



SANE Australia. Helping all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life.



Our vision

Our vision is for Australia to lead the world in mental health within 10 years.

Our mission

Our mission is to help all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life.

Our values

Our values guide us in our work every day.

Respect

We focus on the whole person and their strengths, not the illness, and believe everyone is entitled to a better life. We treat everyone with grace and dignity while welcoming robust and constructive discussion. We communicate our appreciation to those who give of their time, advice and financial resources.

Responsibility

We do what is right, however difficult that might be. We are accountable for the decisions we make. We take good care of our physical and mental health, and seek help when we need it.

Collaboration

We partner with others who share our vision, values, passion, and commitment. We work with people with lived experience of mental illness to build better services, policies, and programs. We encourage and support each other to do the best work we possibly can.



Innovation

We have a passion for learning, and disseminating creative solutions to real-world problems. We embrace technology to build community and provide helpful information. We seek out new ways to have greater impact through research, testing and evaluation, always informed by people's lived experience of mental illness by listening, communicating and working as one team.

Celebration

We celebrate great achievements (big and small) by ourselves and others. We warmly welcome everyone who comes through our doors and we create a fun, flexible and inspiring workplace that fosters personal and professional growth. We broadcast to the world heroic stories of courage, resilience and recovery.

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ABN 92 006 533 606



Jesse (left) lives in Melbourne with partner, **Ash** and son, **Ned**. With his Bipolar disorder well managed, he wanted to share his story of recovery and hope, to break down the stigma against mental illness. Jesse is proud to be a SANE speaker. He is also involved in our Mindful Employer program, and contributed to the development of the online SANE Forums. 'It's a way to keep me honest,' says Jesse of his role with SANE, 'to make sure I'm honest with myself, and in doing so I am able to help others'.

A better life through support, training and education



Support

SANE provides urgently-needed information, referral and direct support to people concerned about mental illness.

Training

SANE provides training and resources for companies and organisations to promote better workplace mental health, as well as for those affected by mental illness and those who care for them.

Education

SANE Australia changes lives by changing minds about mental illness.

Anxiety. Depression. Bipolar disorder. Schizophrenia. Personality disorders and other conditions.

One in five Australians experience a mental health problem every year. And every one of these has family, friends, fellow students or work colleagues who are affected by their condition.

Mental illness isn't something that happens to 'other people'. It's something that affects all of us at some time in some way.

It's about people like us.

Mental health problems are treatable, yet the majority of us who experience them do not access the treatment and support we need.

Why? Lack of understanding of symptoms, concerns about stigma and discrimination, confusion about where to go or what to do, inadequate or non-existent mental health services and policies – all of these contribute to the unnecessary and distressing cost of mental illness to Australian lives today.

SANE Australia is passionately committed to addressing these problems, to help all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life – through Support, Training, and Education in the community.

A year of connection and growth towards a better life for people affected by mental illness

SANE Australia has had a strong year working to help Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life. For the first time, we connected with over one million Australians in a year, which is a great result – an increase of a third on last year. We have done this despite the uncertainties around Government funding, for a second year running, and as we await the Government's response to the National Mental Health Commission's comprehensive review.

But more important than any number is that we have worked hard to keep true with the people we seek to serve. Ever since SANE started operating, we have walked hand in hand with people affected by mental health issues. In fact, it was just over 29 years ago that a young man stood up before a few hundred people at the Teachers Federation Hall on a wet and windy night in Sydney and said, 'My name is Simon Champ and I have Schizophrenia'. Consistent with the SANE way of doing things, I am particularly proud of our *Lessons for Life* project led by Sarah Coker. Funded by the Federal Department of Health, we worked with the University of New England to conduct research with people who had attempted suicide. Their willingness to share their experience and expertise provided new insights into suicide prevention and a number of those we worked with participated in an inspiring and powerful video – please check it out.

Another highlight for SANE was an endorsement from the respected National Mental Health Commissioner Jackie Crowe, who spoke of 'SANE's preparedness for true partnerships, for working in an inclusive way and ensuring resources, expertise and knowledge are shared'.

The new SANE Forums launched in August 2014 provide a great example of our partnerships. We have harnessed technology to provide a new platform for peer-to-peer support around Australia and in a way that reinforces people's relationship with existing mental health organisations. Through the SANE Forums, we are opening up a huge untapped community resource of lived experience and support. Importantly, this peer-to-peer support both complements the efforts of busy specialist professionals and provides a new connection for many people in rural and regional Australia who have limited access to professional services. More recently, we were thrilled to be able to link up with the ABC to provide the SANE Forums for their 2015 Mental As promotion. This led to a huge increase in forums usage and contact with the SANE Help Centre which has had another year of great service.

Across our programs we have much to celebrate but particularly our training efforts: training peer workers to promote physical health; training aged care staff to provide support to residents with a mental illness; training mental health professionals in

how to support people bereaved by suicide; training mental organisations on how to get their story out via the media; and training managers in the workplace to deal with emerging mental health issues.

Our media team have done a great job in getting our messages and stories out to more people than ever before as we have continued our push to reduce stigma, including through our participation in the Global Alliance Against Stigma. Through our StigmaWatch program we will continue to ensure media coverage is realistic, respectful and offers hope.

Our finance and operations team have maintained their outstanding standard and worked closely with our Board members, who we thank for their highly committed support, expertise and wisdom.

This year we say a heartfelt thank you to Stan Wallis AC for his eight years of outstanding leadership as SANE

Australia Chair. During Stan's tenure, we have more than tripled our reach and are well positioned to help even more Australians in the years ahead.

The personal commitment and time Stan dedicated to SANE Australia has been simply outstanding. We also say thank you to Judith for all her support and forbearance – it seemed that Judith had to haul Stan to exotic and remote locations around the globe in order to get his mind off SANE and even then she wasn't always successful!

We thank Stan and Judith for their extremely generous financial support along with the many other individuals and families who have given us such heart-warming support. We acknowledge the very generous support from the Colonial Foundation and Gandel Philanthropy.

This year we also farewell Dr Paul Morgan. A beautiful writer, Paul has been an absolute torchbearer for

people affected by mental illness and embodied the great values that have seen SANE Australia become one of the country's leading and most respected mental health organisations.

We also pay tribute to the incredible Anne Deveson who was with Simon Champ in the Teachers Federation Hall on that night 29 years ago. As Anne has shared publicly, she is now dealing with the new and debilitating challenge of dementia – we will hold her closely in our hearts.

Finally, we thank the 89 inspiring individuals who are part of the SANE Speakers program and through their contact with the Australian community are playing a critical role in reducing stigma and offering hope to so many.

2016 will mark the 30th Anniversary of SANE Australia and we look forward to celebrating it with you.

At the same time, there are major challenges before us. Government funding remains uncertain but whatever transpires we know we will continue to be supported by so many generous individuals and organisations. We remain resolute in our determination to help many more Australians affected by mental illness to lead lives full of hope.

Thank you.



Jack Heath
Chief Executive Officer
SANE Australia



Jack Heath, Chief Executive
Officer of SANE Australia.

Mental illness – out of the shadows and into the light

Anne Deveson AO, co-founder of SANE Australia, talks about the organisation's early days – almost 30 years ago – and the vital role SANE plays to bring mental illness out of the shadows and into the light.

In the front room of her Sydney home, Anne Deveson shifts boxes, searching for a label. At last she finds a box marked 'Correspondence – Jonathan.' It's filled with letters from people from all over the world. People who wrote to her about their loved ones, about themselves, sharing their reflections on Anne's story of her son Jonathan who had Schizophrenia and died at the age of 24.

When Jonathan first started to experience symptoms, Anne says she found it difficult to talk about mental illness for fear of betraying Jonathan. 'I didn't know much about Schizophrenia. I thought Jonathan was angry with me because he used to project on me all his anxieties and fears,' she recalls.

