the people who listen with rapt attention to the women and children who matter most. The women and children who others attempt to silence. It is only by listening with rapt attention that we can ensure their voices are heard, their pain and trauma recognised, and pathways to hope discovered.

Thankyou for the privilege of serving DVPC. And I wish the incoming Board, Lucy and her incredible team all the very best as they continue to advocate for a better community in which we can all live safely.




MELISSA
DONNELLY
Chair






“This accommodation is way too nice for me, but I am so grateful to have a few days to breathe.”



“No words can simply express my sincere gratitude. The sheer extent and in depth collaboration and support that I have received from yourself and your highly compassionate, professional, ethical, nurturing staff has astounded me.”



“I got to enjoy my first safe nights’ sleep in a long time”



” I feel awesome, I feel I am settled now. Finally, I get somewhere to stay long term, and I don’t have to worry for the next day where I will be so thank you for your hard work, it means a lot to me. If I ever return to the Gold Coast I will say hello.”

CEO's Report



LUCY
GREGORY
CEO

“Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I'll rise.”

MAYA ANGELOU

The words of Maya Angelou have never been more important and more relevant than in this last year. As a Gold Coast community, we haven't risen together through experiences such as the Christmas Storms, floods, and an increasingly difficult economic environment. And amidst all this, DVPC continued to work

with victim survivors and persons who use violence, to end domestic and family violence.

This year all too often I have reflected that our work at DVPC has increasingly become about providing access to the basic human needs in Maslow's pyramid – we give access to food, to clothing, to shelter and sleep. As social workers, psychologists and counsellors we are all familiar with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the pyramid which sets out a five-tiered model of human need within a pyramid. At the base of that pyramid are the psychological needs – air, water, food, heat, clothes, reproduction, shelter and sleep. Never before has access to shelter, a safe place to sleep, seemed so difficult. With the Gold Coast experiencing population growth at levels higher than Sydney and Melbourne, we have a rental vacancy rate of less than 1% and the cost of rentals increased by over 7% in 2023.

As the visibility and awareness of the impact of domestic and family violence grows, victim survivors are told they can leave their violent partner. Most victim survivors wish to stay in their homes, with their children, and continue to be in their community, however this is not often a safe option for them.

For a woman with children, the decision to leave their partner and the violence is a very difficult one. If she decides to risk her financial stability, her home, her neighbourhood and her partner, where is she to go?

All too often there is no-where for them to go.

So victim survivors will reach out to our service, seeking safety and shelter.

We may be able to help by accessing time-limited emergency accommodation, often for one or two nights. Then what are her options?

Is it refuge? A place far from home, in an area that neither she nor her children know? A place where they hide, hoping to start a new life, free from violence?

Refuge is only meant to be temporary, to provide safe secure accommodation in situations where the risk to their life is such that they need to flee. Currently, families are staying for 12 months or more, as there is no-where for them to live, there is not enough 'transitional' or other accommodation for them to live in after refuge. And this is before we consider challenges for those without an income, those without citizenship and survivors with complex health and other challenges.

On the Gold Coast our housing and accommodation challenges are exacerbated by the influx of tourists that flock to our beautiful city, providing our city with income that we all benefit from, but at the same time their presence makes access to hotels, motels and caravan parks very restricted. Our inflated rental market makes housing almost impossible to afford on a single income, social housing is very limited and in high demand and housing prices make home ownership inaccessible for most single parent families.

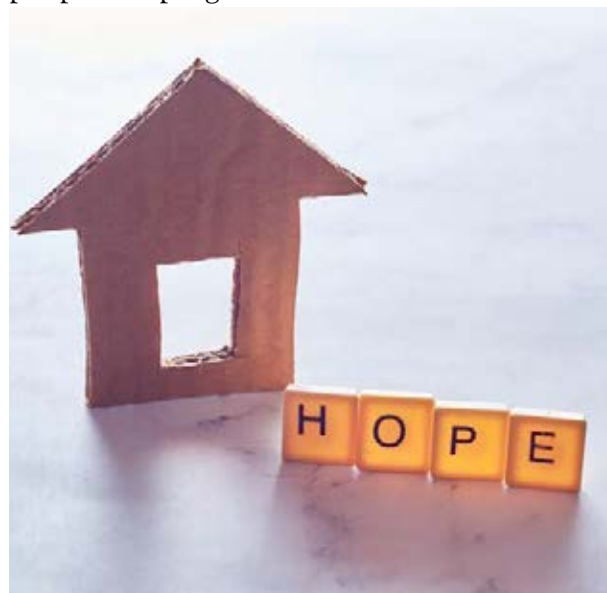
One of the team said to me recently that she feels like she has become a housing worker – that her days are filled searching for accommodation options for families. Long

gone are the days when we only accommodated those who had a viable 'exit strategy' from emergency accommodation. We are accommodating survivors because it is better for them to have a night in a motel than a night on the streets. It is better than a night back with their abuser.

Due to the housing and accommodation crisis, we are now having conversations with women about where the safest place is for her to park her car she is sleeping in that night. Rather than sleep on the streets, some break into vacant homes, which can lead to police involvement and criminalisation.

