

Annual Report 2021



Social connections in the time of isolation



Prologue

Extraordinary people

It takes an extraordinary person to spend hours each day supporting and guiding people through personal crisis. It takes an extraordinary, resilient and dedicated person to do so when isolated in their own home, and dealing with their own personal challenges that a pandemic creates.

Better Place Australia (BPA) has over 135 of these individuals who have worked tirelessly over the past 18 months to ensure our clients receive much needed care. This work can be equally exhausting while still being extremely satisfying.

Across all the helping professions, these unsung heroes have quietly gone about cushioning the impact of the pandemic, and have been a shining beacon for those having to navigate the many challenges of being isolated.

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our wonderful team at BPA and provide some personal insights into their experience of the pandemic, in their own words.

The greatest challenge

"The greatest challenge for me was trying to establish a routine with my children and their remote schooling and respond to their concerns and fears about COVID-19, whilst also working from home and supporting others through their crisis. We needed to be able to focus on keeping ourselves strong and calm and reassure others that it will be okay - we are all in this together."

— Belinda, Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner

Clients are like you and I

"Clients are like you and I. Working through the pandemic, I have found that both the client and I begin to relate to what each other is going through. We feel a greater sense of shared empathy. For them to know that everyone is going through this crisis has helped them to know they are not alone; we are going through this together."

— Kursley, Psychologist

Amazing impact

"A client stated to me: "I've never met you and may never meet you, but it's amazing the impact you've had on my life just over the phone." Also, one of my children said they now understand more about what I do and how proud they are of me. Outside of lockdown, they may never have understood."

— Catherine, Family Consultant

My personal satisfaction

"My personal satisfaction comes from the clients who, despite never communicating via Telehealth, embraced it and engaged magnificently. Despite many of the clients having hearing, sight and cognitive issues, on the whole they themselves persevered and expressed gratitude for the service."

— Cheryl, Social Worker

The dedication, resilience and professionalism shown by the whole team at BPA has been nothing short of amazing. I want to thank our staff, our leadership and Executive team for their tireless and continuous efforts to support and serve our community, all while doing the same at home.

Serge Sardo, CEO



Reflecting upon the last year where our organisation and our community have been experiencing a worldwide pandemic, it strikes me that we are living in an age of paradox. We are connected yet disconnected.

Serge Sardo
Chief Executive Officer

CEO Message

Social Connection in an age of Loneliness

The past year has highlighted some major issues in terms of the significance of impacts of loneliness, and the need to forge and reinforce social connection in Australian society. Like many other organisations, we at Better Place Australia adjusted to Australia's loneliness crisis by shifting our practice online, but we are cognisant of the fact that this shift has not suited many of the more isolated and disadvantaged communities. This vulnerable cohort are at increased risk of needing, but not being able to access our vital services during COVID-19.

Disconnect?

The past two years have been rough. Not just in terms of sickness, lockdowns, masks, political and medical confusion, job security, economic hardships and increased caring and teaching responsibilities; but also because of the undermining of some basic human needs that are central to the functioning of society. We have become isolated from each other, from our families and communities. This is in part due to government mandates to stay home to prevent the spread of COVID-19, however, the issue lies deeper. It is a symptom of a broader and longer-term social change that has become more acute. We are now paradoxically closer to each other by virtue of spending more time in our communities, yet we remain further apart because that is not where we have cultivated relationships and built our lives. We feel further from each other and almost don't know how to reach out and start afresh in this (possibly temporary) new, smaller, more isolated way of life.

At Better Place Australia, we are in the fortunate position of being able to understand these dynamics from two distinct perspectives. We experience them first-hand, and we can also appreciate just how hard it is for our clients – many of whom already live in more precarious circumstances, with smaller or more distant support networks, and deeper socio-cultural barriers to navigate in their daily lives. We already support older people who have been deprived of

their agency and isolated from broader society once they reach their social and economic use-by date, women who have been coerced and isolated by abusive partners into absolute dependence, and people who feel so alone that they consider suicide. So, although we at BPA are siloed at home, hunched over our computers, helping children with homework between meetings and feeling the impacts of this isolation in our bodies and minds, we know we are fortunate, because we are a community – or at least, we are one part of each other's network, and we have the experience of helping clients to navigate similar experiences and stresses.

At this time of year when BPA looks both back and forward to assess the old and plan for the new, I want to reflect on the individualist nature of contemporary Australian society and consider how it is manifesting in serious challenges to health, wellbeing, and relationships. I suggest that prioritising social connection and strong relationships is one way that we at BPA can help to avert and address loneliness and prioritise our own, our client's and our community's mental health and wellbeing moving forward.

Individualism over Community – a very long-term problem

Issues of isolation and loneliness are not new. In fact, the problem was deemed so acute in Australia that a national network, Ending Loneliness Together, was founded in 2020.¹ This was a result of increasing global concern about loneliness 'because of its reported impact on health and wellbeing'.²

The acuteness of this problem has been overlooked for many years owing to social, democratic and economic structures that elevated the individual as the prime unit and focus of personal, political, and financial life. Over the last half century, social mores and ideals have actively and increasingly encouraged Australians to silo themselves from each other; to compete for opportunities,

find meaning in individual pursuits, and place themselves at the centre of all things.

But this premise denies something fundamental about humans as a species – we are essentially social animals and so this misdirection of human nature and endeavour has facilitated the rise of loneliness 'because [our] innate need to belong to a group is unmet'; and the motivation to form and cultivate meaningful relationships that facilitate species survival have also diminished.³

As a result of these trends, in combination with the acutely felt and still ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns, the impact of loneliness is increasingly perceived to be both a mental state, and also to have serious physical health impacts. Loneliness and disconnect from meaningful relationships play out like anxiety and depression.⁴ At BPA we are dedicated to the ideal that better relationships make better individuals and communities, and it is in this respect that we flag loneliness as a pressing social and organisational concern.

There are tendencies to view loneliness as a problem of the person experiencing it, 'as though the people who are lonely have this problem and maybe they should be doing something about it'.⁵ But one positive side effect of the pandemic is that it has had the effect of democratising loneliness – people that had not experienced it as a deep personal and long-term phenomenon are also suffering. This paradoxically offers us an opportunity to identify and address the issue of lack of community at a more local level.

The COVID-19 Effect

Founder of Ending Loneliness Together Michell Lim has demonstrated that people seek out other people as a means of support and comfort in times of crisis. As the effects of loneliness and isolation become more ingrained, people feeling socially isolated will be increasingly less likely to initiate social connection and interaction.⁶ As the COVID-19 crisis has dragged on, 'people's coping resources get eroded' and mental and physical health have become strained. Rates of anxiety, depression and reports of suicidal ideation have spiked in correlation with the preventive actions taken by governments and medical authorities.⁷

The various Australian government's responses to COVID-19 have strictly (and officially) negated potential remedies for the stress of the pandemic; it has unintentionally created more personal and ubiquitous harm through forced isolation, social distancing, curfews, the shutting down of social and economic structures, and confusing the public with sometimes, contradictory public health and legal information.⁸

Not only are people becoming lonely, and isolated, they are becoming disoriented and socially unmotivated. Our individual sense of connection and relation to community 'ideas, values, or at least social patterns that [typically] give ... a feeling of communion and belonging' has been severed, and the effect is a loss of social cooperation, engagement and a failure to 'sense significance beyond the self'.⁹

Despite these concerns, COVID-19 has also presented an opportunity to take stock of the individualist social norms and practices that have been championed in contemporary society, and to counter them by building and fostering a genuine sense of community through technology.

Digital Reconnect?

The capacity of the internet to help people connect during COVID-19 has (for the most part) been a blessing. It has meant that much of our daily lives have continued despite lockdowns and work/study from home orders. Of course, this doesn't universally apply – many people's jobs cannot be moved completely online, and others don't have access. We at BPA have been fortunate enough to have been able to move most of our functions online. This has enabled us to continue to facilitate the vital work that we do to help clients to manage and navigate mental health, financial and relationships issues safely and effectively.

The smooth shift that we as an organisation have been able to make has allowed us to innovate through the available technology to practice what we preach and bring services to clients in ways that would never have been possible or necessary before. We have continued to provide our services across the organisation, albeit via different channels. We have incorporated telephone and

video sessions, and we are particularly proud to say that we made sure that older people's services did not languish during the pandemic. Late 2020 in partnership with the South East Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN) we undertook a pilot trial of computers on wheels at residential aged care facilities to ensure that older people's mental health and wellness remained a priority area, and that they were not excluded from opportunities for technological interaction and treatment.

But for many of our actual and prospective clients, this digital shift has only exacerbated their exclusion and loneliness. Contrary to popular belief, not everyone is digitally connected – in fact, the 2020 Australian Digital Inclusion Index demonstrates that based on the criteria of digital access, affordability and technical ability, Australia only achieves a 63 out of a possible 100.¹⁰ Perhaps unsurprisingly, the mean score is dragged down by Australians in the most vulnerable cohorts we service at BPA – Australians over 65, the under and unemployed and those not in the labour force, those with less than secondary education, as well as indigenous, culturally diverse and disabled Australians.¹¹ These people are typically those that experience overlapping intersections of cultural and socio-economic disadvantage that are unlikely to be fully reflected in these metrics.

BPA exists because people matter to us. Providing our clients with appropriate services and advice to support and empower them has become even more critical in light of the emerging detrimental mental health and wellbeing effects of long-term lockdowns.¹² In this hyper-digital and socially distanced year, we understand that many socio-cultural and health and wellbeing concerns have been linked with digital life. Employing digital resources that foster community and stave off the loneliness during this enforced distancing are more necessary. However, we remain aware that there are significant challenges in achieving these goals in such an inequitable digital and real-life world, where we and our clients must react to crises, rather than being able to be proactive and preventive.

Although this year has been tough, we have made great gains in terms of adapting our service provision to uncertain and frequently changing

conditions, gaining public and political traction for our advocacy for mental health, older people, and women's economic security, and in obtaining funding for our family services for four more years. BPA has found ways to foster and encourage social connection in an age of loneliness – and build social, political, and digital connections that we are working hard to expand into the future.



Serge Sardo

Chief Executive Officer

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9 Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York, NY: Henry Holt & Company 1969), 17–19.

10 J. Thomas, J. Barraket, C. K. Wilson, I. Holcombe-James, J. Kennedy, E. Rennie, S. Ewing, and T. MacDonald, *Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: The Australian Digital Inclusion Index 2020* (Melbourne: RMIT and Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, 2020), 12.

11 Thomas et al, *Australian Digital Inclusion Index* 18-21.

12 Jane Fisher, 'Double Trouble: How Severe Lockdown Restrictions Have Taken a Toll on Population Mental Health' Monash University Lens, 6 August 2021, <https://lens.monash.edu/@coronavirus-articles/2021/08/06/1383599/how-severe-covid-restrictions-have-hit-population-mental-health>



Rachel Holthouse
Chair of the Board

Message from the Chair

Life in the shadow of COVID

Extended lockdown and life in the shadow of COVID-19 have been the reality for Australians over the past year, and especially so for Victorians. Our world continued to be shaped by the pandemic and the impact to families, businesses and individuals has been profound. As communities struggled to endure personally and professionally, the need for support escalated. Despite their own challenges, our Better Place Australia community stepped forward to help others and the care and empathy they showed each other was reflected in the positive employee engagement results the organisation recorded for this period. Identifying with the mission and purpose of BPA scored very highly in the survey reinforcing the strong sense of purpose that binds the organisation.

Our services grew to meet demand, particularly in the mental health support provided for residential aged care facilities and elder abuse. This has reaffirmed BPA as a leader in this space and we are proud of the contribution we have made in addressing this growing issue. BPA continues to enjoy a trusted and effective relationship with government and successfully advocated for the incorporation of the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) into future sector funding, and participated in senior department working groups. We secured additional funding from government, for example, from the Department of Social Services to provide an expanded service in financial counselling and the National Debt Helpline (NDH) and from the Australian Government's cashflow support to assist with additional operational costs. This resulted in BPA performing well as a company, with over \$2M increase in revenue as compared to the previous year.

