

ANNUAL REPORT

20

A YEAR OF
GROWTH & RESILIENCE

23



Lifeline

Loddon Mallee

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Building a Legacy, Embracing the Future

Welcome to our Annual Report, a showcase of our achievements, progress, and commitment to our community throughout the year.

Lifeline Loddon Mallee

You're not alone, we're here to listen

Lifeline Loddon Mallee started servicing the local region as a short-term crisis support hotline in 1995. Since then, we have become a community-focused and volunteer-led for purpose organisation.

Today we are proud to have almost 80 volunteers throughout the Loddon and Mallee regions. With call centres answering 13 11 14 calls in Bendigo & Mildura, we answered over 18,000 calls last year from people needing support or short-term crisis help.

Our purpose is to provide support and connection to empower people to change their lives, and we live this purpose by delivering other programs into our community.

Our accredited trainers deliver training and education that is highly valued and equips local people with the skills, experience, and knowledge to recognise, respond and refer those experiencing poor mental health, suicidality, and domestic violence.

Our qualified counselling team provides in-person and telehealth low-cost services too.

A dedicated volunteer Board drives our organisation to be a connected place with solid governance and strategic direction. Our employees are building an inclusive community from the inside out, with our help seekers and volunteers at the centre of that community.

Lifeline Loddon Mallee is building on the fantastic work done in our first 25 years by setting a strong strategic direction and robust governance by building further on our established core offering, we now work to grow our services and reach throughout the region.





Leading with Vision, Inspiring Success

Report from the Chair

It gives me great pleasure to present my 3rd Chair's Report for what has been another very productive 12 month's for Lifeline Loddon Mallee (LLM).

The Financial year started with a bang with the presentation of our first major fundraising campaign which was a great event and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. The "Hello for Hope" launch was held at Ms Batterhams, and I especially acknowledge our guest speakers Alannah and Paige who so clearly articulated their stories and touched the hearts of our guests.

At a Special General Meeting in July, we had some major governance changes in that the Board approved a new, simplified, and contemporary Constitution and resolved to move to a Company Limited by Guarantee. This change in our legal status brings us in line with many other charities and provides increased certainty for donors. Additionally, the Board determined to change our name to Lifeline Loddon Mallee Ltd which more clearly defines the geography of the

communities that we support and aligns with other social service organisations that cover the north west of the State.

In March, the Board met in person in Bendigo for our strategic planning day where we reviewed and revised our Strategic Plan. Again, it was great to be able to meet face-to-face and have the side conversations that we miss when meeting online.

Also in March we officially opened the Sunraysia One Hub, much to the delight of the Sunraysia Lifeline Committee which has been working tirelessly for many years to establish a Lifeline presence in the north of the region - their vision was finally realised!

Like so many organisations, post Covid, LLM has seen a decline in volunteer numbers. In an attempt to address this issue strategically, the Board in conjunction with our staff, developed a Volunteer Recruitment, Engagement & Retention Strategy which is currently being implemented.

Report from the Chair cont.

Additionally, a Communications & Marketing Plan was adopted to increase awareness of LLM and its services across our region.

Our face-to-face Counselling Service has obviously met a great community need and has been extremely popular. It was an excellent initiative to take this service and some of our crisis supporters out to Cohuna after the devastating floods of last year.

The Board has closely overseen the development of a new social enterprise to open in late 2023. It is proposed this operation will enable long term revenue generation and ensure the financial sustainability of LLM.

In line with good governance, the Board initiated a survey of staff and volunteers on the Culture and Engagement at LLM. We had a sound survey return rate of just under 50% and the Board was delighted at the very positive responses. There were also some good suggestions for potential improvements which the EO will follow up. The Board plans to make this an annual survey so that trends can be detected.

The demand for Lifeline's call taking service has increased across the country and our region is no exception.

This year we again exceeded our target of required delivery on 13 11 14 by answering over 18,000 calls. Our dedicated volunteers and staff achieve remarkable outcomes through their enthusiasm and commitment.

I wish to acknowledge our positive, passionate and committed Executive Officer, Lisa Renato for her leadership and dedication to LLM. I also thank my fellow Board Directors for their support and contributions to ensure the appropriate governance of LLM.

For me it has been an honor and privilege to lead LLM but whilst I will remain a Board Director, I will be stepping down from the Chair at the AGM and allowing another Director to take up the reins. I look forward to an exciting and productive year ahead.