We are talking women through their options, such as is it better to sleep in a supermarket carpark under a light or by the beach in the dark? As the hotter weather comes, is it safe for her to have the windows down in her car at night to escape the stifling heat in her car she sleeps in?

We are assuring women that the police in our city are so aware of the housing situation that they will not move along people sleeping in the cars.



Survivors are couch surfing, sleeping in tents in the rain, in swags, and in cars as they hope for help and try to hold on to the reasons they left their abusive ex-partner.

It simply isn't good enough.

At DVPC we work with men who choose to use violence, working through with them if there is someone, anyone, they know that they can stay with so that they don't return to their former home. We refer men to emergency housing services, that are overstretched and unable to meet demand.

We work with men to prevent them breaching DVOs by returning home, to prevent them sleeping in the garage or in the car outside the house or down the street. But accommodation options for men are also very limited.

So, they sleep rough – which is a nice way of saying they sleep on the street, if lucky in a tent, vulnerable and homeless.

As a society we must do better.

Access to safe housing should be an enshrined, upheld and irrefutable human right. But in 2024, in our community, it is not. And so we advocate with those in power to understand this crisis and to do more.

We will continue to advocate for better housing options, including priority housing for women, children and young people escaping violence. We continue to work in partnership with the Department of Housing, our refuge sister services and all of the members of the GCDVIR to influence and make systemic change.



Image credit: Central falls school district

This past year our DVIR Housing Pathways Group was invigorated, we made some wins in housing survivors. We met with the then Minister for Housing, sharing our concerns, the plight of survivors and the desperate need for more housing.

This year we were successful in our applications for two grants, both of which we will use in the 24-25 financial year. I have no doubt we will exhaust both of these streams sources of funding, as well as the DVPC brokerage funding that we use for crisis accommodation.

We will continue to advocate for more housing, for better pathways, for priority access to affordable housing for survivors.

Advocacy is a one of the key tenets of our purpose and our mission, and we will continue to advocate for housing for all as a basic human right.

We continue to strive to meet our strategic plan – how do we ensure our work reflects what our clients need from us? How do we make sure our work is safe, promotes wellbeing and promotes the agency of



women, children and young people? How do we honour our sisters who have worked to make DVPC the organisation it is today – an organisation that is inclusive, that embraces innovation and centres around the survivors we serve?

In my first full year as CEO of DVPC, it has been my intention to create a DVPC where our team can support our community and support each other to be well and to thrive. I am so proud of the DVPC we are collectively becoming – an organisation that embraces diversity, a team that supports each other through adversity and who strives to meet the expectations of those who trust us to work with them.

We have worked to provide career options for our team, to provide opportunities for growth and development within our service. We are working on how we 'grow our own' team members and provide entry level employment for new graduates.

We have revived our social committee, we have a team wellbeing room, we have ongoing regular supervision and team building events. The support that I witness each day between team members fills me with a sense of admiration and joy. It is an honour and a pleasure to be a part of the DVPC team.

This year I am very proud of our ongoing advocacy work, as an organisation, as a member of various networks and committees and as a community.

We joined tens of thousands of Australians who took to the streets to protest the increasing and alarming number of women being killed in Australia. We advocated for change, for better accountability for those who use violence, for increased funding to be able to do more to support survivors and to work with those who use violence to make a change.

And we had some successes.

We received increased Federal and State funding, and I look forward to welcoming the new DVPC team members who will join us in the near future as a result of this increased funding.

I want to thank every member of the team who has worked at DVPC this year – those who have joined us, those who have grown with us and those who have moved on to other workplaces.

You are DVPC.

You are the reason that I get to reflect on our year and be proud.

I want to thank the board of DVPC for your hard work, your time and your support of our organisation. Your critical thinking and your openness to new opportunities has allowed us to grow and thrive.

I especially want to thank Melissa Donnelly and Marie Cone. To Marie, who as Deputy Chair, provided her wise counsel and support to me, along with Melissa Donnelly,

who as Chair of the board provided much more support than I could do justice to. Both Marie and Melissa are stepping down from the DVPC board however I am confident that we will continue to see their positive contribution to our community and that they will continue to promote our vital work where-ever they are.

I want to pay tribute to Cornelia Babbage who passed away in 2024. Cornelia was Board President of DVPC, serving on our board from 2008-2016 and only stepped down when our sister service for refuge and migrant women, SARA, was established under Cornelia's leadership at Multicultural Families Organisation Gold Coast.

Cornelia was an incredible force - as CEO of MFO she worked tirelessly to promote the value, richness, and contribution of our multicultural community here on the Gold Coast.

Cornelia believed strongly in the right for women and children to be safe and live free from violence and was instrumental in pilot programs being established between DVPC and MFO that eventually led to the establishment of SARA at MFO.

Not only a warrior woman, Cornelia had a great sense of humour and fun and was always welcoming and treated everyone she met with equity and empathy.

Vale Cornelia.

On a personal level, I want to thank my network of strong women leaders in our

sector who support me, counsel me and strategize alongside me. Your dedication and your tenacity is unmeasurable. And thank you to my family and the families of all of our team, who have supported us unconditionally in this work.