Over 20 years later, Anne reflects on a life filled with the trials and triumphs of caring for someone with a mental illness, and a public campaign to make all Australians more aware of mental illness. 'I learnt a huge amount from Jonathan and from that whole experience,' she says.

In the 1980s Anne was working as an established broadcaster and filmmaker, when she shared her experience of caring for Jonathan in a major newspaper article. After it was published she received a letter from academic, Dr Margaret Leggett, who had researched the impact of mental illness on families.

'Margaret wrote the most wonderful letter saying it's obvious you're having a

very difficult time, do you want to meet up? And it was the beginning of a long friendship that remains,' Anne says.

'It was out of that meeting that we talked about setting up a group of people to see what things we could do together that would be really helpful.'

The two women agreed on the need for a national campaign to raise awareness of mental illness. With help from others, they established SANE Australia in 1986 (under its former name, Schizophrenia Australia). They approached prominent business people to fund the campaign.

'It was Margaret's intelligence and charm that got many people involved. These were well-established business people who had never talked about the fact that any of their children had a serious mental illness because they were ashamed of it,' Anne says.

Anne travelled around Australia with Margaret's support, running workshops encouraging people not to be ashamed to talk about mental illness. 'People were actually anxious to talk about it,' Anne remembers.

Anne recognised the need not only for awareness of mental illness but also for improved services. 'If there is proper help then you automatically reduce the stigma. Earlier help is essential,' Anne says.

The workshops extended to emergency services, and trying to convince the medical community of the problems that prevented people from accessing care. 'There had to be a broad spread of action otherwise you were just picking off little bits of change,' Anne says.

In the late 1980s a national campaign got underway, with advertisements about Schizophrenia on billboards and



Anne Deveson at home with her dog, Clodagh. Photo by Nic Gibson.

television. Anne recalls that many fellow journalists were aware of discrimination and fear surrounding mental illness but found it difficult to cover. 'I tried to get the press involved in a more helpful way. On one page you'd have a piece about Schizophrenia with the problems well presented, but the lurid illustration was guaranteed to get people running away in fright,' Anne says.

Momentum around the campaign peaked with a public meeting in Sydney. Anne invited as many people as possible.

'Even for me – and I was operating pretty openly as a journalist on these matters – it wasn't easy to get people to come along. I remember it was a filthy, stormy night and we thought nobody would turn up but it was packed to the rafters. So many people came because there simply weren't any outlets at that time,' she says.

Margaret, Anne and others talked about the stigma surrounding mental illness.

'Then a young man who had been sitting at the front, playing with bits of string, suddenly stood up and said, "My name is Simon Champ and I have Schizophrenia". An enormous sigh went around the hall and then everyone applauded him.'

Anne says the memory still brings tears to her eyes because Simon was the only one brave enough, despite the stigma, to disclose his mental illness.

'That was the beginning of another round of openness in society, but we have to keep working at it because I think it's easy to forget. People close their doors and they get scared,' she says.

Simon Champ went on to help Anne with a documentary, *Spinning Out*, about the experience of Schizophrenia. When this was broadcast by the ABC, it generated a flood of calls from people inspired to reach out and seek help.

Anne also wrote about her personal journey in caring for Jonathan in a book published around the same time, *Tell Me I'm Here*.

Among the boxes in her house are yet more letters from as far afield as Iran and Scotland, responding to her book. One high school class even studied the book and created a diagram of what they thought Anne's house looked like, drawing pictures of Anne's son.

'Jonathan became a pathfinder for people with a mental illness,' Anne says.

Even though there is more research on mental illness, treatment, and community care these days, Anne says there is still more work to do in helping people living with mental illness lead a fulfilling life.

'It's a basic need that all of us have – we want to feel valued, we want to enjoy ourselves. We never allowed people with a mental illness to have their own humanity and that is what is changing.'

Service at the heart of two of our organisation's great leaders. To them we say, 'thank you'

This year we farewelled two people who have been integral to SANE's success over many years, Stan Wallis AC and Dr Paul Morgan. Stan has served as SANE Australia's Chairman for eight years, and Paul as Director of Communications for 22 years. We thank them both for their years of service and dedication to helping Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life.

Everyone of us who has had the good fortune to connect with Stan Wallis, will have been struck by his deep caring for the hundreds of thousands of Australians affected by mental illness, but most especially for those who have far less resources and support than most Australians. This caring has also extended to individual SANE staff and SANE board members.

Stan has always been a great champion for recruiting and building outstanding teams of people – 'it's all about the people' is one of his mantras we will remember. And he placed a premium on looking after people. It was Stan who advocated strongly for a new office environment that would make SANE a great physical place to work, one that had a sense of vibrancy and colour.

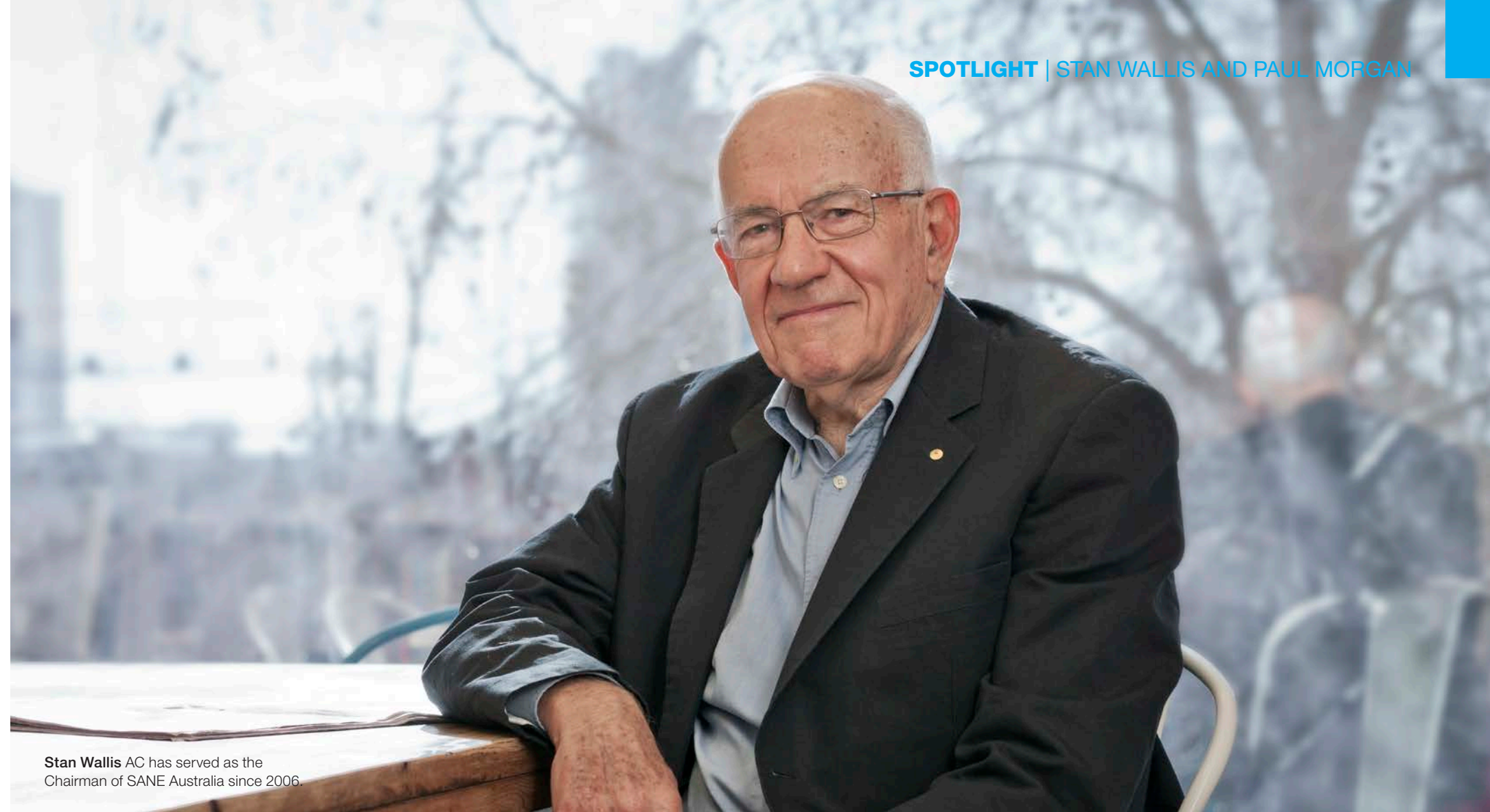
We will remember Stan's frequent visits to the SANE office, always keen to know how people and their families were doing as he walked the office introducing himself to new team members. Often he would turn up a

few minutes ahead of schedule to see how people were in their real element rather than allowing them to get ready for 'the Chair's visit'.