Jan Boynton BTRP and FAICD
Chair



Treasurer's Report

Inspiring Progress

↑ 3%

Total revenue

↓ 4.3%

Total Expenditure

↓ \$157k

Net Assets

↓ \$19.2k

Net Profit FY23

29%

% Government Funding

71%

% Self Funded

The Board of Directors is proud to present the reviewed financial statements of Lifeline Loddon Mallee Limited for the period ending 30 June 2023 following the Australian Accounting Standards.

Justin Gordon and the team at Stratagem have independently reviewed the organisations' accounts. A full financial report is included.

The key points to note concerning the financial performance in 2023 include:

- Our total revenue was \$886,951, with our Victoria State Government Service Agreement representing \$267,342.
- Total expenditure for the year was \$913,383, resulting in a total net profit of -\$21,423.

Our net assets are at a healthy balance of \$764,505, which creates a wonderful foundation to provide additional support to our local region.

The Board of Directors monitors financial performance closely to manage our diversified revenue streams while providing more support to the Loddon and Mallee regions. The Board of Directors looks forward to an increased revenue in the coming financial year.

Simon Carter
Treasurer





Leading with Vision, Inspiring Success

Message from the EO

Lifeline Loddon Mallee Limited has achieved some significant milestones in the year ending 30th June 2023. When I joined the organisation just under 3 years ago, we were at a crossroads, contemplating the best path forward for Lifeline in the Loddon Mallee region. Those of you who were members at that time will recall the array of challenges we were facing.

I am pleased to have been a part of the journey that has transformed us into the inclusive, high-achieving, and sustainable organisation we are today. Expanding our team from two full-time roles to nearly eight today, to better serve the community and our volunteers, is a testament to our progress.

Continuing our face-to-face counselling service and developing it into a sustainable model has allowed us to extend our service delivery to the community. Alongside increasing our training programs in the community, we have imparted essential skills and resilience in areas such as Domestic Violence Awareness, Counselling Techniques, Suicide Prevention, and Mental Health First Aid. This has enabled us to deliver the quality services our community needs and have real impact.

In the 2022 – 2023 financial year, Lifeline

Loddon Mallee Limited exceeded our service delivery expectations, with over 5,200 volunteer hours logged providing crisis support, almost 1,000 hours of access to our counselling service, 38 training programs delivered, and the establishment of our phone hub in the Mallee.

Strengthening our brand awareness took various forms, including the implementation of an organisation-wide marketing and communications plan with clear goals and actions to increase local awareness of our services. This initiative has boosted engagement with our stakeholders and fostered new relationships that have been mutually beneficial.

The team has also increased our fundraising events and revenue, with the successful inaugural "Hello For Hope" week held in September 2022, raising over \$25,000. This achievement enabled us to leverage existing relationships and establish new connections with community members, businesses, and organisations that align with our vision and purpose.

Initiating the implementation of the project plan to establish a Lifeline Thrift Store has presented an exciting challenge for our organisation.



Message from the EO cont.

Despite some delays, we are beginning to see the outcomes of our hard work and patience.

My proudest achievement by far is fostering an inclusive culture throughout the organisation through strong leadership, connectedness, and engagement with our directors, staff and volunteers.

I cannot express enough gratitude to the Directors, volunteers, and the team at Lifeline Loddon Mallee Limited for the tireless work, effort, and care you all contribute. It is an absolute honour and privilege to work with you all every day. I eagerly look forward to sharing another successful year with you.



Warmest,

Lisa Renato





Strategic Pillars

Making a powerful impact

**Engaged Volunteers
& Stakeholders**

**Continuous
Improvement in
Operations &
Governance**

**Strengthen Brand
Identity**

**Extend Quality
Service Delivery**

**Increase Financial
Sustainability**

OUR FOCUS

At Lifeline Loddon Mallee we focus primarily on crisis support services, education, and training so that we can make a powerful impact within our community and ultimately ensure that no one in our region has to feel hopeless or alone.



Extend Quality Service Delivery

18,050

Number of Calls Answered

5,251

Number of hours logged by volunteers
in Loddon Mallee

38

Number of training
packages delivered

154

Number of clients using the
Counselling Service

26

Number of new
volunteers trained

3,249

Deaths by Suicide Nationally

75

Active Volunteers

88.6%

Adherence Rate



Award recipients

Eucalypt Award Recipients

Presented in recognition of their ongoing commitment and support to Lifeline and for 5 years continuous service.

Stephen Hegedus
Leanne Hegedus
Ray Pratt

Tom Arbuthnot
Andrew Plant
Simon Carter



Golden Wattle Award Recipients

Presented in recognition of their ongoing commitment and support to Lifeline and for 10 years continuous service.

