

2023 - 2024 Annual Report

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc.

ABN: 76 073 229 523 INC.NO: A0015737N

Email: hello@heartbeatvictoria.org.au

Website: www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au

Facebook: facebook.com/heartbeatvictoria



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

Heartbeat Victoria

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

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

Our Vision

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

Our Mission

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

President's report



2023-2024 has been a busy but rewarding year, during which I took on the role of President, after Linda Macauley stood down as President in March. I thank Linda for her two year contribution as Board member, Vice-President and President during that challenging time.

During this financial year, I visited our groups in Ballarat and South Gippsland and have plans for more visits in the coming months. The differences being made in these communities through their support of cardiac persons, fund raising, rehabilitation visits and equipment provision is astounding.

I feel that with good communication and a team effort, the Board will continue to support all members across Victoria in their efforts to improve the lives of those with heart disease and their families.

We are very fortunate to have a core of people who put in an enormous effort on behalf of Heartbeat Victoria. Board members, office bearers in affiliates and branches, walking group leaders, as well as the organisers of social events and fundraising, and those who support them, are all contributing to the viability of Heartbeat Victoria Inc and its values.

This year, Heartbeat Victoria has forged alliances with Sydney University SOLVE-CHD and the Baker Institute and is actively seeking other partnerships to strengthen peer support programs and local branches.

During the year, I have presented, or been booked to present, at several events on behalf of Heartbeat Victoria, including:

- the 2023 Australian Cardiovascular Alliance Excellence in cardiovascular awards;
- the Victorian Heart Hospital researchers conference; and
- for the Baker Institute at the Alfred Hospital.

From time to time, we receive requests for consumers to become involved in a research study, committee or advisory panel and I hope to see more members taking up these roles - it's challenging, meaningful and very rewarding and there is support if needed.

Every 12 minutes someone in Australia loses their life to heart disease, yet it is not talked about. In the coming year, I hope this will change as we all become ambassadors for heart health and wellness. We need to get information out to stimulate discussion of heart health, in the hope of early testing being utilized more, and the early implementation of appropriate management. All at Heartbeat Victoria need to continue to disseminate the message to the public, so that cardiac challenges are better understood and provided for in all communities.

Christine Rees - President

The Board

President	Linda Macaulay (to March 2024) / Christine Rees (from March 2024)
Vice President	Christine Rees (up to March 2024)
Secretary	Barry Nixon
Treasurer	Karen Saccuzzo
Assistant Treasurer	Tamieka Snowden
Board Member	Mark Braybrook
Board Member	Robyn Fennell
Board Member	Gail Newton
Board Member	Kevin Reid

Board Advisor Vivien Williamson

Board report

At the Board's Annual General Meeting in September 2023, Board members Linda Macaulay, Christine Rees, Barry Nixon, Karen Saccuzzo, Gail Newton and Kevin Reid were elected for two year terms to the roles shown above and Mark Braybrook and Robyn Fennell nominated for and were elected for a one year term each. However, in March this financial year, Linda Macaulay (President) resigned her position as President and Board member and Vice President, Christine Rees has enthusiastically taken on the role of President.

A major project for the Board during this year has been a major refresh of the Heartbeat Victoria website, with the technical assistance of Goop Digital, a Geelong based website designer. The site can be found at www.heartbeatvictoria.org.au. In addition to information about Heartbeat Victoria and information relevant to peer support and heart health and wellbeing, the site provides the opportunity for each branch and affiliate to include information specific to its members.

During the past year, the Board has also successfully established two new partnerships with Sydney University SOLVE CHD and the Baker Institute. These partnerships support both of these organisations to engage with individuals with lived experience of heart disease and heart conditions. In addition, they provide Heartbeat Victoria members with an opportunity to engage with the wider research community to give an individual's perspective, receive information and training and benefit from the research undertaken.

The Board welcomed the opportunity for increased presentations on behalf of Heartbeat (usually by the President) at health related events and has developed presentations for use at similar events that are available for the use of branches and affiliates.

In the latter part of the financial year, the Board also actively sought new Board members and, based on the responses received, is hopeful of several new members joining the Board at the next Annual General Meeting.