We embraced new ways of working to improve our services, such as the creation of a customer service unit to ensure a seamless experience for clients, regardless of whether they were being supported remotely or by approved face to face sessions. This adjustment resulted in 90% of

our clients rating their experience as positive. We welcomed a specialist family violence practitioner to the team to provide secondary consultation and training, making sure that our staff continued to develop their skills to meet growing needs. We invested in technology such as PureCloud to support our remote workforce and to engage with our clients, and we launched new programs such as *Child In Focus*, a digitised online course for separating couples, and an online course for the Australian National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS).

These examples reflect the contribution of many. In small and big ways, everyone associated with BPA has given of their time and energy, believing in the value of what we do and committing to making a positive difference to the lives of others less fortunate. My sincere thanks to the Board, the CEO, the Executive team and to all our BPA employees. Despite the challenges of this year, you have consistently served others, demonstrating the professionalism and expertise that makes BPA a shining light in troubled times.

Rachel Holthouse
Chair

Board



Rachel Holthouse

Chair

Rachel Holthouse believes that access to learning is critical for individuals at all stages of life. Her career has focused on aligning education with the needs of communities and industries, both in Australia and internationally. She enjoys learning about different areas of expertise and fostering connections that bring mutual benefit and result in positive impact. She has a strong commitment to the needs of the learner and a compassionate approach to the challenges people face as they seek to change their lives for the better.

As Chair of Better Place Australia, Rachel brings that passion to the support of the BPA community. She applies her experience of using technology to facilitate learning and teaching to support professional development across the BPA community and is an advocate for initiatives that enhance the organisational culture.

Rachel is currently working with SEEK Education as Senior Strategic Advisor to FutureLearn and is the Executive Director for Pathways for Online Education Services. Rachel's career has included senior governance roles in Australia, the United Kingdom and Singapore. She is well respected across the higher education sector and her previous roles include being the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Global Development at RMIT University.

Rachel's achievements have enhanced the reputation of the organisations she served. She is known for having an entrepreneurial and innovative mindset that balances the values and objectives of stakeholders and enables organisations to flourish. She brings her talent for vision and strategy to BPA and nurtures a collaborative relationship with the Board and the BPA Executive.

Rachel joined Better Place Australia in May 2017 and is a member of the People and Governance Committee. She has been Chair of the Board since 2020.



Erika Owens

Deputy Chair

Erika Owens channels her dedication to support victims of crime in Victoria into initiatives and collaborations with various government agencies and not-for-profits. Her empathy, resilience and clear vision are reflected in every project she leads. And in each one, her mission is clear - prevent harm to others.

Erika is currently the Director of Victim Support within the Victim Services, Support & Reform (VSSR) unit at the Department of Justice and Community Safety. She was previously the CEO of Crime Stoppers Victoria.

Erika has also held executive positions as Senior Manager, Southern & Eastern Melbourne and later as General Manager, State Services at Relationship Australia. Prior to this, she worked in the Department of Justice overseeing the delivery of government reform and operations.

Erika joined the Board in 2018 as a member of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.

Delia McIver

Director

Delia McIver has significant experience at a senior executive level across the post-secondary education sector in the areas of People and Culture/Human Resources, safety, risk and corporate services, and has worked across Australia and internationally throughout her career. Delia currently holds the position of Executive Director People, Culture and Safety at Chisholm Institute, having held similar positions as Executive Director People & Capability at Box Hill Institute, and Director Human Resources at Victoria University.

Having a keen interest in the not-for-profit sector, Delia has been a member of the Fitzroy Learning Network Board, Oakleigh Centre Board and enjoys participating as a volunteer at Reclink.

Delia is a graduate of the University of Melbourne, Monash University and La Trobe University and a member of the Australian Human Resources Institute.

Delia joined the Board in May 2017 as Chair of the People and Governance Committee.



David Speyer

Director and Treasurer

David Speyer firmly believes in an individual's capacity for change and growth. He is committed to creating dynamic environments that facilitate self-development. He has taken great pride in leading the delivery of service excellence to clients and the wider community.

David has spearheaded services to people living with disabilities to help them live their chosen lifestyle. He is currently interim CFO at Teach for Australia. His style mirrors Better Place Australia's approach to helping our most vulnerable clients gain autonomy and build the confidence to make their own life decisions.

David's leadership career revolves around applying commercial and financial acumen to complex organisational change and turnaround. His agility and ability to see the big picture have also helped guide Better Place's strategy and direction.

David joined the Board in October 2014 as Chair of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.

Board



Magistrate Anne Goldsbrough

Director

Anne Goldsbrough has been a leader in the area of Family Violence and Family Law since her appointment as a magistrate in 1996. She was a member of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Steering committee on the intersection between law, religion and human rights (2008–2009), and was the part-time Law Reform Commissioner for the Australian Law Reform Commission's inquiry into the interaction of laws and practice in family law, family violence, child protection, sexual assault, and criminal laws. She sits on the Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity.

Anne is currently the Regional Coordinating Magistrate and Lead Family Violence Magistrate at the Moorabbin Justice Centre. She has presided over notable projects including the development and introduction of the Specialist Family Violence Court Division in 2005.

She regularly contributes to ongoing legal and judicial professional development and to a range of community information and education programs both locally and abroad.

She brings the same dedication to Better Place Australia where she has a natural interest in our services that are supportive of those at risk of family violence and our practitioners' focus on risk assessment and safety planning.

Anne joined as a Director of the Board in November 2018.



Dr Bruce Bolam

Director

Dr Bruce Bolam is Executive Director, Health Protection, in the Department of Health & Human Services, Victoria. He has extensive experience in public health and behavioural science, gained through senior roles in research, healthcare, government and non-government organisations in Australia and the UK.

Passionate about reducing local and global inequalities in health and wellbeing, Bruce was an inaugural Co-Director of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Leadership in Health Promotion hosted by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, VicHealth.

Bruce is a Fellow of both the Public Health Association of Australia and the UK Faculty of Public Health of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and holds several degrees in public health sciences. He maintains an active research profile and is regularly invited to speak at national and international scientific conferences.

Bruce joined in February 2020 as a member of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.



Emma Fenby

Director

Emma Fenby is known for steadfastly championing children, families and young people experiencing disadvantage. Her extensive experience, knowledge, and zeal for this cause placed her at the forefront of various key reforms in the out-of-home care sector in Victoria.

Emma's people skills have helped her build strong and collaborative relationships within government, community service providers, researchers, and philanthropic organisations. These relationships go a long way in supporting her advocacy for policy change to improve outcomes for those experiencing vulnerability and hardship.

Emma was Director of the Children, Families, Disabilities and Communities Division at the Department of Health & Human Services and subsequently seconded as Executive and Strategic Advisor to the Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare. She is currently General Manager of Strategic Services at the Department of Territory Families Housing and Communities.

Emma spent 10 years in commercial law practice where she worked on several inquiries and Royal Commissions. She was involved in the government response to the Hazelwood Mine Fire inquiries.

She joined the Board in February 2020 as a member of the People and Governance Committee.

Thomas King

Director

Thomas is a Finance and Strategy Executive with extensive experience across finance, operations, procurement and M&A both locally and internationally leading change and transformation. Thomas has worked in Melbourne, Paris and Singapore and covered regional roles across Central Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

Thomas has held senior executive roles at Australia Post including General Manager, Finance and General Manager, Procurement, and executive roles at ANZ Bank including CFO South and South East Asia, CFO Enablement, Divisional Financial Controller Asia Pacific, Head of Finance Integration RBS and Head of Productivity, Planning and Performance. Prior to working for ANZ, Thomas held roles in Mergers and Acquisitions for the Global AXA Group and was also financial controller for AXA's Asia Pacific business based out of Paris.

Thomas holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Melbourne University, an Honours degree in Banking and Finance from Monash University, is a qualified Chartered Accountant and a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Thomas joined in August 2020 as a member of the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.

Executive Team



Serge Sardo

Chief Executive Officer

Serge Sardo is the CEO of Better Place Australia. With over 14 years' experience as a CEO and non-executive director for not-for-profit or government organisations, Serge is passionate about transforming the lives of vulnerable Victorians and their families.

In his previous role as CEO of the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, Serge was instrumental in establishing the Foundation as a world leader in the delivery of counselling, support and prevention programs to over 100 different locations.

Serge is a registered psychologist and has an MBA qualification complimented with strong commercial experience. With expertise in preventative programs, social policy and advocacy, he has delivered and managed a wide variety of community-based therapeutic and prevention services.

Serge's commitment to developing stronger communities is exemplified through his voluntary involvement across sectors. He is a member of the Board for the Family and Relationships Services Association (FRSA) and chairs the Finance, Risk and Governance Committee. He is also a non-Executive Director of Scope Disability Services, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation and is Vice President of Sandringham Secondary College.



Graeme Westaway

Executive Manager Brand, Digital & Corporate Communications

Graeme believes all people should be able to live their lives fully, in socially connected ways without fear of coercion or discrimination.

With a science, communication and services development background, Graeme is behind Better Place Australia's digital presence, corporate communications, stakeholder management and growth generation.

He has held executive and senior leadership roles across the not-for-profit, mutual and corporate sectors. He brings to Better Place Australia a strong background in developing strategies to drive growth, digital engagement and service innovation. He has a passion for raising ageism awareness, elder abuse prevention and respecting the right of all people to self determine.



Jenni Dickson

Executive Manager Community Support Services

Jenni Dickson is the Executive Manager of Community Support Services at Better Place Australia.

Jenni oversees the areas of mediation, financial counselling, the National Debt Helpline and Elder services, as well as quality improvement across the organisation. She has a strong understanding of client-focused outcomes coupled with a passion for health and community services.

Joining Better Place Australia in 2013, Jenny has over 20 years' experience in the healthcare and community services industry and has held previous management roles across public and community health sectors.

Jenni has qualifications in Nursing, Community Health, Quality Management and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Jenni has extensive experience in the Aged and Community Care sector. Working constantly to improve service standards, she played a key role in achieving QIC Accreditation for Better Place Australia. Jenni has been an instrumental part in developing Better Place Australia's elder services including the Elder Abuse Prevention Services and mental health and well-being services in Residential Aged care facilities.



David Turen

Executive Manager Human Resources

David Turen has extensive career experience in Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations in both the corporate and not-for-profit sectors. David has held HR leadership roles across a variety of organisations in health and community services, contact centres and commercial aviation.

David is responsible for the full suite of people and culture functions including HR Strategy, Employee Relations, Performance and Reward Management, HR Consultancy and People Policy.

David has a Bachelor's Degree in Economics, a Master's Degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations from the University of Sydney and is a Professional Member of the Australian Human Resources Institute (CAHRI). David is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).

Executive Team



Andrew Johnston

Executive Manager Mental Health Services

Andrew Johnston has over 25 years' experience in organisational development, operational planning and development, and quality and risk management spanning the not-for-profit, aid and development, community, and private sectors. Andrew has held a variety of key leadership and senior positions at large non-profit, community, and private organisations.

Andrew has a passion for working with strategic, values-based people and has an educational background in business, management and leadership. He has also undertaken extensive work as an independent organisational development consultant supporting a range of not-for-profit agencies in the health/community service sectors.

Andrew joined Better Place Australia in 2019.



Craig Dennis

Executive Manager Business Systems

Craig Dennis has over 30 years' of experience in IT systems, information management and information technology strategy. He has held a number of senior and executive roles, and has extensive experience in technology change consulting, and advisory and business leadership roles.