Stephen Hegedus
Leanne Hegedus
Ray Pratt



Peter Ryall Award Recipients

Peter was a Civil Engineer who lived in and loved Bendigo. He was a dedicated Bendigo South Rotarian and an enthusiastic and involved community member with many associations such as the Victorian Welsh Choir fundraising concert, Rotary team projects, Vision Australia newspaper reader and volunteering at the Bendigo Tourist Information Centre.

Peter passed away in 2015 and Peter made it known that he wanted his estate to focus on local charities who are simply doing good in the world. Lifeline Loddon Mallee was very fortunate to be one of the major recipients of his legacy.

Lifeline Loddon Mallee would like to sincerely thank & acknowledge his generosity and pay tribute to Peter, whose qualities and regard for others benefitted many people.

Peter was described by his family, friends and peers as a quiet achiever, a family man and a passionate community member. In honour of Peter and his enduring legacy, Lifeline Loddon Mallee has received permission from his family, Ivan, Heather & Keith Ryall to acknowledge annually, a Crisis Supporter who exhibits these same qualities.

This year we would like to honor Mark Needham who demonstrates these qualities.



Engaged Stakeholders & Volunteers

Lifeline Loddon Mallee are tremendously grateful for those who give their time so generously to serve the help seekers who call our centre every year.

Not only do volunteers undertake a robust application and training process, but they commit to their own ongoing development and training when they become accredited crisis supporters.



Continuous Improvement in Governance & Operations

Lifeline Loddon Mallee is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not for profit Commission (ACNC). The organisation has a highly skilled and experienced Board of Directors who provide robust governance, clear strategic direction, and transparent financial management.

Board members freely invest their knowledge, expertise, and time to ensure quality services are available to help support Australians in time of crisis and promote a resilient and suicide-safe community. The Board is committed to the highest standards of professionalism, probity, diligence, and excellence and is responsible for setting the ethical framework for the organisation, defining, and nurturing the organisation's fundamental values.

BOARD DIRECTOR	ELIGIBLE MEETINGS	ATTENDED MEETINGS
Jan Boynton	6	6
Katherine Hancy	6	6
Simon Carter	6	5
Dianne Bowles	6	4
Charmaine Calis	6	5
Anjum Chaudhry	6	6
Rick Van Emmerick	6	5
Sean MacDermott	6	6
Rachel Mason	6	5

SUBCOMMITTEES

Finance & Audit Subcommittee

Chair - Simon Carter

Members - Jan Boynton, Dianne Bowles,

Governance Subcommittee

Chair - Anjum Chaudhry

Members - Jan Boynton, Charmaine Calis and Sean MacDermott

Business Development Subcommittee

Chair - Rick Van Emmerick

Members - Jan Boynton, Rachel Mason Katherine Hancy and Simon Carter



Our Board



Jan Boynton
BTRP and FAICD
Chair

Jan feels immensely proud and privileged to be Chair of Lifeline Loddon Mallee. Jan is a Non-Executive Director and sits on 5 other Boards including CVGT Australia; Haven; Home, Safe; Chair of Bendigo Art Gallery; North Central Catchment Management Authority and Deputy Chair, Bendigo Jockey Club. Jan has been a Fellow of the AICD for over 20 years.

Prior to her Board roles she was Regional Director with Regional Development Victoria, CEO of Radius Disability Services and Director, City Strategy with the City of Greater Bendigo.

Jan has over 25 years' experience in executive positions and has an extensive background in Board governance. She is a former Board Director of Bendigo Health, the CFA and La Trobe University Council. Jan and her partner run a cattle stud near Bendigo.



Katherine Hancy
B. Pharm, MPS, MBA
Vice Chair

I first joined the board of Lifeline Loddon Mallee to make a positive impact on mental health in our region. I have come to recognize and be passionate about the amazing service that our volunteers provide to people in crisis all over Australia as well as the amazing supportive community within the center.

I have a Bachelor of Pharmacy and work as a community pharmacist in Bendigo. I have held various roles on voluntary committees and organisations through university and in the pharmacy industry however this is my first board role within the wider community.



Simon Carter
Treasurer

Simon is an experienced management accountant and director. He brings his 30+ years' experience to the role of Treasurer on the Board.

Simon is a passionate supporter of everything we do to contribute to the community.



Dianne Bowles
GAICD Adv Dip Ag

I have joined the Lifeline board as someone who is passionate about mental health and wellbeing and totally embrace the organisations values of no one is alone, there is someone to listen. I've been touched by depression and mental health issues both personally and in my family and wider circle of friends and want to help and support the organisation to continue to grow, succeed and support.