Most importantly I want to thank the people in our community who have reached out to us for support and assistance. It is a truly trusted position that we have, being witness to the hope, the courage and the resilience of survivors and to be able to work with men who use violence to find a way to make better choices and to be safe and loving men in the lives of their families.

As I reflect on the challenges, the successes and the joys of this year, I feel a immense sense of hope. Hope for our organisation, for our community and for a future free of violence. Hope that we will continue to rise.





Her Story

Sadly, DVPC continue to see an increase in women and children directly impacted by the housing crisis when they are attempting to flee domestic and family violence. DVPC hear multiple stories a day of women and children sleeping in cars, tents, couch surfing, or on the street because they simply have no other option. In many cases, we have seen women return to the perpetrator of violence after they fled due to being unable to secure safe alternate accommodation.

There are still many people in our community who ask, “why doesn’t she just leave” without having any understanding of the challenges women face and the lack of options that are available.

There is a vast lack of availability of refuges on the Gold Coast, and rental affordability is beyond the means of most. Additionally, local hotel/motel accommodation becomes completely unavailable whenever an event is on such as GC500, schoolies, air show etc. However, women who flee domestic violence are often seeking to remain on the Gold Coast as they wish to maintain their current employment to ensure some financial stability, they wish to avoid disrupting their children’s schooling, or they have ongoing health care being provided locally such as disability care or medical treatment. Further to this women are often forced to remain on the Gold

Coast to remain compliant with family court orders for care arrangements of children.

In these scenarios, women become faced with the harsh reality of the housing crisis. DVPC may be able to successfully advocate with DV Connect or Department of Housing for a few nights of crisis accommodation in a motel local to the Gold Coast. However, the chances of a local refuge becoming available within that timeframe are slim, and it is highly unlikely a woman would be able to secure a rental property or social housing property within that time. The options very quickly diminish for women in these circumstances, they could become homeless with their children and risk child protection involvement. Or they could give up their job, take the children out of school, and go to a refuge in a highly remote area in Far North Queensland (despite the children begging to remain on the Gold Coast), all whilst the perpetrator of violence goes on to live their life as per usual in the comfort of the home.

BILLIE PRIOR &
LUCY JACQUES

Service Managers

DVPC Accommodation Support



WOMEN, CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS

70

Emergency Accommodation
Bookings

41

Women and their
children accommodated

\$29,968

Spent on emergency
accommodation



MEN'S DV EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM

6.34%

Men referred to DVPC through Police Assisted
Referrals requiring information about
accommodation

12.03%

Men engaged with our services through a
program or at Court were provided with
information about accommodation



Domestic Violence Integrated Response

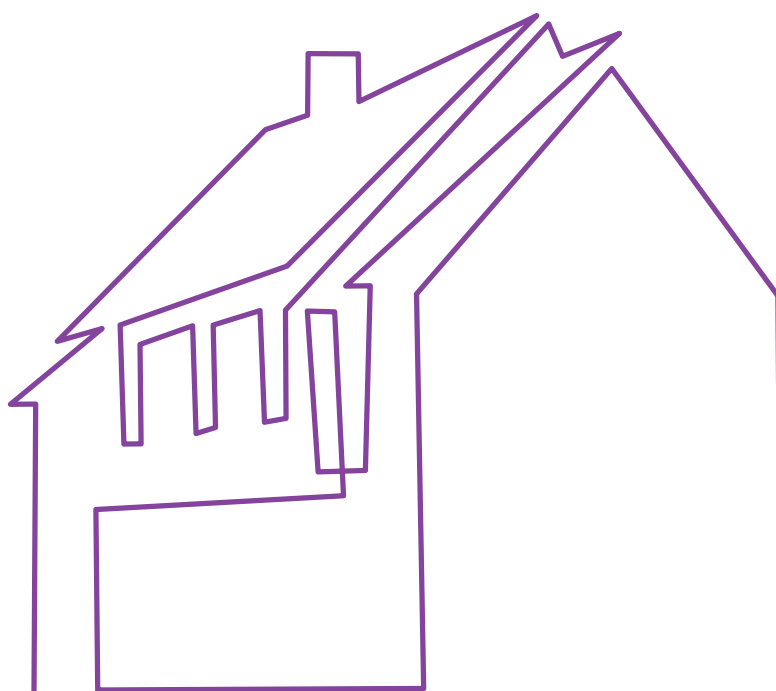
Housing Pathways Group

In 2021, the Domestic Violence Housing Allocation Panel was formed with the purpose of improving the housing and support options and outcomes for victims-survivors of DFV and abuse in the Gold Coast region. Unfortunately, the group disbanded during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In 2023, Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response members highlighted the need to re-form this group, in recognition of the ongoing housing crisis and rising concerns regarding the lack of safe and stable housing options for women and children experiencing Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) on the Gold Coast. This coincided with Community Housing Limited (CHL) seeking to re-establish the Housing Allocation Panel. Therefore, in August 2023, the GCDVIR Housing Pathways Group and CHL's Housing Allocation Panel were merged into the GCDVIR Housing Pathways Group. An invitation to join the Housing Pathways Group was also extended to Centacare, as the agency providing targeted mobile outreach support for families residing in properties managed by CHL.