During his highly successful business career, and in his work for Government, Stan has always had a big ambition to touch the lives of as many Australians as possible and that's something he brought to SANE Australia, always asking the question of how we can grow, who can we partner up with to improve the lives of others, and how absolutely critical it is to put the people you serve ahead of the organisation that serves them.

Stan has been an outstanding Board Chair, consulting widely ahead of meetings and bringing people along on the journey. With a unique ability to combine a firmness and flexibility in his views, Stan was always open to new insights and sought out the opinions of every board member, especially those with lived experience.

So thank you Stan, for your great caring, warmth, wisdom and generosity over eight fine years. We know you will continue to support our work but we want you to know how deeply we appreciate all you have done to help Australians affected by mental illness to lead a better life.



Stan Wallis AC has served as the Chairman of SANE Australia since 2006.



Paul Morgan has served at SANE Australia for 22 years.

'I'm acutely aware that a few words can change a life – or even save one – so we have to get those words right!'

Dr Paul Morgan

IN THEIR WORDS

Dr Paul Morgan

In his farewell address on 1 October 2015, Paul shared his three operating principles guiding his work at SANE:

The first is to Walk with the People. To listen to ordinary folk living with mental illness and their families, the ones who don't get seen or heard. Too often, the voices that dominate are people who jump up and speak first. The people I always want to hear from though, are the quiet ones at the back, the ones too shy to speak, the people who couldn't get to the meeting, or didn't even know it was happening.

The second principle is Simplicity – within chaos there is always a hidden order waiting to be revealed. Whatever the complexity, there is always a simple solution at its heart. The trick is to find it. Whether working on a website, a

social media campaign, or a submission to a Senate Enquiry, there is always the simplest, most effective way of doing it.

The final principle is to always Think Different. To be inventive and creative in our work. If we're going to follow the herd and produce 'good enough' work that looks like other organisations', then why bother? We can do better. That's why, for example, the *Lessons for Life* video is so moving and effective. It's why the new SANE web service released by the team yesterday looks and works so beautifully.

From my first day at SANE to my last, I've set off walking in the morning, eager to get to my desk and get cracking. And there are not many people in the world who are lucky enough to say that.

Highlights from our year

Throughout the year, we receive feedback from many individuals and organisations attesting to the value of our work, and the way in which we go about it.

Earlier this year, we were delighted to receive the following message from National Mental Health Commissioner **Jackie Crowe**.

‘SANE’s preparedness for true partnerships, for working in an inclusive way and ensuring resources, expertise and knowledge are shared is inspiring and heart warming. This has been particularly evident with the peer-to-peer forums, videos and blogs that feature real people, real challenges and voices of really exceptional champions – people personally affected by mental ill health, suicide or suicide attempts.

Thank you for your continuous efforts in rising to the challenge and joining with people who have lived experience, their families and carers in a true partnership – to work collectively to improve the quality of life for all Australians affected by mental ill health, suicide or suicide attempts.’



Janet Hopkins, General Manager, SANE Australia.

In the pages that follow you will find details of this years highlights from the many and varied SANE programs. If there is a central theme that stands out this year, it is the way that across all of our programs, the work we do has been strengthened, and the breadth of our reach extended, through the support of partners and collaborators. For example:

- The Online Forums are now moderated 24 hours a day and delivered across 22 partner websites (and growing).
- Three pilot programs were commenced or completed: Aged Care (with residential aged care partners), Peer Health Coaching (with NEAMI) and a Suicide Prevention Audit Tool (with MIFA).

We continue to be supported in our work by the growing team of SANE speakers who this year have assisted with the design and development of the Online Forums and the SANE website, participated in the *Lessons For Life* video, and continue to work across the Mindful Employer program, which is now involved with 43 corporates and over 112,000 staff across Australia.

As always community involvement has also featured strongly, with over 5,000 people giving their input into exploring the imagery associated with mental illness in the *Picture This* research project.

Janet Hopkins
General Manager
SANE Australia

1,062,551 100⁺

LIVES TOUCHED BY SANE
AUSTRALIA IN 2014–2015

PARTNERSHIPS WITH
OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Support



47,421

AUSTRALIANS USED
THE SANE FORUMS
(SINCE INCEPTION)

22

PARTNERSHIPS WITH MENTAL
HEALTH ORGANISATIONS
ESTABLISHED TO INCREASE
THE REACH OF SANE FORUMS
(AS AT 30 JUNE 2015)

9,739

PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES
PROVIDED WITH INFORMATION,
SUPPORT, AND REFERRAL
THROUGH THE 1800 NUMBER,
ONLINE CHAT AND EMAIL

24/7

SUPPORT VIA SANE FORUMS
AS A PART OF THE HELP
CENTRE

Training



112,000

EMPLOYEE REACH NATIONALLY
THROUGH THE MINDFUL
EMPLOYER PROGRAM

100

MENTAL HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS TRAINED IN
HOW TO SUPPORT FAMILIES
AND FRIENDS OF PEOPLE
BEREAVED BY SUICIDE

86

AGED CARE FACILITY STAFF
TRAINED IN HOW TO SUPPORT
A RESIDENT WITH A MENTAL
ILLNESS

36

COMMUNITY HEALTH
ORGANISATIONS EDUCATED
ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF
PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE FOR
PEOPLE LIVING WITH MENTAL
ILLNESS

Education



89

SANE SPEAKERS NOW SHARE
THEIR EXPERIENCE OF BEING
AFFECTED BY MENTAL ILLNESS

800⁺

MEDIA STORIES FEATURED SANE
AUSTRALIA TO EDUCATE THE
COMMUNITY ABOUT MENTAL
HEALTH ISSUES

600,000

UNIQUE VISITORS TO THE SANE
WEBSITE WERE HELPED TO
UNDERSTAND MENTAL ILLNESS

25%

INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA
FOLLOWERS, WITH OVER 10,000
FOLLOWERS ON FACEBOOK AND
11,600 ON TWITTER

The SANE Help Centre – it's just a click away

Our frontline services took a major step forward this year with creation of the SANE Help Centre.

The SANE Helpline and Forums merged this year to create a powerful new resource for people living with mental illness, their families, and other carers. The SANE Help Centre brings our Helpline services – 1800 18 7263, online chat and email support – under the same umbrella as our 24/7 online peer support Forums for people with mental illness and carers.

Integrating these functions means we can take a more holistic, 360° approach to providing information, guidance, and support to people worried about mental health issues. Our Help Centre Advisors can cross-refer between these services, providing a flexible suite of options appropriate to people's needs at different times in the journey from crisis to recovery.

Creation of the SANE Help Centre has expanded the Advisor role to include Forum moderation, as well as answering Helpline queries. This brings a welcome diversity and broadening of expertise to a challenging role. A new Help Centre Manager and four new Advisors have joined the team this year. All are qualified mental health professionals who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their roles.

This predominantly new team, together with our new website service, opens up opportunities to maximise the reach and impact of the SANE Help Centre. An important priority is a strong focus on innovative and more effective use of technology. This is a work in progress with the goal of creating more welcoming, interactive, and user-friendly channels to support, guidance, and information.