I have over 15 years' experience on boards of all sizes and am currently a board member of Rural Financial Counselling Victoria West and chair of Murray Primary Health Networks community advisory for Loddon Mallee. I have previously done a lot of advisory work in the dairy and the water space and am proud to be the creator of the Show Some Dairy Love Facebook group

I am a member and graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and also hold an Advanced Diploma in Agribusiness and a Diploma of Agriculture

When I'm not doing those things, I co-own and manage with my husband Gary run our dairy farm in Mead, near Cohuna where we milk 290 cows.



Charmaine Calis

Charmaine joined the board in 2021 having 20+ years' experience in corporate governance and risk management and also serving on the board of Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council. Charmaine lives in Mildura and is focused on supporting the local community.



Anjum Chaudhry

Anjum Chaudhry is a Lecturer at La Trobe Business School, Bendigo campus. Her research focuses on Corporate Social Responsibility and organisational Sustainability motivations and challenges in regional Australia. She has 20 years of experience across the Academia and Mining sectors in multiple countries.

She joined Lifeline Loddon Mallee in June 2020 as a board member. Anjum is passionate about social justice, equality and sustainability. She also sits on the governing committee of Bendigo Sustainability Group. Anjum holds a PhD and a Master Honours from Swinburne University of Technology, Australia.



Rick Van Emmerick

I am passionate about Lifeline Loddon Mallee because I believe that through our amazing volunteers we provide care, compassion and connection for our community. In the last 18 months we have seen bushfires and a pandemic and it is during these uncertain times it's so important that we are there to provide hope and support. We are a well-known and even more integral part of the local community. A financially strong organisation that has an ever increasing number of volunteers that are working together to build resilience in the community and really driving towards the vision of a suicide free Australia.

I joined the board in May 2020, and I bring with me a wealth of experience, including 15 year's experience in the finance and telecommunications.

Founding member of Reach out for Ryan an incorporated association raising funds for Ryan Healy and his family. Ryan was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy at age 6.



Sean MacDermott

I joined the board of Lifeline Loddon Mallee in 2021 as this fits with my passion for suicide prevention as well as a desire to contribute something back to the communities where I live and work.

I have a background in Management, Psychology, and Social Work and am employed at La Trobe University's Rural Health School where I lead the Social Work program at the Mildura campus. My research focuses on health across the lifespan in rural areas and this has included work on suicide prevention and follow-up services.

Having worked in a number of crisis support roles, I am very aware of the role of our volunteers and the fantastic service that they provide. I have served on a number of boards and believe that I have a skill set and passion to contribute to the work of Lifeline Loddon Mallee



**Rachel Mason MFIA
BBus Mkt, GradCert
Bus Admin La Trobe.
MICDA**

It is an absolute privilege to be a Board Director of Lifeline Loddon Mallee and contribute to the vision of a suicide-free Australia.

In my role as Director of the Fundraising & Foundation at Bendigo Health, we raise funds and actively advocate for improved regional health services and understand the importance of the Lifeline 13 11 14 service.

Over the past 20 years, I have held a range of senior leadership and Board positions together with a Bachelor of Business in Marketing and Graduate Certificate in Business Administration, I bring specialist expertise in philanthropy and a passion for supporting the dedicated team in the delivery of the strategic plan.



Our Team



Lisa Renato
Executive Officer



Julie Holland
Training Coordinator



Gillian Edlin
Marketing Coordinator



Leanne Loveland
Store Manager



Christine Adelwohrer
Service Lead
/Counsellor



Prue Walkinshaw
Service Support Officer



John Richards
Community Fundraising
& Events Officer



Meg Logan
Centre Supervisor



Jacqui Knight
Personal Assistant



Independently Audited Financial Reports

Gratitude, Collaboration, and Continued Success

Our supporting partners and stakeholders enable us to achieve our purpose

Sunraysia Lifeline Project
Bendigo Bank Branches
Department of Families, Fairness & Housing
Peter Ryall Estate
Lifeline Australia
Loddon Shire
Bank Australia
Ski For Life
City of Greater Bendigo
Mildura Rural City Council
Comealla Club
Wentworth Shire Council
AFS & Associates
Tweed Sutherland First National
Tough Cookie Marketing

The Foundry
Reign Legal
The Bra Van
Pinot & Picasso Bendigo
Red Energy Arena
Star Cinema
Awaken Coffee
Emily Roberts Pharmacy
ESE Consulting
Bendigo UFS
CVGT
Agnico
SPAN
Wentworth Community Bank



 www.lifelinelm.org.au

 03 5406 0506

 admin@lifelinelm.org.au

 Crisis Support Hotline 13 11 14

 PO Box 1164, Bendigo VIC 3552