The current membership of the GCDVIR Housing Pathways Group includes:

- DVPC (Chair and Secretariat)
- MFO SARA Program
- Department of Housing
- CHL
- Centacare
- Parmenie Refuge
- Majella House
- Macleod Refuge
- 54 Reasons refuge



The GCDVIR Housing Pathways Group's primary purpose is finding safe, long-term accommodation for women who have been residing in local refuges for an extended period, as a direct result of experiencing significant barriers in securing a home. The group meets monthly and discusses consent-based referrals with the aim of identifying suitable housing pathways for women and families, through Department of Housing or CHL. In some cases, there may be an opportunity to offer transfer to a transitional property in another refuge, within the group.

During the period of Nov 2023 – Aug 2024, 26 referrals were made into the Housing Pathways group by members agencies of this group. Out of these referrals:

- 8 women secured housing via CHL / Centacare or Department of Housing
- 3 women secured private rentals on their own
- 6 women are receiving ongoing support via CHL / Centacare or Department of Housing
- 9 women have active applications, awaiting long-term accommodation.

Common themes that the Housing Pathways Group members have identified in relation to barriers experienced by women, children and young people seeking emergency accommodation and refuge include:

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

- Limited or no social or financial support
- Emergency accommodation is short-term, usually for less than a week and only extended by a few nights at a time
- Limited hotel/motel vacancy on the Gold Coast due to tourism
- Inability to secure hotel/motel accommodation on the Gold Coast due to accommodation not wanting accept referrals from DV Connect/Department of Housing/DFV Services

REFUGE

- Eligibility criteria
- Limited vacancies
- Suitability
- Financial barriers



The Housing Pathways Group believe that the following initiatives have the potential to improve access to emergency accommodation, refuge, and safe and stable long-term housing, for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

- Expanding guidelines for emergency accommodation / refuge
- Utilising existing infrastructure
- Interstate partnerships
- ‘Staying Home, Leaving Violence’
- Increased DFV Social Housing
- Designated emergency accommodation
- Private market collaboration
- Improving financial supports
- Increased funding for services

Crucially, any changes to DFV supports must occur in ongoing consultation with frontline DFV specialist services, and most importantly victim-survivors in order to ensure that policies meet the needs of victim-survivors. The Housing Pathways Group and the GCDVIR are committed to continuing to find ways to improve access to immediate, short-term, medium- and long-term accommodation for all victim-survivors of DFV on the Gold Coast.

GIRIJA DADHE

DVIR Manager



Case Study

Amy's Story

Amy is a single mother, with three teenage children in her care. Amy was experiencing family violence from her adult son George. This included a history of threats to kill, stalking, physical, verbal and psychological abuse.

Due to the violence and in an attempt to seek safety for her family, Amy had previously moved interstate with her children. However, George's use of violence continued to escalate. There were also concerns for George using illegal substances, mental health concerns, and possible affiliations with outlaw motorcycle gangs.

Amy and her children had recently returned to Queensland, without George, to be closer to her personal supports. However, George located her and the violence and threats escalated. Amy and her children fled the home to keep themselves safe. Amy's primary need was safe and secure housing for herself and her three teenage children, who were all enrolled at a local school. The family was temporarily residing with friends, but this was not a long-term option. Amy declined refuge due to wanting to be close to her family and other social supports.

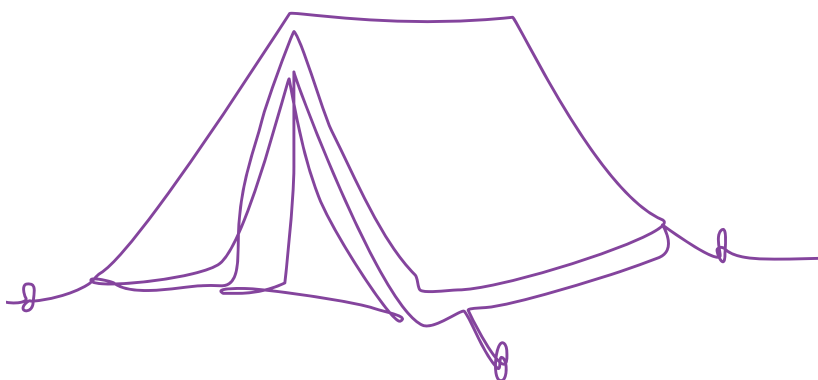
DVPC supported Amy through a High-Risk Housing Referral to the Department of Housing. Subsequently, Amy's circumstances changed and she could no longer stay with her friends. George also moved to a place close to where she was residing.

Amy therefore needed urgent accommodation support and consented to referrals to refuges

within driving distance of her children's schools as she did not want to disrupt her children's schooling by having to change their schools. Amy was unable to find private rentals as she was experiencing extreme financial hardship as a result of financial abuse.

DVPC provided emergency relief support for Amy and her children and discussed safety planning strategies. Suitable refuge referrals were completed. Simultaneously, DVPC sought emergency accommodation through DV Connect, including direct advocacy noting that whilst there had not been an immediate recent incidents of violence, Amy was homeless as a direct result of family violence and was therefore eligible for domestic and family violence supports. DV Connect provided emergency accommodation for a couple of nights.