By partnering with others, we are able to extend the reach of our service more than ever before. Our new partnership with the Victoria Police allows us to reach people who are not yet sure where to start in addressing their own mental health concerns, or those of a person close to them.

Early and compassionate intervention at this stage has the potential to reduce the impact of the mental illness and the effect on individuals, their families and friends, and the broader community.

We are proud of what we are achieving, and grateful to those who support us in this work.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Assisted 9,739 people via the Helpline 1800 number, online chat and email services.
- Integrated the Helpline and the Forums to create the SANE Help Centre.
- Worked with Supportlink and Victoria Police to provide mental health early intervention.
- Appointed a new Help Centre Manager and four new Advisors.
- Contributed to the development of an interactive SANE website promoting engagement across all SANE Help Centre services.

'I would like to thank your staff at the Helpline for possibly saving a life, and helping us when we needed it the most.'

Veronica Lake

Partnerships

Funding | Individual donations

Services | Community mental health services around Australia | Victoria Police | Supportlink



Veronica Lake turned to the SANE Helpline to assist a friend in a time of need. The support Veronica received enabled her to help her friend, and also gave her the knowledge and skills to manage the issues at hand on an ongoing basis.

9,739

PEOPLE ASSISTED VIA 1800 NUMBER, ONLINE CHAT AND EMAIL

24/7

SUPPORT VIA FORUMS AS A PART OF THE HELP CENTRE

5

NEW TEAM MEMBERS RECRUITED TO THE HELP CENTRE

IN THEIR WORDS

Veronica Lake

My friend Peter* was a heavy drug user. He was experiencing delusions and paranoia, and I thought the drug use might be bringing on some form of psychosis. His girlfriend Susie became very worried.

Peter wasn't aware he had a problem and Susie* had no idea how to deal with it, so I called the SANE Helpline as a starting point. It was so good to talk to someone who understood the issues that both Peter and Susie were facing.

They gave me some practical advice and sent some information to pass on to Susie. This gave her the tools she needed to talk to Peter and his family about what was going on.

Around this time the relationship ended, but the breakup was amicable. Peter moved to his parents' house and eventually gave up the

drugs. When I saw him next, he said that he wasn't taking them anymore. I took this as a small win as I hadn't spoken with him directly about it before, just passed on the information from SANE to Susie.

The paranoia that Peter was experiencing was helped by him breaking the drug cycle. On the rare occasions when his symptoms resurface, we now have the knowledge to help support Peter and his family. Just knowing SANE is there to talk to helps a lot.

I really feel Peter is on his way to recovery. Quitting the drugs is a great start, and has definitely put him in a different head space.

* Names have been changed.

SANE Forums – 24/7 online peer support

SANE Forums provides peer-to-peer online support for people living with a mental illness, and for family and friends who are caring for someone living with a mental illness.

The SANE Forums service is moderated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing members with a welcoming, safe, and anonymous community to share experiences, seek and give support, and connect with others.

The Lived Experience Forum and the Carers Forum are provided in partnership with dozens of mental health organisations around Australia to dramatically increase their reach, working together to help all Australians affected by a mental illness lead a better life.

Thanks to an innovative partnership model, the Forums are not only available at sane.org, but can be accessed via the websites of a growing number of mental health organisations across Australia – radically amplifying their reach across the country, especially in rural and remote areas.

‘The Forums have also helped me find motivation to do some important things I’d been putting off in my depression. This was with encouragement from other members and moderators.’

SANE Forums user

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- With over 47,000 visitors using the SANE Forums since inception, developing extra capacity quickly became a priority. This was managed by merging the Forums into the new SANE Help Centre as well as drawing on the support of partner organisations to provide additional moderation and contribute their own unique expertise and experience. Additionally, with the support of Colonial Foundation, we were able to extend moderation to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – a huge leap forward.
- SANE partnered with 22 mental health organisations nationally, to increase the reach of the Forums through their websites. The contribution of partners has enabled the Forums to continue to grow, with ongoing promotion through their channels, contribution of specialised mental health expertise, plus additional moderation hours.
- We highly value the work of Forum partners to assist SANE in making this service a success.
- Evaluation of the Forums has provided strong evidence of their value in providing connections and support, as well as facilitating the exchange of practical information and referral among peers.

47,421

UNIQUE VISITORS

483,255

PAGE VIEWS

15,259

POSTS

1,167

DISCUSSION TOPICS

22

MENTAL HEALTH
ORGANISATION PARTNERS

Note: Figures are as at 30 June 2015.

Partnerships

Funding | Australian Government, Department of Health, Colonial Foundation

Partner organisations | ARAFMI National Executive, ARAFMI NSW, ARAFMI WA, CentaCare SW NSW, Compassionate Friends Victoria, Eating Disorders Victoria, MH Carers Tasmania, MIFA National, MIFNQ, MIFQ, MIFSA, MIFA NT, MIFWA, Mind Australia, Ozhelp, PANDA, Partners In Recovery (Lifeline Darling Downs & South West Queensland), Richmond PRA, Mental Health Australia, Neami National, Toowoomba Clubhouse, Tandem

Out of hours moderation | Turning Point

Technology and design | Lithium Technologies, Persistent Systems, Isobar, Snaffleweb

IN THEIR WORDS

Denielle Stephens

When I was 24 years old, my father, who suffered from a mental illness, took his own life. Most families endure that kind of heartbreak in private, but Dad, who lived in the tiny Victorian hamlet of Swifts Creek, about 380km east of Melbourne, had also burnt down the family house. The picture of my charred childhood home was on page one of *The Age* newspaper.

Mum and Dad were separated when he died. In a small community, when something like this happens, I think people need someone to blame. And they blamed my mum. When we held a wake for Dad, nobody in the town came. They held their own. It was an awful time.

Shortly after Dad’s death, my boyfriend and I broke up and I had to move house. The confluence of upheavals brought me undone. I wasn’t eating, I wasn’t sleeping and I was crying constantly. The only thing that helped me cope was running. When I injured my knee and couldn’t exercise, I went into an emotional tailspin. Though I was really cross with my dad for not giving us a chance to help him, there I was 12 months later, pushing people away. I was drinking too much and, at my lowest point, gambling. I was lost in a fog of utter hopelessness and couldn’t see a way out. Finally, in despair, I tried to take my own life and ended up in hospital.

My stay there was pretty awful. I was in a maternity ward because that was the only bed available, and the nursing staff weren’t trained to deal with depression or mental illness. The professional care I got after that, though, was fantastic. I started taking antidepressants – there was

a bit of trial and error until I found one that worked for me – and seeing a psychologist, and that was the start of turning my life around. The medication plateaued my mood, so I was finally able to sleep and start dealing with my issues.

When I came out the other side, Mum and I started a depression support group in Bairnsdale, where we both now live, and we had 45 people at the first meeting. It was astounding.

Looking back, my own experience with depression not only allowed me to forgive my dad, but it also gave me the strength and desire to help others. What I say to anybody feeling overwhelmed is, ‘Hang on and keep breathing, take one day at a time and get yourself some really good support. Don’t push people away, seek out professionals you feel comfortable with and, if you’re not happy with your doctor, find another one. It is hard. It really is hard, but it can be a chapter in your life; it doesn’t have to be a life sentence.’

I am happy to be identified. I’m proud of my story and proud of having lived through it.

Most of all, though, I feel eternally grateful that I was given a second chance, which is ultimately what it was. I feel like that one moment could have defined me because it could have been the end. It humbles me to be able to see my children paint a picture, laugh, smile, or kick a ball – to see my family grow. It humbles me to think that I was so close to not having that.

Denielle’s story, as told here, was first published in Marie Claire.

Mindful Employer equips workplaces with the information and skills they need

Mindful Employer offers eLearning and face-to-face training to businesses of all sizes on how to manage mental health-related issues in the workplace.