The Board acknowledges the passion, commitment and great work of affiliates and branches for their communities, as well as the challenges that they face. The Board thanks members for all they have done during 2023-2024 to assist those with heart-related conditions.

Our affiliates and branches

Ballarat	Bendigo (Affiliate)
Goulburn Valley	Grampians (in recess)
South Gippsland	Sunraysia (Affiliate)
Latrobe Valley (re-establishing)	

With the further easing of Covid restrictions during the past year, our affiliates and branches have continued to rebuild much needed peer support for members with heart related health issues through meetings, social, physical and fundraising activities. For some, however, access to inpatient and cardiac rehabilitation has remained a struggle.

During the year there has also been an increase in affiliates and branches having access to government grants and also using other local community groups to support their fundraising.

Heartbeat support and activities

In particular, during the past year, affiliates and branches have provided:

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

Sunraysia

Our Heartbeat Sunraysia group has once again enjoyed another 12 months of spending time together.

We have continued our regular Cuppa catch ups on the first Wednesday of each month at 10.00am at Espresso Drive in Deakin Avenue. This social get together is enjoyed by our members and we often chat about what is happening with each other's health issues.

Our monthly meetings have been well attended by our members. They are held on the third Wednesday of the month at Irymple Hotel at 5.30pm and after our meeting we all enjoy a lovely meal together. We have also had a couple of guest speakers come along during the year, including the CEO of Mildura Private Hospital.

We have been proud to have been able to make several donations during the year:

- In October 2023, Jeff Gregory (President) and Des Wakefield (Vice President) presented a cheque for \$1,440 to Jacob McEwan (Paramedic Community Support Co Ordinator) for four portable Automatic Blood Pressure Machines which will be used by the First Responder Volunteer vehicles in Loddon Mallee Region. They replace the Patchewollock and Murrayville devices and are new devices for the Mangangatang and Nangiloc vehicles which previously did not have them.
- We presented a \$9,000 cheque to Riverland (SA) for the purchase of equipment. This money was raised through the Murray To Moyne bike ride fundraiser organised with Australia Almond Board and Victoria and South Australia riders each year.
- We donated \$8,000 to Mildura Hospital for the purchase of an ultrasound probe.

We finished the 2023 calendar year with a lovely Christmas Heartbeat Dinner to celebrate 2023.

Although our member numbers are still low (about 12), everyone does an amazing job. We would really like some new young members and hopefully this next year we can build our numbers up as our Sunraysia group will be celebrating 40 years since being formed. We look forward to our next 12 months.



Goulburn Valley

For Goulburn Valley Heartbeat 2023/2024 was a year of

Sharing and Chatting



Members share experiences, insights and socialise at Heartbeat GV Branch monthly coffee mornings held at different venues in Goulburn Valley.

“Support groups are an important first step for people who are recovering from a heart event or adjusting to living with heart disease or a heart condition. They provide a place for people to come together, learn about their condition and speak to others in a similar situation to themselves. Most of all they provide friendship and support for ongoing health and wellbeing.” (Heart to Heart: A guide to fostering successful Heartbeat Victoria Inc peer support groups, 2015)

Learning

Goulburn Valley Heartbeat members attended a dinner featuring education from speaker Chloe Carr, an exercise physiologist from Goulburn Valley Health, who spoke of the “Importance of continued exercise following Cardiac diagnosis”.

On going evidence-based education is provided most months following our dinner meetings and is provided by health professionals or through online webinars and videos. Members value this type of information to keep abreast of current information to support their heart health.



Fundraising



Our Branch members focus on enjoying the few fundraising events we hold annually, mainly being through Can Collection, Bunnings BBQs and direct donations. Happy Bunnings BBQ fundraising GV Branch members made \$1788 on the day.

This financial year we donated six Ambulatory Blood

Pressure Monitors to the Clinical Diagnostic Unit at Goulburn Valley Health, valued at \$13,800.



Support, appreciation and recognition



On the occasion of National Volunteer week – “*Something for Everyone 2024*”, Goulburn Valley Health hosted a thankyou luncheon to show appreciation for the work of their volunteers.