Amy's refuge applications were unsuccessful and it was noted by some refuges that the age of Amy's children was a barrier in the referral being accepted. Amy and her children were sleeping in a tent as they had no other accommodation option.





Amy was also continuing to contact homelessness services, with additional support from DVPC.

DVPC provided Amy and her children with a week's accommodation by accessing funds from donations received by DVPC. DVPC continued to assist Amy with emergency relief vouchers for food, clothing and fuel.

DVPC advocated on Amy's behalf with the Department of Housing for temporary and long-term accommodation support for Amy and her children. Department of Housing prioritized Amy's matter but there were concerns raised around Amy's safety as she was wanting to reside in areas where there was a possibility that George could locate her. DVPC continued to advocate for Amy's autonomy of choice, noting that Amy had been clear that she must stay in the local area to

ensure stability for her children in senior high school. Furthermore, DVPC highlighted the immediate risk of homelessness for Amy and her children if they did not receive further accommodation support. Consequently, the Department of Housing noted that Amy's application had been listed as a top priority, with ongoing interim accommodation options being sought.

In a few days the Department of Housing confirmed that a suitable property had become available for Amy and her children. Amy expressed that she was both greatly excited and relieved to have secured safe, stable and long-term housing for herself and her children, following ongoing advocacy and support from DVPC. Amy was referred to a local DFV service, after she moved into her new home.

Service Snapshot



Women, Children & Young People Services

5570

Women supported by DVPC

2516

Women supported by the team at court

774

Children & young people supported by DVPC

59

Women who attended DV Groups

1205

New self-referrals

37% increase from 2024

1265

New secondary consults

4651

Police Assisted Referrals (PARS)

Men's DV Education & Intervention Program (MDVEIP)

145

Mandated program sessions held

144

Non-mandated program sessions held

80% increase from 2024

201

Women provided support while Person Using Violence was in the program

416

Women offered support while Person Using Violence was in the program

438

Police Assisted Referrals (PARS)

Of which 246 accepted service



Domestic Violence Integrated Response (DVIR)

19

DV Integrated Response (DVIR) member organisations

34

Training and information sessions provided

282

DV Interagency Group (DVIG) members

96

Networking meetings attended

Business Operations

GROWTH & INNOVATION

This year marked significant milestones in enhancing our facilities and internal capabilities to better serve our clients and support our team. A highlight of this progress was the acquisition and renovation of our ground-floor space, transforming it into a warm and welcoming entry point for clients and visitors. The newly renovated area serves multiple purposes, functioning as a reception and waiting area, office space for our Business Operations team, and a trauma informed space for group work. We also renovated our counselling rooms and waiting area to enhance a sense of wellbeing in our client environment. This investment reflects our commitment to creating an environment that fosters professionalism, collaboration, and accessibility.

In alignment with our strategy to respond to our growth, the Business Operations team underwent significant structural changes, transitioning to a

multi-layered approach. A dedicated Business Operations Manager now oversees key roles, including a Finance Officer, Project Manager, and HR Support Officer. This structure is further supported by a dedicated Administration and Client Support team, enhancing operational efficiency, and enabling a more proactive approach to our services.

STAFF WELLBEING

Recognising that a supported and engaged workforce is essential for delivering quality services, we placed a strong emphasis on staff wellbeing and sustainability. To address the unique challenges faced by our team, we appointed additional Team Leaders to provide guidance, oversee high-risk consults, and offer regular supervision. These measures have helped our staff feel more equipped and supported in their roles.



TECHNOLOGY & SECURITY UPGRADES

A trusted partner in the IT space is crucial for any modern organisation, and this year we successfully transitioned to a dedicated managed IT service provider, BiTS Technology Group. This partnership has significantly enhanced our online security, safeguarding sensitive data and providing peace of mind for staff and clients alike.

Beyond improving security, this collaboration equips us to modernize our workforce and opens doors to future projects that rely on cutting-edge technology. With BiTS Technology Group's expertise, we are positioned to streamline operations, support remote and hybrid working arrangements, and adopt innovative solutions to enhance service delivery. This modernisation ensures that our organisation remains adaptable, efficient, and forward-looking.

WORK HEALTH & SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS

Prioritising the wellbeing of our team has been a cornerstone of our commitment to fostering a safe and supportive workplace. This year, the newly established Work Health & Safety Working Group took significant strides in addressing psychosocial hazards and promoting a culture of care across the organisation. One of their key achievements was the creation of a dedicated wellbeing room—a tranquil space designed to help staff unwind, recharge, and reflect during their day.

Central to this room is a massage chair, generously gifted by the DVPC board, which has quickly become a beloved feature among staff. This initiative reflects our deep investment in the physical and mental health of our team, providing them with a resource that promotes resilience,

reduces stress, and enhances overall job satisfaction. By prioritising these measures, we continue to strengthen our workforce and build a workplace where every individual feels supported and valued.



BUILDING CONNECTION & CAMARADERIE

In response to staff feedback, we established a social committee dedicated to fostering connection and camaraderie. Over the year, the committee organised a range of team-building activities, including friendly office games, themed lunch days, and outdoor challenges. These initiatives have been met with enthusiasm, boosting workplace morale and cultivating a positive, inclusive culture.