Craig's expertise in business automation systems for small to medium businesses has enabled Better Place Australia to develop new key IT strategies and systems.

Craig maintains strong ties to his local community and has a long history in volunteer work, including helping senior roles in the Country Fire Authority and consulting for a number of not-for-profits.



Chris Ritchie

Executive Manager Corporate Services

Chris has a Bachelor of Business with a major in Accounting and postgraduate qualifications in business management.

He is a Fellow of CPA Australia and of the Governance Institute of Australia.

He has an extensive knowledge of finance, administration, contract administration, facilities management, corporate governance and risk management, with over 25 years in senior roles with ASX listed companies as a CFO, Director and Company Secretary.

Chris believes in giving back to the community and is actively involved with the operational, financial and sponsorship management for a number of regional sports associations.

Client Profile

Household composition



Single adult	Family (including extended)	Group (unrelated)	Couple
45.7%	32%	11.2%	11.1%

Current income



\$0 - \$25,000	\$25,001 - \$50,000	\$50,001 - \$100,000	\$100,001 - \$150,000	Over \$ 150,000
48.4%	24.9%	21.1%	4.8%	0.8%

Highest level of education



Primary	Secondary - Year 10	Secondary - Year 12	Tertiary - University or Institutes	Never attended School
9.1%	21.6%	21.4%	47.6%	0.2%

Marital status



Single / Never married	Married	In a relationship	Separated	Divorce	Other relationship	Widowed	Not disclosed/N/A
16.6%	12.2%	5%	47.4%	10.6%	1.8%	0.6%	5.9%

Employment status



Employed	Unemployed but Seeking Employment	Not in the Labour Force	Retired	Person aged under 15 years
58.1%	10.9%	24.6%	1.1%	5.4%

Strategic Pillars

Strategic Pillar 1



Make A Difference

The overall aim of this strategic pillar is to ensure Better Place Australia achieves a positive impact on its clients, staff and the communities it serves. The two underlying premises of this aim is that staff are critical to good client outcomes, and that by adopting a public health approach, with stronger focus on prevention, Better Place Australia will make a stronger positive impact on people's lives.

Key priorities 2020–2021:

- A better place for clients – consolidate new services and create the best possible experience for our clients
- A better place for staff – engaged and high performing workforce
- Better results – sustainable outcomes through effective evidence-based services
- Safe and secure – strengthen responses to prevent and manage incidents of family violence and improve staff safety

Strategic Pillar 2



Growth and Sustainability

With a long and successful history spanning 35 years, the overall aim of this strategy pillar is to ensure BPA prospers well into the future, and continues to provide much needed services to those people most in need. Continued growth and sound financial management will enable BPA to invest in new approaches to support individuals and communities, and grow the sector knowledge base through sound research.

Key priorities 2020–2021:

- Strengthen financial position
- Build philanthropy fundraising
- Consolidate recent growth and effectively embed new services
- Respond to the COVID-19 impact on communities

Strategic Pillar 3



Enterprising

With a rapidly changing sector, growing population, increasing diversity and community needs, this strategic pillar aims to build a dynamic, creative, inventive and daring organisation that pushes boundaries and explores new frontiers.

Key priorities 2020–2021:

- Create a Better Place for Kids – specialised services for children
- Establish Better Pride within the LGBTIQ+ community
- Technology as our enabler

Strategic Pillar 4



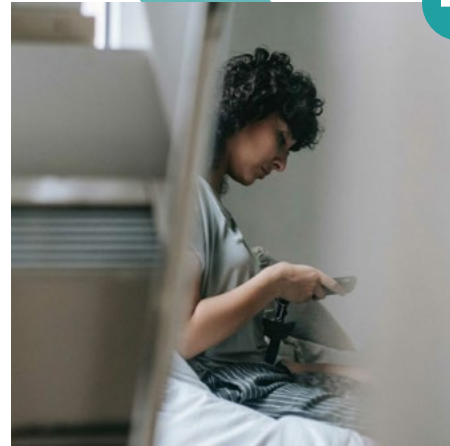
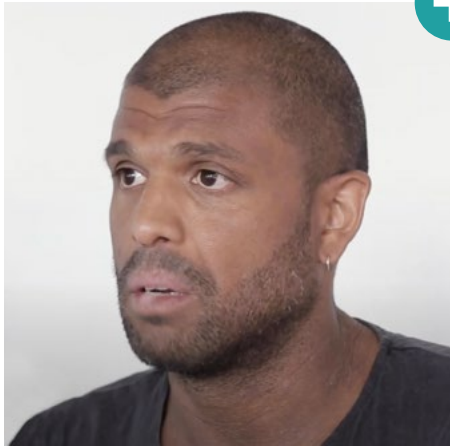
Brand and Reputation

Often described as a quiet achiever, for over 35 years BPA has delivered much needed services across Victoria and has now grown to an organisation that sees over 12,000 new clients per year, and has over 140 staff across 18 locations. A leader in delivering high-quality services, Better Place Australia's next stage of development is to build stronger awareness of the BPA brand and gain a reputation as a thought leader, influencer and innovator.

Key priorities 2020–2021:

- Social Impact – grow our influence across stakeholders, policy makers and the sector
- Grow reputation and influence through research, policy and advocacy

Our Achievements



Launching The Way Back Support Service

The Way Back Support Service is a Beyond Blue initiative for people who have experienced a suicidal crisis. Research shows that people experience severe distress in the weeks immediately after a suicidal crisis, and are at high risk of attempting again. Clients are triaged through the Emergency Departments of Casey or Dandenong Hospital following a suicidal crisis. A Better Place Australia Support Coordinator contacts the person within one business day of receiving their referral and tailors a program for up to three months after discharge from hospital. This program is built on personal connection and integration with community services. The service is provided in partnership with Monash Health and the South Eastern Melbourne Primary Care Network. Better Place Australia launched this service to reconnect vulnerable people with the community and their existing support networks. Clients work one-on-one with a Better Place Australia Support Coordinator who engages them with services that address issues related to their distress. Social and family connection is integral to the approach.

Expanding the RACF Psychological Program reach

In May 2021, Better Place Australia was commissioned by the Western Victoria Primary Health Network to launch the Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) Psychological Program. The launch took place at the Hesse Lodge facility in Winchelsea.

New federal funding to support the mental health and wellbeing of aged care residents will allow Better Place Australia to provide Psychological Therapy Services (PTS) to support residents of over 30 care facilities across Western Victoria. As many of them continue to face increasing social isolation due to the pandemic, the RACF Psychological Program will give them a valuable lifeline.

Self-help resources guide clients through the pandemic

Most of our services involve seeing clients at pre-arranged times during business hours, however, anxiety and depression can happen at any time. We understand this and introduced a mini library of self-help resources for clients at times when they can't see their practitioner or aren't ready to talk through issues.

We also know that it can be difficult for clients to make decisions during a stressful time. With so many self-help resources available, deciding on which is of high quality, value for money and based on credible research can be overwhelming.

We have done the work for our clients by evaluating many of the leading self-help products for quality, usability and evidence-based functionality. The products that we recommend are now available on our website.

Retaining client satisfaction through remote counselling

As we adjusted to working from home, we also took several steps to help our clients adapt to remote mediation and counselling sessions. A small change that made a big difference was displaying highly visible banners and prompts on our website about our changing circumstances according to the latest restrictions.

We also published a guide on how clients could set themselves up for a comfortable and discreet remote counselling session in their own homes. Over the year, we observed several trends as a result of people adapting to our remote services:

First contact through online enquiry grew 152.47% year-on-year. Online chat grew by 50% chats per month compared to the past online enquiry. More people viewed our website on desktop (up 6%) rather than mobile phone (down 4%).



↑6%
DESKTOP



↓4%
MOBILE

Our Achievements



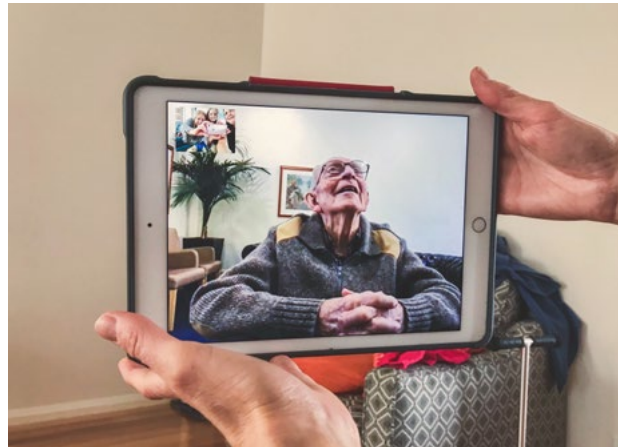
Putting the child at the heart of the matter

The pandemic led to the launch of our first online client course - the Child In Focus online learning module. This course is designed to support our Family Dispute Resolution clients by helping them better understand their child's experience during a family separation.

The self-paced course encourages parents to think clearly about how they can help their children continue to thrive after their separation and their role in supporting that. Both parents are invited to participate in and complete the course. Since then, participation in this course has increased significantly

The Child In Focus program is a strong educational resource for parents who are intent on protecting their children and focusing on their child's interest in their decision-making. Using an online portal has made it easy to reach more people who appreciate the convenience of accessing it whenever and wherever they want. Over 550 parents have completed the course in the last 12 months.

BPA have also created the Better Place For Kids website, featuring our services and programs for parents and children. The website reinforces our credibility and experience in helping families through difficult times and will be integrated into the soon to be launched Children's Contact Service facility at Narre Warren, to complement our child-and-parent focused training programs.



New technology helps an older generation stay connected

Better Place Australia is funded by two Primary Health Networks to provide mental health and psychological support services to people in RACFs with mild to moderate mental illnesses. When the pandemic reached Australia, we had to quickly shift from a regular in-person service to a remote service.

The South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN) supported our development of a mobile video terminal for the RACFs, which was met with an enthusiastic uptake and response from the residents. The new technology has been a game-changer. It has broken through social isolation and upheld older people's right to access the same mental health support offered to the rest of the community.

The self-supported terminal consists of mounted computers on portable stands with a screen large enough for a video consultation. These computers are easy to clean, charge and can be used either seated or at a bedside.



Setting up a new site for expanded services

In May 2021, Better Place Australia moved its team and services into a bigger and brighter site in Oakleigh. Our new office is located close to public transport and amenities, has free street parking and an access-friendly entrance ramp and lift. It's also better equipped to service our growing clientele in the region.

Oakleigh is a designated Family Relationships Centre (FRC) that offers Family and Relationship Counselling, Child Counselling and Family Dispute Resolution (FDR). There are programs such as Dads Tuning into Kids that help fathers to build positive relationships with their child and to support their child's emotional resilience, and a child-focused course for separating parents wanting to keep the best interests of their child at the centre of their post-separation arrangements.



Advocacy

Supporting our community during COVID-19

Looking out for older clients when they are out of sight

The culmination of increased stress and anxiety, financial pressures and social isolation during the pandemic has led to a rise in cases of elder abuse. Alarming, most of these cases have taken place behind closed doors where it is easily concealed since the older person has been cut off from social and support networks.



Orange Door Family Consultants have observed clients referred are likely to have experienced degrees of physical assault that required police intervention.



Being single and female places the older person at a higher risk of elder abuse.



An estimated 71% of victims are female with no partner.

In the past 18 months, Better Place Australia has received 40% more referrals for older people from community health agencies. This is likely the outcome of a concerted initiative to raise awareness of elder abuse by the Elder Abuse Prevention Networks across Victoria.

Better Place Australia is part of key elder abuse consortiums aimed at raising awareness around drivers of elder abuse and promoting greater service links and cooperation among the Victorian Government, Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership, community legal service organisations, local councils and other key primary health partnerships.

40% more referrals

In the past 18 months, Better Place Australia has received 40% more referrals for older people.