Chief executive GVH Matt Sharp” expressed his thanks for the contributions made by all volunteers to various areas of GVH.

The diversity of the skilled volunteers means there is “*Something for Everyone*” in what you offer to our patients, carers, visitors and staff.” Heartbeat GV Branch is part of this, as they have a team of seven volunteers who provide assistance at the Cardiac Rehabilitation Unit. A big thank you to all our volunteers including the Heartbeat Goulburn Valley Committee of Management.

Bendigo

Although we have are still not able to access the local hospitals and cardiac rehabilitation programs in the same way as pre-Covid, the Branch’s meetings, social events and fundraising efforts are continuing.

Bimonthly general meetings continue to be held on the third Sunday of each month.



A new Social Committee has taken on the planning of the social program from the long serving and hard working previous Committee and members have enjoyed participating in a comprehensive calendar of social events including coffee catch ups, seasonal lunches, morning music concerts, bus trips, fashion events and trips to Melbourne for shows - and not forgetting the traditional Christmas in

July and December Christmas events and the compulsory raffles at most events.

In order to ensure the affordability and viability of some of the events previously offered the Bendigo Domain Country Club has also invited Heartbeat members to join its residents on many of the outings that it arranges for the enjoyment of its residents.

Two major donations were approved during the year to Inglewood and Districts Health Service (\$11,500 for the purchase of a cardiac rehabilitation treadmill) and Dhelkaya Health in Castlemaine (\$14,500 for the purchase of three portable ECG machines for their three aged care facilities).





This year Heartbeat Bendigo has also been generously supported by other local community groups – Country Music and Spring Gully Dance Club who have run special fundraising events in support of Heartbeat Bendigo. Heartbeat Bendigo was also thrilled to receive a \$4000 Federal Government grant for the next financial year.

Ballarat

Recruiting members via Cardiac Rehabilitation referrals and being very active on social media has seen Heartbeat Ballarat's membership grow in 2023/2024. Folk come for the exercise but stay because of the great social connection.

Ballarat branch is proudly by patients for patients, with President Bernie, Treasurer Anne, and Secretary Barry and every Committee Member all actively walking multiple times each week.

Four walking opportunities each week, all with coffee catch ups, and regular Meet & Eat meetings with a guest speaker, concerts and event bookings keep Ballarat Branch members involved and engaged. Disease burdens reduce and wellness improves when you associate regularly with the Heartbeat Ballarat mob.

Ballarat Branch's youngest walker in 2024 was 16-year-old Connor, a grandson of twice weekly walkers Dianne and Bill. Our oldest walker was Anne, (known as Anne with an E) who is aged 100 and drives herself to the indoor stadium from Buninyong and return, a round trip of forty kilometres. Anne with an E you inspire us all.

Encouragement awards are frequently presented to deserving achievers, like Tuesday walker, Sandra who achieved completing ten laps. Sandra lives with health challenges and walks with walking aids. Assistant Secretary, Ross, was awarded for completing 600+ Heartbeat walks as Walk Leader.

Some Ballarat members spent Christmas 2023 at sea, sailing on the first Heartbeat cruise. Cruising looks to becoming an annual event with a larger group of Heartbeat sailors cruising from Melbourne in the coming year.

During the year, peer support was constant, with a larger number of Ballarat members having surgeries, being hospitalised, or having a stay at home in the sick bay. Covid, influenza, shingles, and measles were active in Ballarat and visited our members, some members multiple times. We are seriously proud of the way Ballarat members support each other, learn from, and educate each other. Peer support is constant in Heartbeat Ballarat.

Heartbeat Ballarat members generously contributed over 100 sets of scales to aid heart failure patients in need. These scales are preventing heart failure emergencies and alleviating the strain on Grampians hospitals. Heartbeat donated scales are one less hurdle a heart failure patient must jump over to manage their condition.



Grampians

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

The Board has been in touch with some members and is looking forward to meeting them soon to ascertain their plans for the future.