Sector Impact

Integrated and interagency response is a key component of DVPC's approach to addressing domestic and family violence in our community. We achieve this through meetings with key services and figures within the community, delivering training, attending and hosting sector events, and participating in submissions and consultations.

MEETINGS WITH SERVICES & KEY FIGURES

Including:

- Attorney General Yvette D'Ath
- Senator Murray Watt's Office
- Sam O'Connor MP
- Minister Meghan Scanlon

EVENTS HELD BY DVPC

Including:

- Purple Tent - December 2023
- Candlelight Remembrance Ceremony
- DVPC DFV Prevention Breakfast

PRESENTATIONS / TRAINING DELIVERED

Including:

- Training for Gold Coast University Hospital
- TAFE QLD
- Griffith University Students
- In Her Shoes: Queensland Police Service
- Connecting, Collaborating, Learning: Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network

PANELS/MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Including:

- Protecting Women's Rights panel
- ABC Radio - Brisbane Drive's Violence Against Women Panel
- Gold Coast City Council Safer Suburbs Forum

Victim's Commissioner and Sexual Violence Review Board Bill 30 April 2024

"I also want to pay tribute to the incredible team led by Lucy Gregory at another vital frontline service in my area, the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast. I acknowledge the comments they made in their submission about the appointment of the commissioner and the language in this legislation, particularly around consent."

Samuel O'Connor MP
Bonney - LNP



SUBMISSIONS

- Victims Commissioner and Sexual Violence Case Review
- Perpetrator Strategy 2023
- Coercive Control Legislation
- QPS Delivering Modernised, Victim Focused Policing Responses Through Collaboration
- Sentencing of Sexual Assault and Rape
- Police and Other Legislation (Police Efficiencies) Amendment Bill
- Queensland Community Safety Bill
- Understanding of, and responses to, domestic and family violence in State funded mental health and AOD services.
- Criminal Defences Review
- Adult Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment Tool
- Inquiry into access to family violence orders for victim-survivors in the family law system

CONSULTATIONS

On topics including:

- DFV and Coercive Control
- Multicultural Communities Experience of DFV
- Efficiencies Bill
- DFV Risk Assessment
- Women's Health

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

- Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network
- Ending Violence Against Women Queensland Management Committee
- Services & Practitioners for the Elimination of Abuse Queensland
- Business Reference Group - Adults using violence assessment tool
- Queensland Police Service Referral working group Gold Coast Family Law Pathways Network committee
- QNADA Building DFV Capability in Mental Health, Alcohol & Other Drug Services Project Governance Steering Group
- Youth At Risk Alliance Advisory Group
- Multiagency Collaborative Panel
- Domestic Violence Court Assistance Network

DVPC Staff Career & Professional Development



67

Professional
Development
Opportunities



15

Conferences /
Networking Events
Attended

At DVPC, we are committed to fostering the professional development of our team. Through a combination of in-house practice sessions, regular supervisions, and access to external training, we ensure that our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to excel. We also encourage participation in conferences and networking events, providing opportunities to learn from industry leaders and build valuable connections. This holistic approach reflects our dedication to supporting growth, innovation, and excellence across our organisation.

Professional Development Opportunities Include:

- Queering Practice Workshop: Dr Brodie Evans
- Addressing Women's Use of Violence Training: Melissa Scaia
- SPEAQ Conference
- Elsie Conference
- Non-Lethal Strangulation: A National Conversation: Red Rose Foundation
- Dare to Lead
- Navigating cultural differences and ethical dilemmas when working with culturally diverse families: Australian Institute of Family Studies
- Strangulation, Sexual Violence, Separation & Stalking - Beyond the basics - WorkUP
- Children and Young People Tech abuse - WESNET
- Improving the court experience of LGBTIQ+ community members experiencing DFV
- Effective professional supervision for children's wellbeing: Australian Institute of Family Studies
- De-escalation and Occupational Violence and Aggression Training: Resolution Education Australia



CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At DVPC, we are committed to empowering our staff by providing opportunities to expand their skill sets across diverse practice areas. This commitment is exemplified through programs like the Colocation Pilot with Queensland Police Service.

We embrace the philosophy of ‘Grow Our Own,’ prioritising internal promotions and offering staff the chance to step into senior or team leader roles during extended leave periods. This approach not only nurtures talent but also reinforces our culture of growth and development.

Recognising that career development is not a one-size-fits-all journey, we offer flexible opportunities for staff to explore varied pathways. Whether transitioning between roles or programs, our team members can diversify their skill sets, rewarding a growth and development mindset.

Additionally, we proudly support staff pursuing further education. The WorkUP scholarships have been instrumental in enabling our team members to undertake studies that enhance both their personal growth and their contributions to our organisation and the community we serve.