Empowering clients to pursue their own self-help approach

Like many other organisations, we too have shifted our services and ways of working to digital platforms. One of our digital initiatives is the creation of self-help mental health and well-being resources online aimed at providing clients and practitioners resources they can access in their own time and in the privacy of their own homes, supporting them when they need it most.



Shifting our services to digital platforms with self-help mental health and well-being resources online.



Advocacy

Supporting our community during COVID-19

More women seeking financial counselling during the pandemic

Women have been shouldering the extra responsibility of handling remote learning, child-rearing and homemaking while juggling their regular work.



Women make up 63% of Better Place Australia's total current Financial Counselling and Capability (FCC) client base.



Women face greater vulnerability to financial volatility during the pandemic.



Victorians are increasingly resorting to short-term credit such as payday loans to make ends meet.

Many women have found themselves faced with the increased risk of losing their jobs, being ineligible for government support during the pandemic, and often work in precarious, lower paid roles.

For as long as harmful gendered financial attitudes go unnoticed in Australian culture, women will always face the risk of financial insecurity and dependence. Better Place Australia works to advocate for and support those who are struggling financially by offering Financial Counselling and Capability (FCC) services and through our work with the National Debt Hotline.

From a dark time to a brighter future

65,000

An estimated 65,000 Australians attempt suicide every year.

25%

25% of that number will make a re-attempt within three months if there's no follow-up support and care.

Better Place Australia launched The Way Back Support Service in partnership with South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN), Beyond Blue and Monash Health in April 2021.

The service supports those who have attempted suicide or experienced a suicidal crisis through the Better Place Support Coordinators. They play an integral role in working with these clients to develop a safety plan and provide personalised support over three months. Clients are supported by coordinators who support them with a safe space to participate in the recovery process through their darkest hours.

The Way Back Support Service is developed by Beyond Blue and commissioned by SEMPHN. Funding from the federal and state governments is funnelled to those who are referred through Casey and Dandenong hospitals.



Advocacy

How the Centre for Better Relationships is enhancing lives through research



The Centre for Better Relationships is the research and policy division of Better Place Australia. It conducts ethically applied research and policy analysis in the field of family and social welfare in a way that aligns with our values and mission.

We aim to establish ourselves as a research leader in this field and have clearly made our commitment to improving lives through meaningful research, knowledge translation and sharing our findings with a broad audience.

Over the past year, the Centre has been an invaluable resource for BPA.

It has played a large role in supporting and guiding many of our projects and initiatives, including research, advocacy and data analysis. The Centre has also produced over 10 publications in the last 12 months for external and internal audiences.

When the COVID-19 pandemic sent Australians into home offices, the Centre adapted quickly and easily by shifting its focus to policy work and taking advantage of existing expertise and resources.

The Centre also hired a Research and Policy Officer and disseminated policy work over the year. Its most timely piece was a response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care, Quality and Safety in which it stated that ageism has created a broken aged care system and facilitated the social discrimination of our older community.

The Centre recommended that this discriminatory attitude be addressed through awareness-raising legislation, service provision and regulatory modernising to bring about meaningful change and to facilitate self-determination. This calibre of work has successfully positioned the Centre as more than a research division.

The social changes sparked by the pandemic also gave the Centre an opportunity to turn its focus inward. Among its contemplations was how to use research and best practice evidence to enhance service delivery.

In early 2020, the Centre began reviewing all program logic documents and outcomes frameworks to provide stronger internal support to our practitioners. This work has been ongoing and will ultimately lead to the reviewed outcomes frameworks being trialled across specific programs.

The Centre also launched a Lunchtime Series as a way to connect with staff and reinforce the importance of good data collection and management practices.

The Research Team

The Centre's team is made up of two well-respected personnel.

Paula Fernandez Arias

Paula holds a Bachelor of Arts, English Literature and Linguistics (Hons) and a Master's Degree in Arts Gender Studies and Development. Paula completed her PhD thesis, "We only meet in the lift" an examination of Australian Multiculturalism through the Resettlement Experiences of African Refugees, in 2016.

Paula has extensive research experience in the areas of families and relationships, mental health, filicide and incarceration. She currently holds the role of Associate Researcher at the Department of Social Work at Monash University. Her research work focuses on Social Theory, Social Policy and Qualitative Social Research.

Natasha Szuhan

Natasha holds a Master of Arts (Research) and PhD in the contemporary history of science, technology and medicine. She has completed a postdoctoral research fellowship and has lectured at the University of Melbourne and Australian National University. Her research focuses on reproductive and contraceptive technologies, women's health, fertility and infertility, medico-scientific standards, drugs, and physicians' perspectives on health and disease.



Advocacy

Pursuing more funding to retain services for vulnerable communities

Not-for-profit and community sector organisations consistently rely on external funding to deliver essential services to vulnerable Australians and pay fair wages to their staff. Many of these services, including those at Better Place Australia, are able to have a wide reach and strong impact because of this crucial financial backing.

In 2012, the federal government introduced the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) supplementation to annually boost the salaries of community service workers involved in pre-existing programs and who did not have the pay increase included in their contracts. We applauded this move for its recognition of the sector's needs and contribution.

Last year, community organisations found themselves in the same financial quandary as they were in a decade ago. The ERO was to effectively end in June 2021 which translated to a \$45m cut from a sector that still badly needed it – even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. The substantial shortfall would deal a severe blow to service providers and their communities. Among the potential implications were:

- 1,000 skilled Australians losing their jobs
- 100,000 vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians losing access to essential services
- 250 family and relationship program sites shutting, mostly in regional and rural areas. These services included family law services, children and parenting services and domestic violence services.

Ripple effect of funding cut would be far and wide

In October 2019, the Australian Community Sector Survey (ACSS) conducted a survey of 1,454 community sector staff on the impact of the funding cut. The response was grim and unequivocal. The respondents warned that organisational financial status, staffing and service delivery would suffer in the aftermath of the slashed funding. The only way forward, they said,

was increasing the base grants to replace the financial shortfall.

A report by the Centre for International Economics (CIE) commissioned by the Family & Relationship Services Australia (FRSA) stated that the financial shortfall had to be addressed through "increased taxation to expand services or be imposed on all health system users through increased waiting lists." Either way, the everyday Australian bore the brunt of it.

Apart from potential staff losses and program closures, the sector would experience a loss in gender equity due to its predominantly female workforce. Attracting and retaining was looking to be a challenge once again.

Campaigning to continue serving vulnerable communities

The road ahead was a bleak one for the community service sector and its partners and allies. In addition to the rising demand for mental health services during the pandemic, the future looked frightening.

Many children, families and communities hadn't yet recovered from the trauma of the bushfires and decades of drought. The pandemic sent them reeling even further. They desperately needed support to heal and move forward - community services filled this need.

We joined the Family and Relationship Services Australia (FRSA), community and not-for-profit organisations in a national campaign ahead of news of the potential funding cut in 2020. We raised awareness of the issue amongst Australian politicians and urged the federal government to embed the ERO into grants before supplementation ended in June 2021.

Successful Outcome

The campaign was a success with the Federal Government including the ERO into future funding agreements for another four years.

Banding together for a unified systemic approach to service delivery

Every year, thousands of Australian individuals and families seek support from Family and Relationship Services (FARS) for help in resolving disputes and rebuilding family ties. Many find the process more complex than anticipated because of a key systemic issue – fragmented service delivery and care.

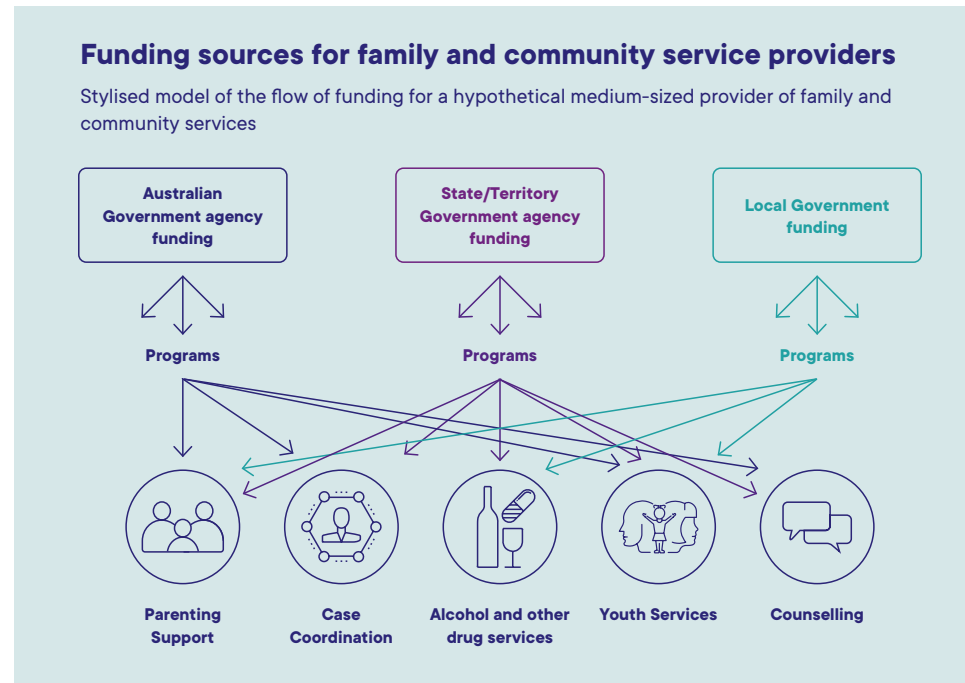
Provision of programs is further complicated by some funders requiring different data reporting by each region in the state. There is also an overlap in the types of services that are funded by different levels of government and departments, yet to the consumer it should be the one system and they think 'why do I have to keep repeating myself?'. Be it mental health family support or family relationship support, the system response is fragmented. This poses a significant challenge in providing a coordinated multi-service response to the individuals and families that we support.

We have observed a pattern with many of our clients where they often present with a single issue around family relationships but gradually reveal underlying causes. In response to these multifaceted issues, we advocate supporting clients through complementary services like financial counselling, elder abuse prevention and mental health support. A cohesive care plan that includes all service providers is essential for cases like these to reach the best possible outcome.

The exclusion of older people in family relationship services

In our work with generations of Australian families, we have noticed the emergence of an ageist approach to the provision of family relationship services that excludes the older person. The notion that older people do not experience family relationship issues is not only misguided but also harmful to this group.

The families of older Australians comprise their adult children and grandchildren. Parental concerns and issues last a lifetime even when



As the above diagram shows the flow of funding and attendant different reporting requirements complicates service delivery and does not place the client at the centre of the service provision.

their children have flown the nest. A relationship with a grandchild is vastly different from that with a child and may require guidance as it develops. To overlook this and deny older people their need to nurture or repair their family relationships is unconscionable. The focus of service guidelines for family services are for younger age normative and exclude grandparents and older parents.

In fact, older people should be encouraged to continue deepening their relationships in this phase of their lives. One way to promote Family Relationship Services (FARS) to them is by making these services more inclusive, acknowledging their needs and linking these services to other

necessary services. Across Australia, over 60 Family Relationship services exist yet the over-65 cohort participation in these services is very low. Children, teenagers and their parents can attend but it seems the doors are closed for the older cohort.

The older demographic is also deeply affected by COVID-19. As we continued providing mental health support and elder abuse support services during lockdowns, it became increasingly apparent that inclusiveness and connectedness were missing for this cohort.

Not only are older people pushed out of public sight but they are also driven into further social isolation because of their inability to use technology to stay connected with family, friends and support networks. As such, Better Place Australia fully supports piloting Voice-Assisted technology trials to overcome this barrier to connectivity.

Fostering cohesion and inclusivity among service providers

There is a growing need for the healthcare sector to start building stronger links among related service providers so it can function in a cohesive and inclusive manner that is beneficial for all Australians.