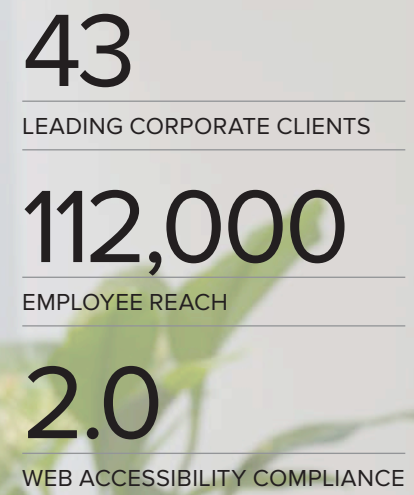
Program participants have access to helpful, accurate information on a range of mental illnesses. They gain the skills to recognise and understand the early warning signs of mental illness, and how to support and manage someone at work who is affected by mental illness or who is caring for someone affected.

Our Mindful Employer face-to-face workshops are facilitated by mental health trainers who are experienced at working in corporate settings. Trainers are joined by SANE Speakers, a team of people affected by mental illness, who are supported to talk candidly about their workplace experience at these workshops, and provide unique, authentic input to the training.

We now have 43 leading corporate clients – from small businesses to large multinational banking corporations – as part of our Mindful Employer program. This commitment is not only helping people deal with mental illness, but also helping us to improve attitudes and behaviours surrounding mental health still prevalent in Australia today.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- A total of 43 leading corporate clients with almost 112,000 employees reached by our Mindful Employer program through training, education and conference presentations.
- Partnered with the Safety Institute of Australia (SIA) to deliver Mindful Employer workshops in Melbourne and Sydney, with plans for workshops in Adelaide and Brisbane underway.
- Worked with legalsuper to design a Mental Health in the Legal Community program for their 40,000 members. This work continues.
- Developed a program of Mindful Employer blog and podcasts on topics such as how to overcome stigma in the workplace, how to manage an employee's disclosure of a mental illness, and how to implement programs and initiatives to support a mentally healthy workplace.
- Upgraded the Mindful Employer eLearning program to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, ensuring the program is accessible in the workplace to employees with a wide range of disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss.



Partnerships

Clients | Central Highlands Water, Citi, Department of Human Services ACT, Department of State Development Business and Innovation, EPA Vic, Hamilton Island, IVF, J A Davey, Kmart, Lundbeck, Mai-Wel Group, McLean Care, Melbourne Water, Open Minds, Department of Transport, Optus, People's Choice CU, Red Cross Blood Service, RSM Australia, Sanitarium, SDA Union NSW, St Barbara Mining, TNT

Partner | Safety Institute of Australia



IN THEIR WORDS

Catherine Owen

Creating a mentally healthy workplace is a key priority for the Blood Service and forms part of our organisation's Diversity Strategy.

With the increasing prevalence of mental health issues, we wanted to take a proactive approach in providing our people managers with the skills to identify the early warning signs. We piloted the Mindful Employer program and, due to its overwhelming success, we are now rolling it out across the organisation.

The Mindful Employer program provides our people managers with

the skills and confidence to engage in conversations with their staff before a small issue becomes a big one. Feedback after each workshop has been extremely positive and the inclusion of a guest speaker who shares their real life experience is incredibly powerful.

Supporting our managers to have meaningful conversations with their employees is one way that, as an organisation, we can contribute to breaking down the stigma associated with mental illness.

'SANE's online learning modules and resources are highly valued by Optus employees. With more than 12,000 people scattered around the country, it's really important to us that the five people in Darwin have the same access to information as the 5,000 people in Sydney.'

If somebody knows they're going to have a conversation around mental health, they turn to SANE's resources to help give them a framework for this. They can trust that the information they get from SANE is reliable and always up-to-date.'

Megan Kingham, Health and Wellbeing Manager, Optus

Suicide Prevention is integral to all of SANE's activities

SANE Australia's Suicide Prevention Project aims to improve how people with mental health problems, their families and friends are supported around the issue of suicide – through prevention, intervention, and bereavement support.

People affected by mental illness or bereaved by suicide are at much higher risk of ending their own lives. This is why suicide prevention is integral to all of SANE's activities.

We recognise the value of learning from people's experiences related to suicide, and are guided by those experiences to help others in similar circumstances.

'Thanks for this ... Being suicidal myself a number of years ago, these were all good points and written with respect ... those with no exposure to mental illness, make so many misinformed comments. Please continue your valuable work.'

Feedback on the *Lessons for Life* research report.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Delivered Mental Illness and Bereavement Training workshops to 100 health professionals from around Australia, on best practice in supporting families and friends of clients who are bereaved by suicide.
- Completed the *Lessons for Life* report (in partnership with the University of New England) – a qualitative research study examining the experience of people who have attempted suicide. The report included 10 recommendations. Findings from the report were presented at the Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA) conference in 2015, resulting in radio and print media coverage on the impact of suicide.
- Produced a documentary film to complement the *Lessons for Life* report. Launched at the SPA conference, the short film aims to reduce stigma and increase help-seeking through the stories of five people who have attempted suicide.
- Presented on *Lessons for Life* and the work of SANE Australia at the International Association for Suicide Prevention conference held in Montreal in June 2015.
- Completed the first draft of a *Suicide Prevention Audit Tool* for community mental health organisations (in partnership with Mental Illness Fellowship Australia). The tool will provide a guide and resources to help reduce suicides within community mental health settings.



Partnerships

Funding body | Australian Government, Department of Health
Community | Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention (Griffith University), beyondblue, Eastern Health, Mental Illness Fellowship Australia, Mildura Base Hospital, Mind Australia, National Coalition for Suicide Prevention, Neami National, Suicide Prevention Australia, University of New England

100
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TRAINED

10
LESSONS FOR LIFE REPORT
RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED
AT NATIONAL SPA CONFERENCE

IN THEIR WORDS

Adam Gould

The way I found to socialise with people when I moved to Melbourne [from the country], was to smoke weed. At that stage I didn't understand where I was at emotionally. I thought that everyone felt like this all the time.

Depression has only been one eighth of the problem for me; it's always been about anxiety, and I've always had this terrible fear of the worst case scenario. I'd lost my flat, I'd lost my social status, I had to move back in with my parents in the country, so I looked at myself as a complete and utter failure.

Coming from a background of high achievement both academically and in sports, I couldn't imagine how I'd got there, and I certainly couldn't imagine how I could get out by action. I didn't speak to anyone in my social circle about how I was feeling, and when it came to speaking with my family, I closed off.

Back then, there was this attitude towards suicide – and there still is this attitude with a lot of people – that it's a desperate cry for attention. It's not actually someone saying, 'Look, I'm in a bad place, and I genuinely need help'. They look at it like you're wasting their time. Like you're trying to get attention, trying to be special.

The other part was, because I did live in a small country town, my parents were afraid of disclosing. That made me feel worse about myself, which

started a cycle of depression, suicidal ideation, and 'how do I get out of this?' And at that stage I didn't have the tools. It took a long time for me to be connected with psychiatric services, let alone psychiatric services that offered the support that I needed.

I have always found that psychiatrists do serve a very important function, and that's the physical and medication side, but that's only a small part of it. Psychologists, case workers, social workers – they make an enormous difference.

Now I have a fantastic psychologist, and instead of saying we're going to put you under this particular course of therapy, she finds what works, finds a way for me to apply it, and makes me do it. She holds me to the fire! She will pull me up and say, 'Hey, you haven't been doing this, do it!'

I've looked at things and said, 'Well how can I turn this lead into gold?' A process of alchemy. How can I make things better? For me, it's writing, it's visual arts, it's stencil art, it's street art, it's talking with other people, it's public speaking. It's a way of reaching out to people and saying, 'I had this experience, but it gets better'.

I walk around with a great deal of pride these days. Not arrogance, but pride. I've come a long way from where I've been.

Watch Adam tell his story on the *Lessons for Life* short film at sane.org

Supporting the needs of older Australians with mental illness

The SANE Aged Care Project focuses on solutions for a major area of concern – the increasing number of Australians living with mental illness who face the challenges of growing older.