LUCY & BETTY
TAYLOR

Founder of
DVPC



ABC DRIVE BRISBANE
INTERVIEW

ABC Office



LEADERS OF
POSITIVE CHANGE

MFO Dinner

No More Rally

April 2024





Domestic Violence Integrated Response

DVPC has been a convenor of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Integrated Response (DVIR) for over 25 years. DVIR meets monthly bringing together system agencies and relevant organizations (including justice, education, health, housing, multicultural services, and child safety) to increase safety, and ultimately end domestic and family violence (DFV). In addition to GCDVIR, the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Interagency Group (DVIG) facilitates monthly networking and knowledge sharing meetings, for services whose work intersects with DFV. DVPC convenes both groups.

This year, as a direct response to the themes and gaps consistently identified at both DVIR and DVIG, multiple working groups were formed. The purpose of these working groups is to provide allocated space to discuss key concerns across (but not limited to) the Gold Coast and seek to improve systemic responses. Specifically, in 2023 the DVIR established the Housing Pathways Group, the Young People using Violence Working Group, and the Community and Stakeholder Consultation Group. Each group includes members of the DVIR, with specific interest and professional expertise in this area of work.

HOUSING PATHWAYS GROUP

Having previously disbanded during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Housing Pathways Group was reformed in 2023, in recognition of the ongoing housing crisis and rising concerns regarding lack of safe and stable housing options for women and children experiencing DFV on the Gold Coast.

The GCDVIR Housing Pathways Group's primary purpose is finding safe, long-term accommodation for women who have been residing in local refuges

for an extended period, as a direct result of experiencing significant barriers in securing a home.

In June 2024, Minister for Housing, Minister for Planning and Local Government and Minister for Public Works Meaghan Scanlon attended the Housing Pathways Group's meeting, to discuss the themes and gaps recognized by the group.

YOUNG PEOPLE USING VIOLENCE (YPV) WORKING GROUP

The YPV Working Group was formed in August 2023, following ongoing discussions regarding the lack of services and supports for young people using violence in the family (YPVF). To ensure these concerns were accurately understood and documented, the group established the YPVF Focus Groups, with the purpose to adopt a survivor-led approach to improve the Gold Coast's integrated systemic responses to YPVF. Invitations to participate were shared with practitioners, mothers, and young people. As of 30 June 2024, four focus groups with practitioners had been held with further dates to follow. Following the completion of the groups, findings will be summarised into a summary report.

Furthermore, as a direct result of these on-going conversations, in February 2024, DVPC submitted a Queensland Government's Youth Justice Targeted Responses to Youth Crime grant application, for Holding Hope Creating Change (HHCC). HHCC is an evidence-based early-intervention program for YPVF. This program utilises a whole of family, wrap-around approach, referencing contemporary research, and interstate and international programs, including evaluated program Meli Victoria's Step-Up Adolescent Family Violence Services (MSAFVS), and was formed in consultation with Jo Howard, an award winning and foremost consultant, social worker and family therapist specialised in this space. This application was successful, and DVPC has now commenced this program.



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION GROUP

The Community and Stakeholder Consultation Group's objective is to improve wider understanding and systemic responses to DFV through ongoing engagement with Gold Coast community and key stakeholders, and the broader DFV sector.

To mark 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence 2023, the Community and Stakeholder Consultation Group delivered two In Her Shoes training sessions for external services providers. Participants, including representatives from government and non-government services, experienced a simulation of the systematic barriers for support that DFV victim-survivors face.

Additionally, during 16 Days of Activism, the Purple Tent event was re-established. Purple Tent is a day for women to come together with DVPC, and our local sister services, to celebrate their strength, resilience and courage. We are excited to confirm that Purple Tent has been again confirmed for 2024.

The Community and Stakeholder Consultation Group has this year submitted two funding applications for wider community and service events. In March 2024, the DVIR, led by SARA, submitted a Queensland Government's Safe and Diverse Communities grant application for Break the Patterns. Break the Patterns is a 1-day conference specifically focused on the intersection of DFV and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, to be held on the 5th of December 2024. In April 2024, the DVIR, led by DVPC, submitted a Queensland Government's Investing in Women QLD grant application, for The Disruption Conference (TDC). TDC is a 2-day conference, to be held during DFV Prevention Month 2025. The conference will raise awareness of DFV in our community, and how we can create a community and service system that brings genuine accountability to perpetrators of DFV, disrupting their use of violence and increasing the safety of victim-survivors. Both applications were successful, with planning committee members from across the DVIR now working together to deliver these events.

Alongside establishing the working groups, DVPC continues our commitment to working alongside our DVIR and wider community partners, including through Triage and the Southport Specialist Court Operational Working Group.

DVPC also continues its commitment to delivering and attending training and participating in networking and other key events throughout the community. This includes our partnership with Queensland Police Service, delivering In Her Shoes training to officers as a part of the DFV and Vulnerable Persons Specialist Course. Notably, in April 2024 this course was recognized through The Commissioners Outstanding Award. Throughout the year, DVPC has additionally provided training to organisations including TAFE, Gold Coast Health, Griffith University, and many more.

During DFV Prevention Month 2024 DVPC held our annual candlelight vigil and breakfast events. The Light the Night candlelight vigil remembers those who have died as a result of DFV, and is open to the community. Our 2024 breakfast was a sold-out event, featuring renowned advocate and author Rosie Batty as guest speaker, and recognizing Gold Coast Health's Kym Tighe through the DFV Prevention Month Award.