One body that is already implementing this model well is the Family Law Pathways Network (FLPN). We consider the FLPN to be a good example of how service providers can work hand in glove with each other and with government and non-government agencies.

We also support the establishment of regional service provider forums that can bring together service providers within niche areas to collectively identify service priorities and strengthen collaboration with each other.

Much of the Department of Social Services' work currently revolves around the administration of grants and developing a relationship approach to contract management. We hope to see the department take on a greater leadership role and prioritise achieving outcomes through relationships, rather than contractual governance. This will be a positive starting point in bringing together the different parts of a whole in the areas of service delivery and care.



Advocacy

Stronger commitment needed to stem the rise in elder abuse

The mental health of Victorians has been acutely challenged for the past 18 months. Multiple and prolonged lockdowns have brought a social disconnection that many still find unnatural and painful. One group that has felt the anguish of isolation more sharply than others is that of older people.

Whether living in an aged care facility or their long-term family home, many older people have had their daily lives disrupted by the pandemic. This, in turn, has heavily impacted their mental health. Even when restrictions were briefly lifted, many of older people were reluctant to re-engage with the wider community due to their vulnerability.

The severity of their isolation led to emerging psychological issues including stress, anxiety, loneliness and financial pressures. It also forced older people to rely heavily on caregivers and family members which removed their independence and put a strain on relationships.

The situation worsened for some as their caregivers experienced similar emotional issues. In many cases, adult children and grandchildren who lost their jobs returned to the family home. As relationships became more complex and emotions grew volatile, the older person became a convenient outlet for unleashing frustrations. The risk of family members perpetrating abuse against the older person increased.

In some cases, the family member became a perpetrator, curtailing the older person's independence and agency by terminating in-home services, practical supports and manipulating social isolation. Enquiring family members on the outside would be told "Mum is not up to seeing you today she's worried about catching Covid". The inability to access these vital services caused great stress and social disconnection that led to significant distress to the older person. Living behind closed doors also led to the abuse being undetected.

Since the pandemic began, Better Place Australia has received 40% more referrals for older people. Based on our Elder Abuse Support Services data, session numbers per client have almost doubled from 3.8 to 6.5 over the past 18 months indicating how complex cases were becoming.

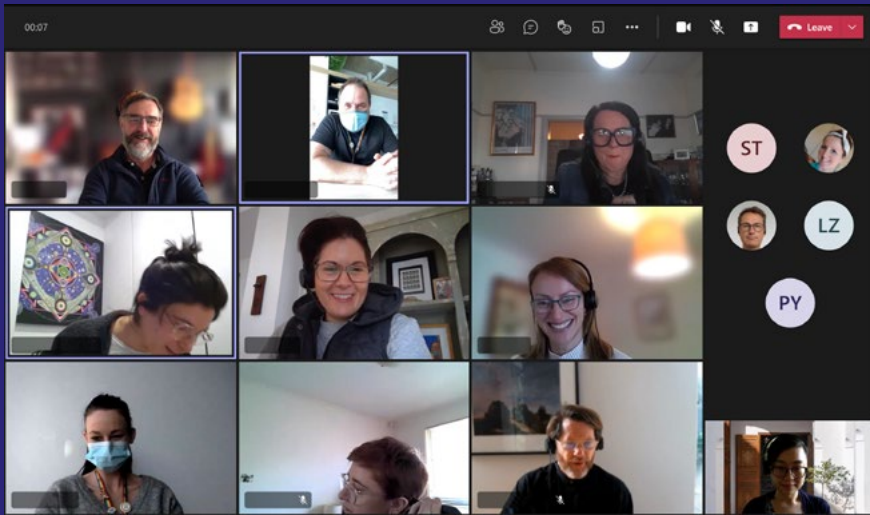
While interacting with this cohort, our Family Consultants observed new themes, patterns and issues created by the pandemic. One of them is ageism, which is identified as a precursor to elder abuse.

A 2018 study by the joint Council of the Ageing and Senior Rights Victoria identified multiple stereotypes that dehumanise and infantilise older people and perpetuate the myth that they possess diminished mental and physical capacity. These ageist stereotypes are often used to conceal elder abuse.

What alarms us just as much as these findings is that the current level of support for elder abuse prevention is not reflective of the increasing demand for this service. We urgently need to see a pick-up in the two key areas that will make the biggest difference – awareness-raising and elder abuse support funding.

Our data clearly shows that elder abuse is a steadily rising phenomenon, and one that cannot be tackled through funded pilot projects alone. We need to see a stronger commitment by state and federal decision-makers and a concerted effort to stamp out this social ill.

In the coming year, we will keep pursuing better means of facilitating social connection for older people, especially those living alone, by introducing voice-assisted trials and more frequent house visits. We have an exciting community research project to gain knowledge about ageist attitudes in the community. We intend to keep driving conversations about ageism and to seek greater funding. Our ultimate aim is to play a significant role in stemming the rise of elder abuse and helping more people regain their rightful independence, agency and dignity.



Our People

Retaining high staff engagement rates

We are immensely proud of the passionate, skilled and diverse people on our team. We've also taken great pride in our latest staff engagement survey which has achieved higher than average ratings.

We received an 84% engagement rate with the majority of staff stating their intention to stay at Better Place Australia. This rate was 11% above the industry benchmark and 3% higher than the previous result for the same metric.

Other standouts included an 83% rating for our progress and delivery outcomes, 71% for leadership, 81% for flexibility, and 87% for health and safety.

Despite the impact of COVID-19, our staff rated their emotional wellbeing at 69% which is 2% higher than the 2019 score. Another notable rating was the 76% satisfaction in technology which is 16% higher than the industry benchmark.

Working apart; staying connected

Our staff have worked remotely for over 18 months. Being physically apart from each other for that long can make it easy for gradual disconnection to set in. We took a few steps to prevent this and keep staff engaged and connected.

Aside from regular virtual team catch-ups, we encouraged them to stay updated on the latest happenings in the organisation through The Loop on Sharepoint, which hosts Yammer and our blog. When restrictions were lifted, we recommended that staff within proximity bubbles schedule walks together. When we were allowed in the office, we ensured that each shift rotation comprised a mix to ensure staff were not siloed.

During this time, our resilience was doubly tested by our work in supporting the community. We knew how easily staff could be overworked and neglect self-care. So we constantly reminded them of their access to the Employee Assistance

Program (EAP) and scheduled regular online wellbeing sessions around yoga, mindfulness and healthy living. To further lighten things up, we organised trivia and online scavenger hunts that turned out to be big hits.

Strengthening inclusivity and resilience within our workforce

We set up our staff for success during the pandemic by offering inclusion training and a Lunchtime Series. These initiatives were aimed at building their professional confidence and skills while working remotely.

We are committed to creating and sustaining an inclusive environment in our workplace for anyone who walks through our doors. In delivering this, we invited staff to enrol in the SBS Inclusion Program on our internal Learning Management System. The online modules are designed to develop core skills and knowledge around inclusion through real stories, easily digestible information and tests to demonstrate knowledge attainment.

Meanwhile, the Lunchtime Series is a social learning initiative hosted in collaboration with the Centre for Better Relationships. Staff came together to learn from subject matter experts on a wide range of topics like data management, the new Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) and industry guidelines. The sessions offered tools and strategies to help staff better advocate for themselves and others.

Staff engagement survey

84%

We received an 84% engagement rate with the majority of staff stating their intention to stay at Better Place Australia.

11%

11% above the industry benchmark for staff engagement rate.



Staff rated Better Place Australia highly in multiple areas

83%

Progress and delivery outcomes

71%

Leadership

81%

Flexibility

87%

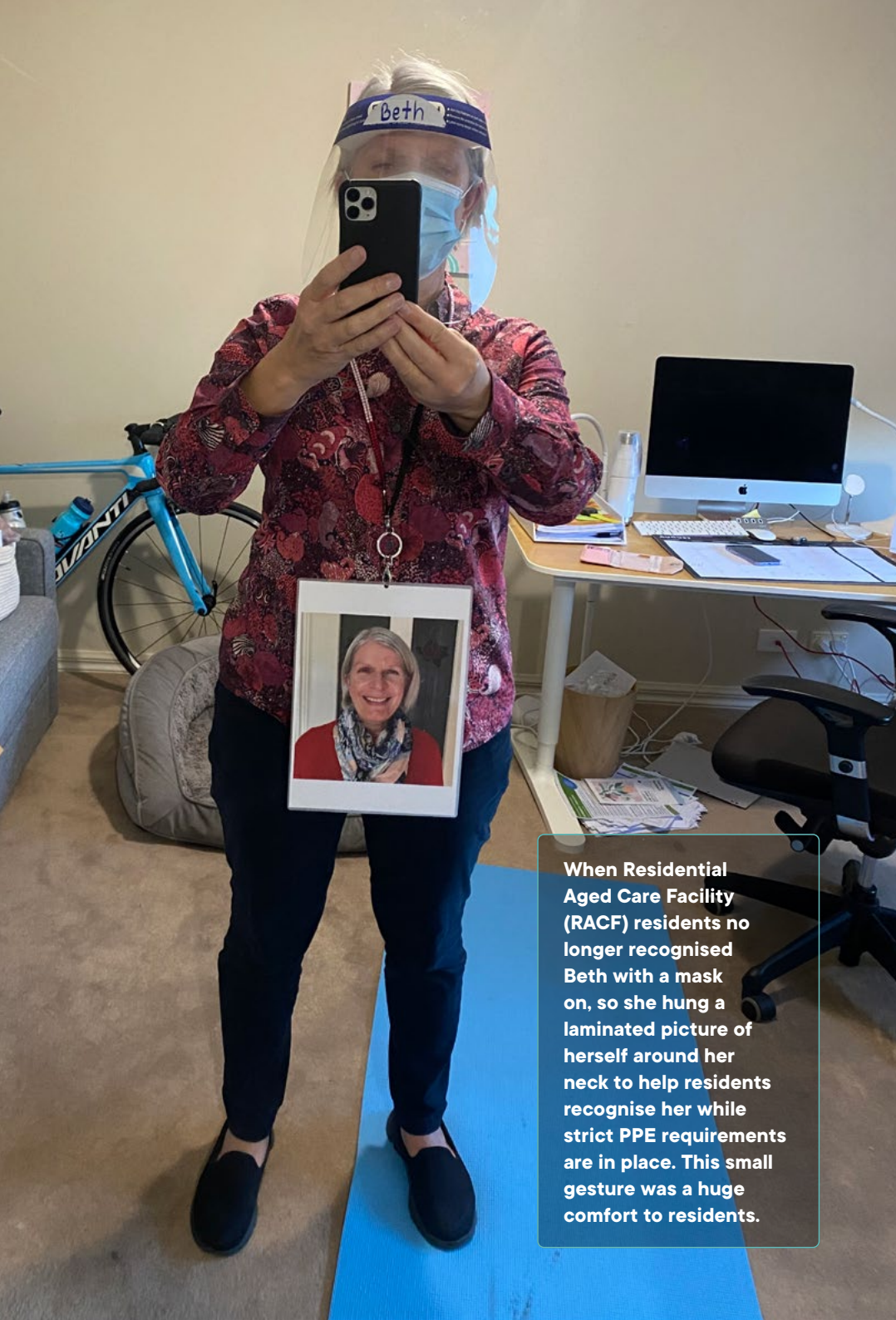
Health and safety

69%

Emotional wellbeing

76%

Satisfaction in technology, which is 16% higher than the industry benchmark.



When Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) residents no longer recognised Beth with a mask on, so she hung a laminated picture of herself around her neck to help residents recognise her while strict PPE requirements are in place. This small gesture was a huge comfort to residents.

Our People

Bridging the distance amongst us

Working remotely during the pandemic had little effect on our teamwork. In fact, staff made an even bigger effort to gather online or in-person (when restrictions permitted) for key events.