As ‘baby boomer’ Australians are now entering their 60s, the number of older adults living with mental illness is increasing fast.

For many of these people – especially those who are severely affected – the impact of physical health challenges, stigma, isolation, and financial instability creates barriers to healthy and active ageing. Furthermore, some of the experiences associated with being older – including a move into residential care – may be associated with a further decline in mental health.

SANE’s Aged Care Project raises awareness of these issues, and develops practical strategies to support older Australians living with mental illness and the people who care for them.

‘Stigma is a huge issue for older Australians. It prevents people from being given adequate support and care. SANE’s training on stigma was a godsend. As support workers, it’s really important to talk about our own judgements when it comes to mental illness.’

Care Coordinator, Residential Aged Care Facility

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Developed and piloted a new mental health awareness training program in four aged care facilities across Victoria.
- Trained 86 aged care staff.
- Delivered a training workshop to 16 Supported Residential Service (SRS) proprietors in partnership with Inner South Community Health and the Supporting Accommodation for Vulnerable Victorians Initiative (SAVVI).
- Completed an evaluation of the pilot training program. The evaluation found that 95% of aged care staff reported that participation in the training had increased their understanding of the signs and symptoms of mental illness, and helped them to develop strategies to support a resident with mental illness.
- Launched the *Ageing Well* guide in June 2015, with endorsement from peak national advocacy organisation for older Australians, COTA Australia.



Graeme Doyle

Graeme is a talented and well-regarded artist, aged 68. He is also affected by Schizoaffective disorder and now lives in a residential aged care facility.

Apart from the support Graeme receives within the facility, he had few opportunities for engagement with his local community. He had little idea what support services were available to him during his later years.

When Graeme came across SANE’s *Ageing Well* guide, he was able to contact one of the referral services and has since started to attend a weekly art group run through his local council.

Graeme is deeply passionate about his art and this weekly session has greatly improved his outlook on life.

Graeme Doyle is an artist. He is pictured with one of his signature ‘Crumple Art’ pieces.

Partnerships

Community | Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG), Leading Aged Services Australia (LASA), Carers Australia, Tandem, GROW, Mental Illness Fellowship, Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association, Psychiatric Disability Services of Victoria (VICSERV), Australian Men’s Shed Association, Mental Health Coordinating Council (MHCC), Mental Health Australia, Inner South Community Health

Pilot sites | Prague House (Kew), Auburn House (Hawthorn), Prom Country Aged Care (Foster), James Thomas Court (Ballarat), Victoria Heights Aged Care (Bendigo), Reservoir Lodge SRS (Reservoir), Sambell Lodge (Clifton Hill)

86

AGED CARE STAFF TRAINED

95%

OF AGED CARE STAFF REPORTED INCREASED UNDERSTANDING

1,600

AGEING WELL GUIDES DISTRIBUTED

Mind + Body: Closing the gap

People living with severe mental illness are dying on average 25 years earlier than the general population.

SANE Australia's Mind + Body Project recognises that a healthier life includes both mental and physical wellness. It seeks to educate communities about the critical role that physical health plays in building better mental health.

Physical health is especially important for people living with a mental illness, as research shows they are at greater risk of high blood pressure, obesity, and conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. This is mainly due to the impact of symptoms and side-effects of some medications, leading to physical inactivity, changes in metabolism, and an unhealthy diet. Smoking levels are also far higher than in the general population.

The Mind + Body Project promotes common-sense steps to improve the health of the whole person. As well as campaigning for improved treatments and support, we have developed a range of training resources in this area.

Finalising the Peer Health Coaching pilot program has been a major focus of 2014–2015.

SANE Australia partnered with Neami National to pilot Peer Health Coaching across Neami service sites with support from the Australian Government, Department of Health. This innovative program aims to improve physical health through increased understanding and personal coaching, provided in a series of one-on-one and group sessions with a peer worker.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Trained 12 Peer Support Workers to become Peer Health Coaches.
- Enabled 185 people living with mental illness to work with a Coach on a self-directed physical health goal.
- Engaged with 36 community health organisations to educate them about the Peer Health Coaching program. A further 30 expressions of interest have been received.
- Evaluation showed a significant improvement in Peer Health Coaching participants' health literacy, health outcomes, and overall feeling of wellbeing.
- A Peer Health Coaching Manual and Overview were developed, published, and launched at The Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Services Conference (TheMHS) in 2015.
- The Peer Health Coaching Program received a 2015 TheMHS Award in recognition of its impact.



‘[The project] enabled me to get in touch with what recovery means to each individual, and to use creative techniques to break up larger goals and values to achieve each step along the way.’

Katie Peters, Peer Health Coach
Project Worker, Neami National

Partnerships

Funding body | Australian Government, Department of Health

Partners | Neami National, Mental Illness Fellowship of NT, Mental Health Carers Arafmi Australia, Mind Australia, Mental Health Carers Tasmania, Mind Recovery College, Centre of Excellence in Peer Support, QUIT Victoria, Monash Psychiatry Research Centre, RichmondPRA

185

CONSUMERS PARTICIPATED IN THE
PEER HEALTH COACHING PILOT

547

ONE-ON-ONE AND GROUP
SESSIONS

36

COMMUNITY HEALTH
ORGANISATIONS ENGAGED

Katie Peters

Rhiannon is a young women who has been receiving treatment for an eating disorder. She worked with Katie Peters, Peer Health Coach Project Officer at Neami National, over a series of one-on-one Peer Health Coaching sessions. Her health goal from the first session was ‘to feel more in control of her life, which included eating more’.

Throughout their sessions, Rhiannon and Katie refined the goal. A high priority for Rhiannon was to stick to her meal plan as a means of recovery. Together they set tasks and strategies for Rhiannon to complete between their coaching sessions, including keeping a journal, making a weekly planner, and sitting with uncomfortable urges and emotions she experienced from eating more.

Rhiannon felt that taking part in the Peer Health Coaching program kept her out of hospital. She found having something to focus on each week useful, and was able to achieve her health goal.

Rhiannon is now continuing to work on her recovery with her regular Support Worker at Neami National.

Katie Peters (right) is the Peer Health Coaching Project Worker at Neami National. She also works as a Peer Health Coach at Northern PARCS, and in outreach. **Catriona Bastian**, Mind + Body Project Coordinator (left) is pictured with Katie following SANE Australia's and Neami National's receipt of a TheMHS Award for the Peer Health Coaching Program.

SANE speakers share their experience of mental illness to help others

SANE speakers are a team of people affected by mental illness who talk candidly in public about their personal experience – providing unique, authentic input to our campaigning and other work.

Personal contact with people affected by mental illness is one of the most powerful ways of reducing stigma and promoting inclusion in our community.

Trained and supported by SANE Australia, our speakers talk to the media and employers, and contribute to advocacy, research, and new information resources to help break down the barriers of misunderstanding.

The SANE Speakers program also helps people with a mental illness form relationships with peers, which helps to offset some of the social isolation frequently experienced by people with a mental illness.

This year the SANE speakers have been involved with the development and design of the SANE Online Forums, the new SANE website and the *Lessons for Life* research and video, in addition to their contributions to the Mindful Employer program, our blogs and other speaking engagements.

Donations and other support help us to recruit, train, and support more speakers, as we continue to work towards a better life for all people affected by mental illness.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Over 900 people attended face-to-face meetings with SANE speakers.
- Speaker presentations included Men's Shed, TransGrid, and all staff at SEEK in their Melbourne and Sydney offices.
- Five SANE speakers told their stories in *Lessons for Life*, our new film on suicide prevention.
- Speakers took part in an ABC Radio program on Bipolar disorder.
- Consultation took part with speakers on the design of SANE's new website.
- Three new Snapshot stories for SANE website written by Peter Wilmoth.
- 22 new speakers were recruited from around Australia, taking the total to 89.