Latrobe

It has been disappointing that due to the impact of Covid, the re-establishment of the Latrobe branch did not occur as planned. The Board will work towards developing contact with the appropriate community and health services to re-establish this group in 2024-2025 and would value the support of any services in this region willing to assist in the establishment of a heart health peer support group.

South Gippsland



South Gippsland Branch members continue to meet on the third Friday of the month at the Austral Hotel Korumburra for a meeting and lunch together. We are a small group of long-standing members' who enjoy the social connections and the opportunity to chat and share experiences.

Most cardiac services, including cardiac rehabilitation are provided through Health Services in the Wonthaggi or Traralgon areas. Heartbeat Victoria President, Christine Rees visited our Branch and is looking at options for South Gippsland Branch to establish connections to cardiac health services.

Our branch fundraising included a raffle pre-Christmas, this followed with a donation of an AED defibrillator for the Austral Hotel.

Many of our current Committee office bearers have volunteered in their current positions for many years. We are appreciative and very grateful for the work they do in supporting the South Gippsland Branch.

Our financial report 2023 – 2024

These accounts are the final accounts for the 12 months ending 30 June 2024 for Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc (HBVCI).

Heartbeat Victoria Council Inc – Alone accounts, not consolidated

	30 June 2024	30 June 2023
Income/Receipts		
Revenue from Government grants		
	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Donations and bequests		
<i>Vic Super (Aware Super)</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 510.00
<i>Donations</i>	\$ 25.00	\$ 0.00
<i>Bequests</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 77,950.50
Other revenue/receipts		
<i>Membership & Insurance Levy</i>	\$ 1,614.36	\$ 1,215.00
<i>Sale of merchandise</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 100.00
<i>Other – Closure of Knox Branch</i>	\$3,826.23	\$ 0.00
<i>Other – Unexpended Knox Branch grant</i>	\$1,545.00	\$ 0.00
Other income (incl interest)		
	\$4,143.32	\$ 342.91
Total Income	<u>\$11,153.91</u>	<u>\$ 80,018.41</u>
Expenses/Payments		
Other Expenses		
<i>Insurance</i>	\$1,802.72	\$ 1,692.74
<i>Hall hire & catering</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 250.00
<i>Postage and Printing</i>	\$213.38	\$ 217.80
<i>Travel expenses</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<i>Other (Administration costs)</i>	\$246.29	\$ 533.89
<i>Other (Web design)</i>	\$ 4,625.00	\$ 3,250.00
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 6,887.39</u>	<u>\$ 5,944.43</u>
Net surplus / (deficit)	<u>\$ 4,226.52</u>	<u>\$ 74,073.98</u>

HBVCI is reporting a net surplus of \$4,226.52, compared to a net surplus of \$ 74,073.98 for the previous year, which was largely related to the large bequest received in 2022/2023.

The term deposit of \$95,000.00, which was opened on the 19th of May 2023, was reinvested on 19 April 2024 for 11 months. A second term deposit of \$15,000.00 of funds moved from the general account was opened on the 27th of November 2023. The monthly interest from both term deposits is credited to the General Account.

Membership and insurance levies have increased from the previous year due to the increase in fees charged to branches and affiliates from \$5 to \$7 per member.

Balance Sheet

	June 2024	June 2023
Current Assets		
<i>Raffle Account & Cash Reserve Account</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<i>General Account</i>	\$ 15,966.82	\$ 25,927.06
<i>Term Deposit</i>	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 95,000.00
<i>Merchandise</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 125,966.82</u>	<u>\$ 120,927.06</u>
Fixed Assets		
<i>Equipment</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Assets	<u>\$ 125,966.82</u>	<u>\$ 120,927.06</u>
Current Liabilities		
<i>Creditors and accruals</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<i>Borrowings</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
<i>Provision</i>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Net Assets	<u>\$ 125,966.82</u>	<u>\$ 120,927.06</u>

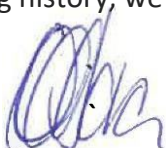
Total cash reserves are \$125,966.82.

HBVCI continues not to incur any debts or liabilities. The net asset position of \$125,966.82 continues to be very strong.

Statement of Solvency

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

Karen Saccuzzo - Treasurer



Robyn Fennell – Board Member