Staff came together for Purple Afternoon Tea on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day 2020 and participated in the Midsumma March 2020 to raise greater awareness of the challenges and issues faced by the LGBTIQ+ community.

For NAIDOC Week, we curated virtual highlights to celebrate the rich history, culture, art and achievements of our Indigenous communities. On R U OK? Day, we encouraged staff to organise their own virtual afternoon tea by site or practice teams as a way of connecting and sharing how the simple question of “are you OK?” had an impact on them.

These events gave staff the opportunity to socialise, act in solidarity for advocacy work, enhance awareness and share the incredible work they do for the community.

Connecting with older members of our community

Restrictions have meant greater isolation and mask wearing. For residents at Aged Care Facilities this can be confronting. When one of our staff realised that Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) residents no longer recognised her with a mask on, she hung a laminated picture of herself around her neck to help residents recognise her while strict PPE requirements were in place. This small gesture was a huge comfort to residents. This is one example of our team being attuned to the unspoken needs of our clientele in the many RACFs we now service across Victoria.

We offer a range of evidence-based psychological support services for the residents of these facilities including art therapy and music therapy. Throughout the pandemic, staff have been dedicated to supporting residents and keeping

them safe. Some staff have had to undergo multiple quarantine periods due to the high risk nature of aged care facilities.

Better Place Australia also provide extensive elder abuse prevention services running across Geelong, Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliffe and the Colac Otway Shire. Better Place Australia funding also extends to providing support to clients referred to us via the Orange Doors at Inner Gippsland, Bayside Peninsula, Barwon, North East Melbourne and via Women’s Health West and the Integrated Model of Care (IMOC) at Monash Health, Peninsula Health and Latrobe Community Health.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion

Our experience has shown that many groups in our community face disadvantage and limited access to vital services. We work hard to ensure that our services are accessible, equitable, inclusive and responsive.

We also believe our staff should reflect these commitments and values in the workplace and in their interactions with clients. One way we are already doing this is by providing services that promote greater inclusion and easier access for clients.

As we move forward, we are focusing on improving policy/services that impact five groups – older people, LGBTIQ+, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and people with a disability.

Our work with these groups involve increasing the diversity of second language, cultural background and knowledge in our own workplace, and incorporating lived experiences in our Inclusion and Diversity Governance.

Elder abuse

From independence to forced reliance

Dawn was living happily and well-supported in a Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) with her chronic health issues well-managed. Six months ago her son, William, borrowed \$90,000 from her for his divorce settlement and mortgage payment. He then talked her into moving in with him and his new partner, Amanda. Dawn reluctantly agreed to avoid conflict.

When COVID-19 restrictions tightened, Dawn lost access to her daily social activities and other support vital to her mental wellbeing. She felt invisible in William's home and her attempts to engage with the family strained their relationships to the point that triggered physical violence. The police issued an IVO, however, William, Amanda and Dawn continued to live under one roof with William committing to not using violence or aggression on Dawn.

From then on, Dawn lived in fear at home. Knowing she was fully reliant on them and hidden from public view emboldened the couple to neglect her physical, mental and psychological needs.

Dawn desperately wanted to return to the RACF but was not in a financial position to do so. As her anxiety levels rose, her emotional and physical health declined. Eventually, she contacted Better Place Australia for help.

Taking small steps towards a big change

A Better Place Australia Family Consultant immediately helped Dawn move into respite at an RACF to enable her safety and in line with her wishes. As her physical and emotional health improved, she bravely told William that she wanted to continue living there. William, who was also her Power of Attorney (POA), was furious.

In discussions with the Family Consultant, Dawn repeatedly stated she wanted to live in the RACF but had no idea how to resolve her financial issue. Due to her loan to William, Dawn no longer met the requirements to access Aged Pension, which had previously supported the costs of her RACF stay. The Family Consultant referred her to a Financial Counsellor who concluded that Dawn needed legal support and advocacy support in negotiating with the service provider and Centrelink. She also needed ongoing assistance in negotiating with William and her access to money to pay the facility.

William, who was paying for her short-term care, refused to participate in these discussions. He also threatened to cut Dawn off from the family if she did not return home. Dawn felt trapped and torn between maintaining the family relationship and regaining her autonomy.

Being supported to prioritise her needs

The Family Consultant helped Dawn manage William's intimidation, supported her decision-making and advocated on her behalf to the RACF. As Dawn's confidence grew, she began putting her concerns and her well-being above the financial implications for William. She also felt empowered enough to change her POA and was able to access pro bono legal assistance to recoup the loan.

Dawn still lives at the facility where she receives regular psychological support for the neglect, physical and financial abuse that she experienced while living with William. She is enjoying being in an environment in which she feels supported.



Dawn, 89

Neglected, intimidated, and financially abused by family

Wants to regain independence

Farrah, 39 Yannis, 37

Separated parents to three young children

Want to improve their communication and develop a parenting plan

Case Study

Better Pride

A breakdown in relationship and communication

Farrah and Yannis recently separated after fifteen years together. After the separation, Yannis relocated to a different city which Farrah saw as a disruption to the lives of their children – Kellie (8), Jade (6) and Brooklyn (2). Jade was conceived with the assistance of a donor, who has an existing relationship in Jade's life as a godparent.

Both parents faced a breakdown in communication. Farrah and the children had to go into Quarantine after being visiting Yannis in another city. Yannis and Farrah blamed each other for the situation. There their communication reach a low point.

Farrah felt frustrated and hurt by Yannis's behaviour and interpreted it as a rejection of a supportive co-parenting relationship. The two also strongly disagreed over parenting arrangements while privately worrying about the impact of the separation on their children. Yannis also wanted Jade to continue her connection with her godparent.

Farrah sought Better Place Australia's help in improving communication with Yannis and formalising a parenting plan together. They were advised about the Better Pride service at intake. Both parents said their priority was providing structure, routine and stability for their children.

Time and space to process and reflect

A Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) practitioner started the mediation process with two shuttle sessions via Zoom. This approach was successful on two levels.

First, the individual sessions gave each parent the space to unpack their concerns and express their grief, loss and fear. This was key to helping them shift to a future-focused mindset and consider the impact of their separation and changing roles on the whole family.

Second, the remote sessions minimised disruptions to their daily routines and kept them within the safety of their own homes. This flexibility offered great comfort during the pandemic.

The FDR practitioner also paced the sessions according to their different communication and decision-making styles. By doing this, both parents had enough time to thoroughly consider their options, seek legal advice and present alternative proposals at the next session that kept the resolution process moving forward.

Following the sessions, the FDR practitioner recommended referrals to three other services for further support - property mediation, Supporting Children After Separation Program (SCASP) and Family And Relationships (FARS) services. Farrah and Yannis agreed to all three.

Reaching an outcome that is in everyone's best interest

The shuttle mediation approach helped both parties gain an understanding of each other's perspectives. Yannis began to understand the importance of Jade's godparent in her life and was open to incorporating this in their discussions. This led to newfound tolerance and optimism for their future as co-parents, and ultimately in successfully developing a Parenting Agreement.

With this out of the way, they then focused on providing support for Jade, Kellie and Brooklyn via Supporting Children After Separation Program. The children received specialised counselling to help them navigate the separation process. Yannis also underwent FARS counselling to help her navigate big changes in her life.

Farrah and Yannis agreed to review their Parenting Agreement at the end of 2021. The FDR practitioner will support them through this process by checking in on their progress and identifying any opportunities for additional support.

Anisa, 28 Jeevan, 35

Anisa battled post-natal depression and anxiety



Case Study

Mental health

Expectations of a new mother

Anisa and Jeevan were married for five years before welcoming their first child, Asha, last year.

Amidst the joy of being a new mother, Anisa struggled to adjust to this role and found herself in tears multiple times a day.

At Jeevan's urging, she consulted her GP and was diagnosed with postnatal depression and anxiety. Jeevan suggested she seek professional help but Anisa refused, believing it was manageable and that she didn't have the energy to do yet another thing.

After his parental leave was over, Jeevan returned to his full-time job while Anisa chose to work part-time from home. Early mornings for Jeevan meant that Anisa had to handle all the night feeds.

Having to wake up several times every night left her exhausted and with a short fuse. This affected her self-image as a mother. She would raise her voice at Asha for crying and then immediately berate herself for being a "bad mother".

On top of that, Anisa also felt pressure to prove herself at work despite her manager being understanding of her new circumstances. She often found herself mired in guilt for being unable to finish certain tasks and imagined her colleagues being angry at her for having to pick up the slack.

A concerned Jeevan watched his wife's mental health rapidly unravel and finally convinced her to contact Better Place Australia for help.

Exploring ways to cope and care for the self

A mental health counsellor scheduled a series of video sessions with Anisa to ease her worries about travelling while sleep-deprived and with a baby during a pandemic.

In the first session, the counsellor asked about Anisa's support network and learnt she had a mother who lived close by and who had already offered practical help. Anisa admitted she was reluctant to accept the offer as she equated it to "failing" as a parent.

In working together to develop coping strategies, the counsellor suggested Anisa reconnect with her mother's group which she had found extremely helpful but short-lived because of the lockdowns. The counsellor also suggested Anisa contact the Maternal Health Nurse who had previously helped her with sleep strategies for Asha.

Other coping strategies included breathing exercises, seeking support from Jeevan and her mother, and undergoing cognitive behavioural therapy. Anisa was also open to making time for self-care strategies like revisiting hobbies and taking short walks each day.

Finding equilibrium again

It took a while for Anisa to shift her mindset from self-blame to self-help. She started by getting used to asking her mother for help while Jeevan was at work and was soon enjoying the break and bonding with her mother over their shared experience of motherhood. She also gradually released her perception of what it meant to be a "good parent".

As Anisa's energy slowly returned, so did her optimism and self-esteem. While someone else tended to Asha, she either rested or completed work projects. This sense of achievement sparked a renewed sense of enjoyment and confidence in her work.

Anisa also reconnected with a few friends from her mother's group who supported her through her post-natal depression. The sleep, coping and self-care strategies helped her feel more like herself again and settle into her role as a mother.



Melody, 35 Adrian, 39

Separated due to Adrian's controlling behaviour

Melody is concerned about their children spending time with him

Case Study

FDR

The dilemma over a parental relationship

Melody and Adrian separated shortly after the birth of their second child, Joey, four years ago. Melody reported periods of high conflict in their relationship but attributed the separation mainly to Adrian wanting to have the final say on financial decisions and other lifestyle choices. This element continues to be present in their post-separation relationship.

Melody reported feeling anxious when communicating with Adrian and tried to limit the children's time with him. This caused conflict and mistrust between her and Adrian. Recently, Joey talked about spending more time with her father and Melody wanted to consider how she felt that could look to best met their children's needs.

At the time, Melody was already undergoing Family and Relationships Services (FARS) counselling with Better Place Australia. Her lawyer suggested she explore our Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) services to help her feel more empowered in her parenting relationship with Adrian.

The intake stage found both parties suitable for FDR as they each had good personal and professional support, and there were no safety or risk issues for anyone in the family.

Collaborating for an optimal solution

The FDR practitioner proposed a shuttle mediation approach due to the history of conflict and to level any power imbalance between the two. Adrian, who wanted a faster resolution, wasn't in favour of the slower pace. Melody, on the other hand, appreciated the time and space to make important decisions.

Melody felt Adrian disrespected her by constantly pushing boundaries, and felt he continued to seek to have the last say on plans and decisions by making last-minute plans and decisions that were not in the best interests of their children's needs.

The FDR practitioner sought Melody's consent to speak to her FARS practitioner about pre-mediation coaching to focus on strengthening her capacity and building boundaries ahead of the next FDR session. The coaching was helpful as Melody advised she felt more confident when pushing back on proposals that she disagreed with.