Partnerships

Disability Discrimination Legal Service (DDLs) | La Trobe University | Melbourne University | SEEK | Suicide Postvention Conference 2015 | Transgrid

'I've spoken twice to employees at Transgrid. On each occasion I have had people come up to me afterwards to share their own experiences of mental illness. This sense of solidarity can be very important; knowing that they are not alone and that colleagues are learning more about the issues they face. I hope that the SANE Speakers continue to provide opportunities to break down the stigma around mental illness, and promote more sympathetic and responsive workplace environments.'

Nick Valentine, SANE speaker



Cameron Solnordal

'I will happily answer any question and talk about my illness,' says Cameron, 'but I won't let it define me. It happens every day. You see celebrities who are battling something terrible, be it physical or mental. They lose their identity. They suddenly become a representative for their cause and that becomes their whole life'.

As a SANE speaker, Cameron delivers talks to a variety of audiences, including HR managers keen to understand the best ways to work with people affected by mental illness.

'Last year I was honoured by the invitation to speak at Parliament House in Canberra, for the launch of a new online service, the SANE Forums. I talked about my experience of using the Forums; how great it is to jump straight in and see what people are talking about, because even though mental illness is fairly common, you can still feel extremely isolated.

'It helps to be able to share my experience through the SANE Speakers program, and to connect with others through the SANE Forums'.

985

PEOPLE HEARD DIRECTLY FROM A SANE SPEAKER

22

NEW SPEAKERS RECRUITED

89

SPEAKERS NATIONALLY

Cameron Solnordal has been a SANE speaker for nearly 12 months. He has lived with the diagnosis of schizophrenia for over 13 years.

SANE Media Centre provides the tools to support quality reporting and reduce stigma

For people with a mental illness, stigma and prejudice can be as distressing as the symptoms they experience. Inaccurate and unfair representation of mental illness and suicide in the media is especially harmful because of the important role it plays in shaping and reinforcing community attitudes.

The SANE Media Centre is a one stop, day-to-day advisory service for media professionals covering mental illness and suicide-related issues. Mental health organisations are also supported to tell their stories, advocating through the media for improved services.

The Media Centre also operates the StigmaWatch program which responds to reports of inaccurate or inappropriate portrayal, and empowers people to take action themselves. It encourages more positive, appropriate reporting rather than attempting 'censorship,' with *Good news* reports praising media professionals who represent mental illness and suicide responsibly.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- SANE Australia generated, or was featured in, over 800 media items this year. The *Lessons for Life* research report, the launch of the SANE Forums, and publication of the *Ageing Well* guide attracted media attention around the country, including articles in *The Guardian*, *mammamia*, and coverage on ABC News, as well as other outlets. Social media promotion was especially important, with a single Facebook post promoting the SANE Forums reaching more than 20,000 people.
- Pictures matter as much as words in the media. We conducted a national study in partnership with Getty Images – *Picture This* – to discover what images are regarded as fair and accurate illustration for media stories about mental illness and suicide.
- Training workshops on 'Working with the Media' were held in different states, providing staff from community mental health organisations with information on how the media works, the needs of journalists, and practical sessions, including mock interviews.

'Thanks so much for making a fairly scary topic so manageable.'

Polly McIntyre, Post and Ante Natal Depression Support and Information Inc. (PANDSI)

Partnerships

Funding body | Australian Government, Department of Health

Organisations | Australian College of Mental Health Nurses, Australian Press Council, Black Dog Institute, Hunter Institute for Mental Health, International Anti-Stigma Network, Life. Living is for everyone, Mental Health Australia, Mental Health Professionals Network, Neami National, Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, R U OK? Day, Suicide Prevention Australia, TheMHS Conference, University of Melbourne, VICSERV, Victorian Transcultural Mental Health, Victorian Women's Mental Health Network, Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre

800+

MEDIA STORIES FEATURED
SANE AUSTRALIA

4,700

MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS RECEIVED A
COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT TO
LAUNCH SANE FORUMS

256

STIGMAWATCH REPORTS

39

GOOD NEWS REPORTS

Polly McIntyre from PANDSI undertaking on-camera media training in Canberra with SANE's Media Relations Advisor, **Jenni Henderson**.

Understanding makes all the difference when someone is affected by mental illness

Understanding of what has happened. What helps. And what we can do to help ourselves. SANE worked harder than ever this year to promote this understanding – with people affected by mental illness, their family and other carers, health professionals, and others in the community.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- Over 600,000 visitors to our website were helped to understand the impact of mental illness and how to manage it, in order to lead a fulfilling life. Integration of SANE Forums into the site – thanks to support from the Australian Government and the Colonial Foundation – helped to make it a major platform for peer support too.
- A major effort for the Communications team in the current year has been assisting with the design and development of a new presence on the web for sane.org, thanks to support from Gandel Philanthropy. The new website, launched in September 2015, includes substantial new content and functionality, making it even more helpful for people seeking information and support.
- SANE's popularity on social media increased by more than 25% during the year, with over 10,000 Followers on Facebook and almost 11,600 on Twitter.
- A new position of Digital Communications and Marketing Advisor was created to focus on raising awareness of SANE Australia's work on social media in particular.
- A range of new resources were developed and designed, including a *Peer Health Coaching Manual and Overview*, a *Guide to Ageing Well*, and *Lessons for Life*, a short film to accompany our research report identifying what we can learn about suicide prevention from those who have attempted to take their own lives. A revised edition of the *Suicide Prevention and Recovery Guide* was also published.
- A *SANE Guide for Electorate Offices* was launched at Parliament House in Canberra, enabling staff in parliamentarians' offices around the country to provide a better service for visitors affected by mental illness.

- A *SANE Research Bulletin* promoted the findings of an evaluation of our online Forums, demonstrating their value to people living with mental illness and carers, the differences in how they use the Forums, and recommendations for future development.
- Our magazine, *SANE News*, highlighted the impact of suicide on family and friends, stigma reduction, the benefits of online Forums, and our Peer Health Coaching partnership with Neami National.

Partnerships

Australian Government, Department of Health | beyondblue | COPMI (Children of Parents with a Mental Illness) | Gandel Philanthropy | Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance | Mental Illness Fellowship Australia | National Mental Health Commission | ninemsn | Pharmaceutical Society of Australia | Healthdirect

600,000⁺

UNIQUE VISITORS TO THE SANE WEBSITE

25%

INCREASE IN SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

'The Suicide Prevention and Recovery Guide proved to be an excellent resource ... Feedback from students demonstrated that, after reading the guide and completing the activities, they felt more confident to manage suicide risk, support the individual's recovery, and instill a sense of hope whilst maintaining consumer and community safety.'

Lecturer, Faculty of Nursing, University of Sydney

Image: Cover of the *SANE Guide to Ageing Well* commissioned from **Julian Pang** for SANE.

Jade Ryall is Manager of the *Back on Track Program* for RichmondPRA, a leading community-based mental health support service.

Jade Ryall

RichmondPRA is proud to be working in partnership with SANE Australia to implement the SANE Smokefree Kit online across our organisation, to enable people who access RichmondPRA services and staff to reduce or quit smoking.

RichmondPRA works in the community providing recovery-oriented supports and resources to people living with a mental health issue, their families and carers. We are committed to providing people with the opportunity to improve their physical and mental health by reducing and quitting smoking.

The SANE Smokefree Program is an important component of our strategy for enabling people who access our services and staff to reduce and quit smoking. The program fits well with RichmondPRA's philosophy of being strengths-focused and person-led, and the flexible design also enables implementation across a wide range of services.

The outcomes of the smoking cessation program will be evaluated and the findings used to improve the effectiveness of the SANE Smokefree Kit and to ensure continuous quality improvement.

We advocate at a national level for improved mental health and support services for those affected by mental illness

As part of our work to improve awareness and understanding of mental health issues, reduce stigma, and improve mental health outcomes for all Australians affected by mental ill health, SANE Australia regularly meets with parliamentarians throughout the year.



Then Minister for Health, **Peter Dutton**, speaking at the official launch of SANE Forums at Parliament House in Canberra.