Over the past year, both the DVIR and DVIG have continued to grow and expand in not only membership, but in our initiatives and responses to DFV. We look forward to continuing to build on our successes and partnerships as we enter a new year. Crucially, we want to say thank you to all of the individuals and organisations that make our work possible. Integrated response is integral component of ending DFV – we cannot work in silos – and the overall commitment of our Gold Coast community is something to be very proud of.

In Her Shoes

DFV Award

May 2024

DVPC was awarded the Commissioners Outstanding Award for the QPS Domestic and Family Violence and Vulnerable Persons Specialist Course for our 'In Her Shoes' training, delivered within the Queensland Police Service Domestic and Family Violence and Vulnerable Person's Specialist Course.





Domestic Violence
Prevention Centre
Gold Coast Inc.

2024 DV Prevention Month Breakfast

With Rosie Batty





Purple Tent

December 2023



Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the financial results for the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Incorporated ("the Association") for the year that ended 30 June 2024.

These financial statements were prepared in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. They have been audited by Crowe Audit Australia to meet the mandatory requirements of Australian Auditing Standards, and I'm happy to confirm a positive audit opinion was achieved.

The Association is primarily funded by government grants, for which DVPC tenders on a regular basis. There has again been a substantial increase in these funds for the year, reflecting the focus on the sector as a whole and the importance of our service delivery.

The organisation doesn't actively seek donations. While there were minor donations, these were substantially less than the prior year when a large donation was made.

On behalf of the Association, I am pleased to report a net surplus of \$742k for the 2024

financial year. This is a considerable increase from the prior year.

The additional surplus is attributable to several causes:

- i) A 26% increase in grant income, equating to just over \$1.37m, attributable to increases in grant funding from the Department of Justice and Attorney General. Note: some of this relates to a change in accounting standards for recognition of income received which relates to activities in FY25.
- ii) Direct Client Expenses increased from \$3.28M in the prior year to \$4.91M this year, representing approximately 83% of the association's total expenditure for the year.
- iii) The rise in expenditure was anticipated, as we aim to fully utilise the additional grant income. However, we initially expected a larger increase in spending. Unfortunately, delays in recruitment and the related costs of serving more clients led to underspending, meaning not all of the additional grant funds were utilised. This is the primary reason for the increased surplus this year.
- iv) Despite the increased staff volume we have recruited, other overhead costs have remained constant.
- v) The organisation's primary expenses, aside from direct client service delivery, are related to premises and additional costs that support our team in providing those services.

For a detailed analysis of grant revenue and other income, please refer to the Financial Statements. It is important to note that DVPC recognises its income only when it can deliver services in accordance with its performance obligations. Currently, there is \$95,000 of unearned income that is yet to be recognised, which is recorded on the balance sheet.

As a result of the updated accounting standards for revenue recognition, the association has acknowledged certain amounts received from the government prior to June 30, 2024, which relate to services provided after this date. This acknowledged amount is approximately \$480,000.

For additional information regarding expenses, please see the Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, along with the accompanying notes.

The organization typically accrues surpluses during periods when it is unable to recruit staff as quickly as it receives grant income. This year, we also recognized income for expenditures that will not occur until next year. As a result, the association's surplus has increased to \$742,000. This surplus is retained in cash to be readily available for deployment when needed. It is anticipated that all of this year's surplus will be utilised in fiscal year 2025 for initiatives proposed by the team, along with some of the surpluses accrued in prior years.

Despite the ongoing economic challenges facing the wider community, I am pleased to confirm that DVPC maintains a strong and sustainable financial position.

Highlights for 2023-2024 include:

The Leadership Team, with the support of the Board, is dedicated to ensuring that our funding and resources are used effectively to serve the women and children who need our services the most.



TONI
LAMB
Treasurer



In Memoriam



Cornelia Babbage OAM



With deep respect and gratitude, we remember Cornelia Babbage OAM, who passed away this year after a long and dedicated association with our organisation. Cornelia served on the DVPC board from 2008-2016, stepping down when SARA was established under MFO. As a former Board President and steadfast supporter, Cornelia's contributions were instrumental in shaping our vision, enhancing our outreach, and supporting our mission.

As we reflect on our milestones this year, we are reminded of Cornelia's lasting legacy and the countless lives touched by their kindness and generosity. Cornelia worked tirelessly to promote the value, richness, and contribution of our multicultural community here on the Gold Coast. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Cornelia's family and loved ones. Her spirit will forever remain part of our organisation's story.

In honour of Cornelia, we dedicate ourselves to continuing their work and keeping alive the values she championed.

DVPC Supporters

DVPC would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to the following people and organisations for their support:

BITS Technology Group
Bunnings Burleigh Waters
Craft Palour
Early Settler Robina
Eureka Furniture Bundall
Friends with Dignity
Laura Gerber MP
MooGoo
Moss n Stone

New Life Church
QCS
QT
Ramen Danbo
Steve Osborne
WesNet
Zonta
Zupp Property Group

We cannot do this work alone and we want to acknowledge our sector partners, our funding body, and their staff. We also want to recognise and applaud the dedication and tenacity of the staff at DVPC, who show up every day with heart and hope.