In the FDR practitioners' discussions with Adrian, he acknowledged that he can be demanding and dismissive of the impact of his behaviour on Melody and their children. The FDR Practitioner discussed Adrian options with him and he accepted a referral to a specialist counsellor to discuss his desire to always have the final say in matters.

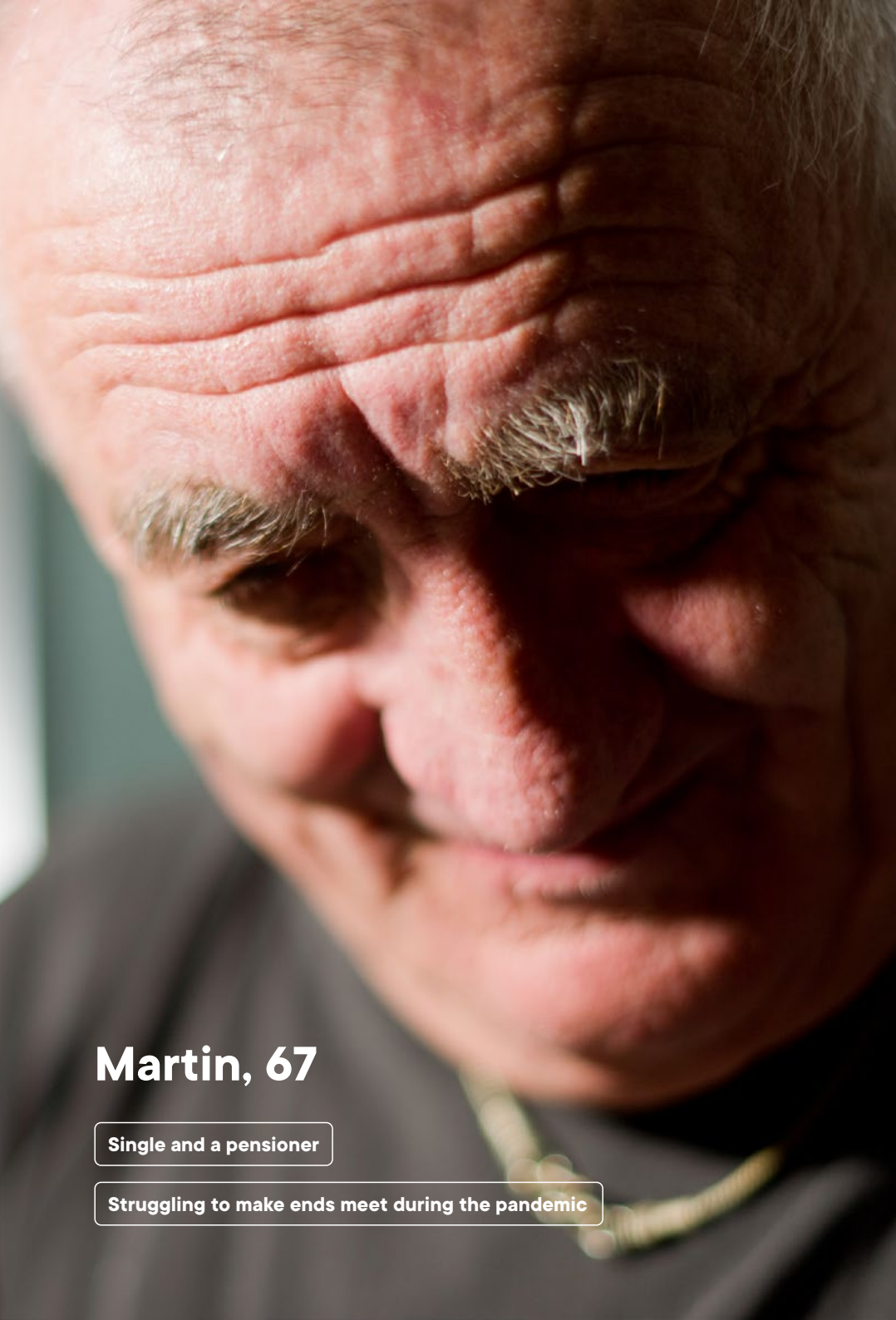
Making steady progress

Both parties were close to reaching an agreement after three FDR sessions but reached an impasse on how much time the children should spend with Adrian. They made an interim agreement on how Adrian could have contact with the children via phone and facetime. Both parties were recommended to seek legal advice as to what their options were.

Where both parties agreed were on changeover issues and keeping their communication to text messages rather than in-person conversations. While they were not able to resolve their main issue of care arrangements, the FDR sessions helped facilitate discussions around Joey's best interests.

Melody also reported feeling more empowered, confident and supported after the mediation and continues to use the strategies she learnt in her pre-mediation coaching.

Ultimately, both parties decided not to pursue court proceedings as they felt their situation had improved since having a platform to hold important discussions. Without the FDR sessions, Melody said, they would not even have come close to where they are today.



Martin, 67

Single and a pensioner

Struggling to make ends meet during the pandemic

Case Study

Financial Counselling

Caught in financial turmoil

The lockdowns during the pandemic struck Martin hard. He lost his casual work as a shopping mall cleaner and his pension income was not enough to cover his rent, utility bills and daily expenses. Martin was in rental arrears of \$3,500 and when his once sympathetic landlord began showing impatience, Martin worried about being evicted.

The stress and anxiety over his uncertain living situation worsened Martin's smoking habit. He began smoking two packs of cigarettes a day which significantly ate into his expenses. The guilt prompted him to try giving up smoking many times but with no success.

Martin then resorted to skipping meals to make his pension stretch the fortnight. He also considered applying for a credit card with a \$2,000 limit to pay his rent.

When he shared his story with a local food emergency relief provider, they recommended he get in touch with Better Place Australia's Financial Counselling services. He contacted us directly and agreed to a Telehealth session with a Financial Counsellor.

A concrete financial plan

Martin told the Financial Counsellor that making ends meet had always been tough but he was proud at having done it previously. He also said his mental health was suffering because of uncertainty over his living situation, employment and health. Being unable to quit smoking further crushed his self-esteem.

An assessment confirmed that Martin was indeed facing financial hardship. This allowed the Financial Counsellor to open a conversation on his financial capability around the following areas:

Rental arrears: Martin was eligible for an interest-free COVID-19 Household Relief Loan and the Financial Counsellor referred him to the authorised community service organisation responsible for administering the loan. The Financial Counsellor also gave Martin information on a No Interest Loan Scheme as an alternative option to a credit card.

Spending priorities: The Financial Counsellor helped Martin identify his spending priorities and which household expenses could be reduced. For instance, an annual pre-paid mobile phone plan worked out cheaper than Martin's annual plan.

Utility bills: A teleconference with Martin's utility provider revealed that he was eligible for the Utility Relief Grant. The provider also agreed to work out a more affordable payment arrangement.

Smoking: Martin was ready to commit to quitting. The Financial Counsellor referred him to the nearest Quitline advisor for support and also suggested cutting down consumption if he could not stop completely.

Mental health: Martin obtained a Mental Health Treatment Plan from his GP that gave him access to a free Accessible Psychological Intervention service. He was also given contact details of other 24/7 telephone mental health support services.

Debt-free with improved financial literacy: Martin's applications for the COVID-19 Household Relief Loan and Utility Relief Grant were successful. As he reduced his overhead costs, he was better able to live within his pension income. He is slowly kicking the cigarette habit through the QUIT program and working with a mental health counsellor on his anxiety.

Most importantly, Martin's financial literacy improved and he's more aware of his spending habits. He is now looking for the most cost-effective ways of doing things and is able to live comfortably within his means while waiting to seek employment again.

Social Media and Web Presence

Widening our digital presence

In 2021, clients reached us through:



Online chat



Phone



Social Media



Referrals

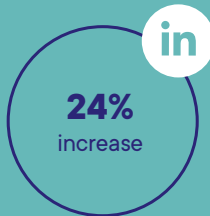
Social Media



Total Twitter engagement



126% increase in Facebook engagement



Total LinkedIn Followers - 545

Online advocacy



Mental health and wellbeing resources during COVID-19



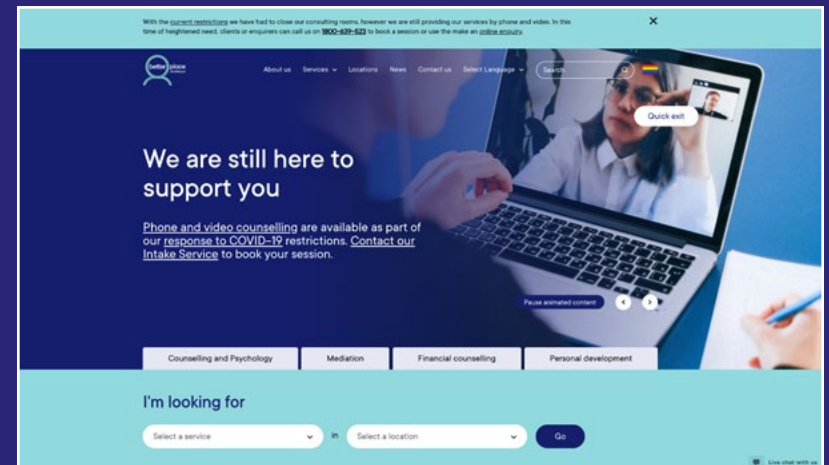
Supporting LGBTIQ+ community's mental health



Financial hardship and debt

Online

Growing our digital footprint, providing support for the community



Better Place Australia betterplaceaustralia.com.au

60,034

Total sessions

25-34

Most visitors are aged 25-34

15% ↑

Increase in visitors aged 18-24 in 2021

61%

Women

38%

Men

1. Family Dispute Resolution
2. Counselling and Psychology

Most visited pages

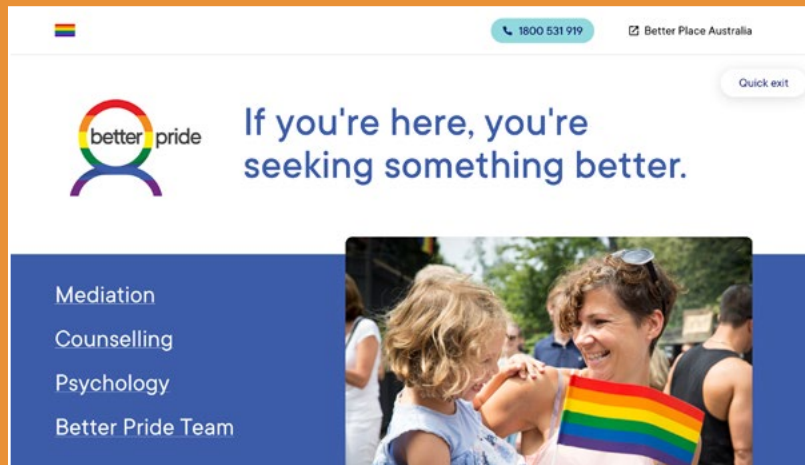
How our clients reached us

Phone, Live Chat, Website Enquiry, Email, External Reference

Social Media and Web Presence

Better Pride

betterpride.com.au



Better Pride is a support service for the LGBTIQ+ community that supports rainbow families during and after separation, and ensuring all families have access to safe, inclusive and equitable services.

2020

Year launched

4,475

Total sessions

25-34

Most visitors are aged 25-34

120% ↑

Increase in visitors from 2020.

61%

Women

38%

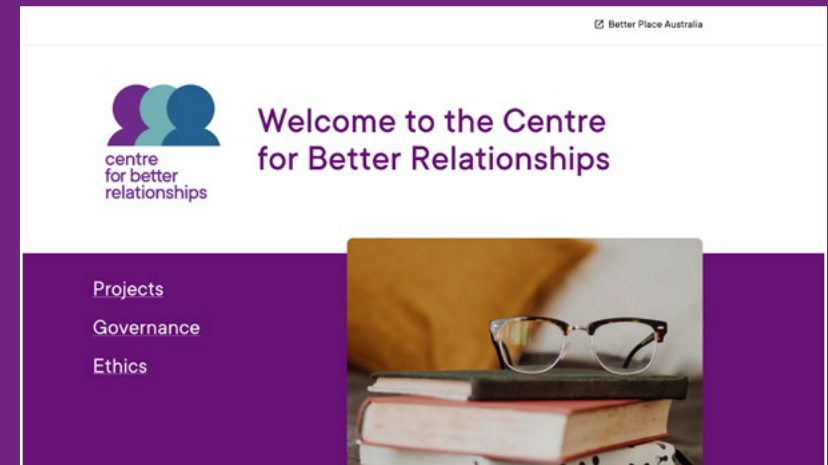
Men

1. Better Pride mediation
2. Better Pride psychological services

Most visited pages

Centre for Better Relationships

betterplaceaustralia.com.au/research



The Centre for Better Relationships is the research and policy division of Better Place Australia. The Centre conducts research and policy analysis in the field of family and social welfare and also conducts ethical applied research in line with the values and mission of Better Place Australia.

Most read reports



1. Financial hardship

An examination of debt and poverty amongst 1900+ users of financial counselling service



2. Rainbow family

information and dissolution in Australia a scoping review of academic literature.

Better Place Assist

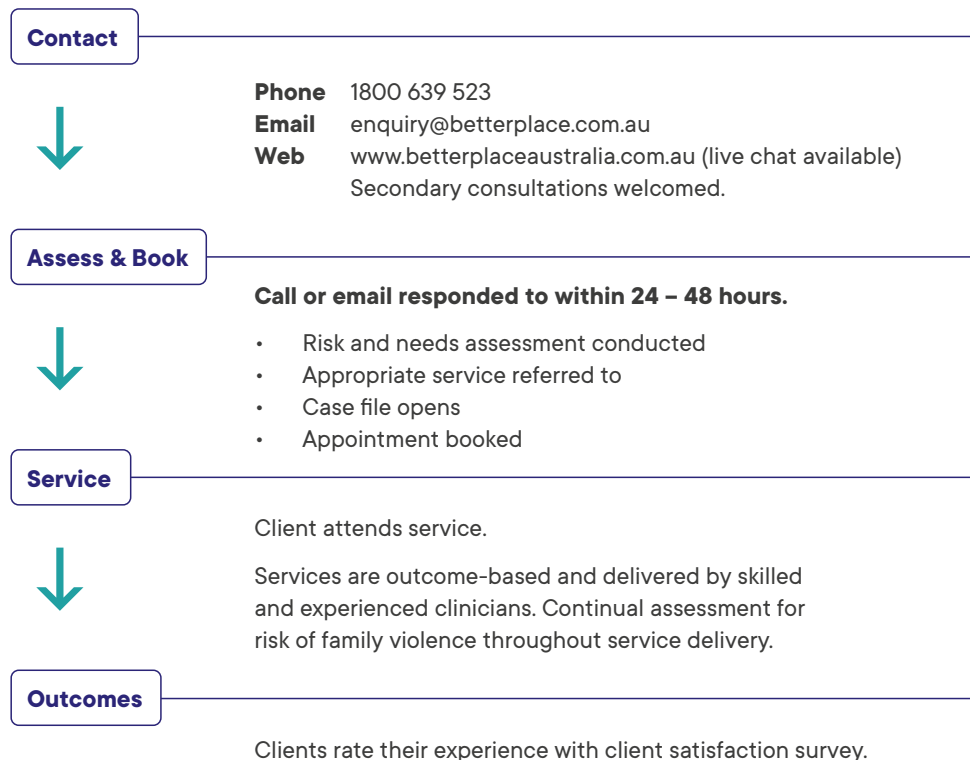
Helping clients find the right service for them

Clients, prospective clients and referrers can reach us by phone, on our website enquiry form or through online chat.

Better Place Assist is the first point of contact for clients to assess their needs and situations to help find the service most suited to their needs, means and location.

Our dedicated team of trained professionals are well-equipped to take you through the next steps on your journey with Better Place Australia.

Referral Process: From first call to first session



More than just customer support

Better Place Assist comprises of the Customer Service & Intake Teams who work to help clients find the right service for them or book into their appointments.

Calls into the 1800 number are responded to immediately by the Customer Service team.

The Better Place Customer Support team is the first point of contact for those calling our 1800 number to find out more about BPA services. They then are put through to our Better Place Assist Intake team who will connect and book clients to the right service.

Better Place Assist team members are qualified and trained to assess and manage risks. They engage, screen clients and book into appointments based on the clients' needs.

They prioritise the most vulnerable.

Better Place Assist and Customer Support

- Access the right service
- Immediate front-line response
- Live chat
- Risk assessment and screening
- Referred by external organisations or other staff
- Referrals: Warm, External and Wrap-around
- Facilitate integration and coordination of care for clients
- Provide information and resources
- Statewide directory and information gateway
- Book into appointments, programs and groups
- Prioritise the most vulnerable

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

Statement of Profit or Loss or Other Comprehensive Income		
As at 30 June 2021	2021 (\$)	2020 (\$)
Revenue	14,375,365	12,227,258
Gain on modification of Right of Use Asset terms	326,402	-
Employee benefits	(11,247,404)	(8,873,186)
Depreciation and amortisation	(745,719)	(789,803)
Marketing	(250,007)	(194,517)
Occupancy and utilities	(226,470)	(234,358)
IT software and support	(176,053)	(218,856)
Professional fees	(321,167)	(234,747)
Communication costs	(165,354)	(203,403)
Interest expense	(93,478)	(113,620)
Other expenses	(587,771)	(706,579)
Surplus for the Year	888,344	658,189
Other comprehensive income		
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	-	-
Items that will be reclassified to profit or loss when specific conditions are met	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	888,344	658,189

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2021	2021 (\$)	2020 (\$)
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,293,069	1,209,753
Trade and other receivables	168,521	442,985
Financial assets at amortised cost	255,153	4,890,636
Assets classified as held for sale	413,588	395,999
Other assets	146,873	618,523
Total current assets	3,277,204	7,557,896
Non current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	9,108,760	4,973,675
Total non current assets	9,108,760	4,973,675
TOTAL ASSETS	12,385,964	12,531,571
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	583,847	488,740
Provisions	1,084,280	832,735
Other liabilities	1,335,456	2,192,546
Total current liabilities	3,003,583	3,514,021
Non current liabilities		
Provisions	203,165	221,387
Other liabilities	1,652,858	2,158,149
Total non current liabilities	1,856,023	2,379,536
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,859,606	5,893,557
NET ASSETS	7,526,358	6,638,014
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	7,526,358	6,638,014
TOTAL EQUITY	7,526,358	6,638,014



About

Better Place Australia

Better Place Australia has spent over 35 years helping people build resilience, empowering them and enabling them to enjoy healthier relationships.

We have evolved into one of the most successful providers of counselling and community support services in Victoria, seeing over 12,000 new clients a year across metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Better Place Australia Suite of Services

Mental Health Support

- Child and Youth Counselling
- Relationship Counselling
- Family Counselling
- Psychological Services
- Couples Counselling
- The Way Back Support Service
- Family Mental Health Support (Family Counselling)

Financial First Aid

- Financial Capability
- Financial Counselling

Learning Programs

- NMAS training
- Parent & Group Programs

Family Dispute Resolution Mediation

Services for Older People

- Elder abuse prevention support services
- Residential Age Care Facility mental health support
- Elder Abuse awareness raising and Group therapeutic programs



Locations

www.betterplaceaustralia.com.au/locations

Bairnsdale

306 Main Street
Bairnsdale VIC 3875
03 5175 9333

[View location details](#)

Broadmeadows

Unit B1, 1-13 The Gateway
Broadmeadows VIC 3047
03 9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Bunyip

High Street Medical Centre
17 High Street
Bunyip VIC 3815
1800 639 523

[View location details](#)

Cheltenham

Level 1/16 Park Road
Cheltenham VIC 3192
03 9556 5333

[View location details](#)

Croydon

1/16-18 Croydon Road
Croydon VIC 3136
03 9847 5888

[View location details](#)

Fitzroy

126 Moor Street
Fitzroy VIC 3065
03 9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Frankston

Level 2, 60-64 Wells Street
Frankston VIC 3199
03 8781 9111

[View location details](#)

Geelong

7-9 Ryan Place
Geelong VIC 3220
03 9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Greensborough

Diamond Valley Community Support Centre
Shop 378a, Level 3 Greensborough Plaza
Greensborough VIC 3088
03 9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Koo Wee Rup

Black Fish Medical Centre
215/235 Rossiter Road
Koo Wee Rup VIC 3981
1300 623 523

[View location details](#)

Leongatha

5A Church Street
Leongatha VIC 3953
03 5175 9333

[View location details](#)

Melton

195 Barries Road
Melton West VIC 3337
03 9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Narre Warren

86-88 Victor Crescent
Narre Warren VIC 3805
03 8781 9111

[View location details](#)

Oakleigh

Level 3, 20 Atherton Road
Oakleigh VIC 3166
03 9564 6999

[View location details](#)

Pakenham (Lakeside Centre)

Lakeside Centre, 2 Olympic Way
Pakenham VIC 3810
1800 639 523

[View location details](#)

Pakenham (Springs Centre)

Pakenham Springs Centre
5 Livingstone Boulevard
Pakenham VIC 3810
03 8781 9111

[View location details](#)

Traralgon

41 Grey Street
Traralgon VIC 3844
03 5175 9333

[View location details](#)

Wyndham Vale

IPC Health, 510 Ballan Road
Wyndham Vale VIC 3024
9355 4700

[View location details](#)

Photography Credits

Thank you to the generous contributions of the Ballarat Foto Biennale and the use of the photographs in their Mass Isolation Australia photobook that have been used in this annual report.



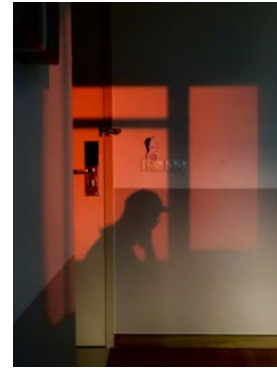
Sandy Scheltema,
Hugs on Holds



Carole Mills Noronha,
Thursday, April 9, 2020



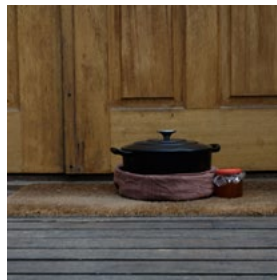
Amy Evans, Still the Same,
Geelong Victoria



Mingyuan Xue (Shelley),
Afterglow in a Bangkok Hotel
Room



Daisy Noyes, Escape



Ponch Hawkes, The Plague 2



Nic Duncan



Ashley Fan, 6



Kel Devoil



Carole Mills Noronha,
Engagement Photos

And lastly Fiona Sweet,
Artistic Director of Ballarat
International Foto Biennale
for her kind assistance.

Better Place Australia

Lv 1, 16 Park Road
Cheltenham Vic 3192

betterplaceaustralia.com.au

Better Place Australia is partially funded by the Australian Government
Department of Social Services. Visit www.dss.gov.au for more information.

Better Place Australia gratefully acknowledges
the financial grant support received:

Commonwealth Government

- Attorney General's Department
- Department of Social Service

Victorian Government

- Department Health and Human Services
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

Health Networks

- South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN)
- North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN)
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network
- Gippsland Primary Health Network

Philanthropic supporters

- The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
- Ecstra Foundation
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Financial Counselling Australia

We would also like to acknowledge the pro-bono
support of our professional services partners
who have been generous in their in-kind hours.



ABN 54 090 993 810



Better Place Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and their
Elders past, present and future in each of the communities where we work.