In 2014–2015, SANE Australia met with a number of key people to discuss a range of mental health issues including:

- the former and current Ministers for Health – Peter Dutton and Susan Ley, and Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash
- Shadow Minister for Health, Jan McLucas, and the Australian Greens spokesperson for mental health, Penny Wright
- federal Parliamentarians from all major political parties
- ministerial advisors from a range of portfolios including the Prime Minister's Office
- parliamentarians from a number of states and territories including Victoria and Queensland.

SANE also holds parliamentary events to enable a greater reach of our advocacy program at the highest level. At these events we highlight particular issues and discuss the need for positive changes to the mental health system. In 2014–2015, such events included:

- the launch of the SANE Forums by then Minister for Health Peter Dutton, at Parliament House in Canberra
- the launch of the SANE Guide for Electorate Offices through the Parliamentary Friends for Mental Illness Group at Parliament House in Canberra
- a dinner for parliamentarians from each major political party to discuss the mental health of politicians, the effects mental health has on sound policy-making, and the need for reforms to the current mental health system.

‘SANE Australia works with policy-makers, governments, health professionals and consumers to improve treatment and health outcomes for people affected by mental illness.’

Rebecca Halpin, SANE's Head of Policy and Government

As part of our advocacy program, SANE also provides written and verbal submissions to national reviews and inquiries that relate to our portfolio of work on mental health. Our submissions in 2014–2015 included:

- submission to the Standing Committee on Health's Inquiry into Chronic Disease Prevention and Management in Primary Health Care
- submission to NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Policy Framework consultation
- submission to the Australian Government Department of Social Services Review of Australia's Welfare System Interim Report: A New System for Better Employment and Social Outcomes

- submission to the Department of Health's workshop on the Government's Response to the National Mental Health Commission's Review of Mental Health Programmes and Services.

Our engagement with parliamentarians and peak bodies is an important way to increase the understanding of the impact of mental ill health in Australia, to make mental health a priority, and to encourage positive change.

Our services, information, advocacy and other work is only possible through the generosity of our supporters

Fundraising is a critical component of SANE's income. We rely on the generosity of our individual supporters, corporate donors, and trusts and foundations to deliver our services. This year our supporters have provided over 40 per cent of our income.

Our achievements in 2014–2015

- SANE's individual donors have helped us to help thousands of Australians in 2014–2015. They have given more than in any previous year, and contributed to the expanded SANE Help Centre.
- Corporate support has always played an important part in helping SANE to carry out its work. With the growing recognition of the importance of mental health in the workplace, we are proud to say that valued support from the business community is also growing, to help more Australians affected by mental illness than ever before.
- We call them Team SANE – the passionate and dedicated fundraisers who take part in challenges and community events to support our work. This year our fundraisers braved challenges including, walking the Nullarbor and trekking to Everest. We also saw a growing number of people join together in fun runs across Australia.

Partnerships

Funding bodies | Colonial Foundation, Gandel Philanthropy
Partners | Chartered Accountants, Australia and New Zealand, Hunter Hall International, Janssen, Just Cuts, King & Wood Mallesons, Redpath Mining



Dan Watson walked 5,000 kilometres from Perth to Sydney, raising valuable awareness and over \$40,000 for SANE Australia and the Cancer Council.

Dan Watson

Standing in the middle of the Western Australian desert, Dan began to fully appreciate the magnitude of what he was tackling, not just physically but mentally.

Dan walked 5,000 kilometres from Perth to Sydney to raise awareness of mental health and cancer. 'The purpose of the trip was a means of helping myself and helping someone I care about,' he says.

Many years earlier Dan was part of the corporate rat race. Competing to be the best cost him sleep, damaging his health and relationships. He lived with depression and anxiety. 'After 10 years it was almost breaking point,' he says.

His mother was battling cancer and for a long time she didn't want to reach out to Dan for help.

'When she finally said she needed me, that opened the flood gates,' Dan says.

He realised that the stigma surrounding mental illness was holding him back from talking about what he had been experiencing.

Throughout his trek, Dan took time off the road to encourage those he met to seek help. 'SANE is a good place to start, they can point you in the right direction and you just can't do it on your own,' Dan says.

Dan's phenomenal walk raised over \$40,000 for SANE Australia and the Cancer Council.



'Living with a schizoaffective disorder is an uphill battle, and will continue to be until a cure is found. Cat and I wanted to do something to help those who have – or know of someone who has – experienced how crippling mental illness can be. Much money is raised for research into mental illness, but organisations that help those living with mental illness and their families are just as important. This is why we chose SANE Australia.'

Nick, diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder 10 years ago. In March 2015, he and his partner, **Cat**, trekked for 18 days to Mount Everest Base Camp (5,545m above sea level) in support of SANE Australia. The trek was symbolic of the uphill battle faced every day by people affected by mental illness.

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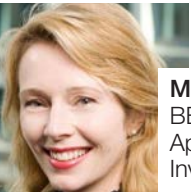
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MBCh.B, MSc, MD, DLSHTM, MRC Psych, FRANZCP

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BA (Hons), MA (Clinical Psychology), PhD, MAPS

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MBBS FRACGP

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MBBS, MPM, PhD, FRANZCP

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BSc, MBBS, PhD, FRANZCP

Professor Dan Lubman
BSc(Hons), MB ChB, PhD, FRANZCP, FACHAM

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MBBS, MD, PhD, FRANZCP

Professor Philip Mitchell AM
MBBS (Hons I), MD, FRANZCP, FRCPsych

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BA, DipEd, MSocSc, PhD

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BSocSci (Psychology)

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Tanya Wallis
CA

Accounts + Office Manager
Emma Rye
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Myra Jill Nunez
BSc (Computer Eng)

IT Manager
Wendy Stiles
BA, Dipl (Applied Photography) (on maternity leave)

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BA (Journalism)

Media Relations Advisor
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BA (Journalism)
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Online Community Manager
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Online Community Engagement Specialist
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BA Social Science (Psych), MGMC (M. Media and Comms), PhD student (Media and Communications)

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Image: *Tree of Light* by **Christine Healy**, doctor, painter, and supporter of SANE Australia. We are proud to have this painting on the wall of our national office.

Life-changing gifts: Thank you to our funders, partners and supporters

This year we have decided to acknowledge the very generous support SANE has received over the years from the following funders, partners and supporters. We thank you all for your belief and investment in our work to help all Australians affected by mental illness lead a better life.

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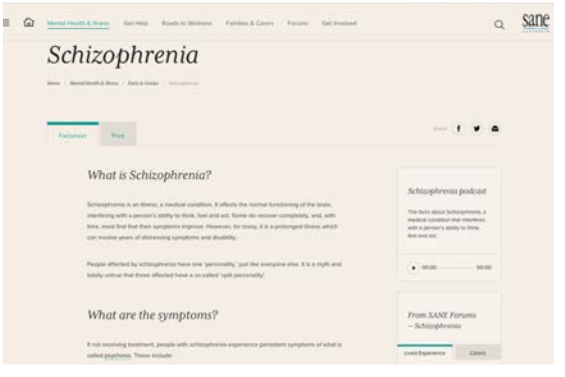
Special thanks:



Thanks to a major grant from Gandel Philanthropy SANE Australia has undertaken two new major projects.

We have built a new SANE website service off the back of extensive consultation with people with lived experience and their family and friends. The new service integrates the SANE Forums seamlessly along with our chat facility. People who come to the SANE website looking for information on schizophrenia will be able to easily find out the latest conversations taking place on the topic around Australia. Over the coming year, we will populate the new platform with a wide range of content across a variety of formats.

Gandel Philanthropy support is also enabling SANE to build an innovative online application to help people living with bipolar, and those who care for them, to be alerted to the early onset of a potentially elevated period. SANE is working with the UNSW Department of Psychiatry in the development of this important initiative. Gandel Philanthropy's generous support will have a profound impact on the support SANE can provide to people directly affected by mental illness.

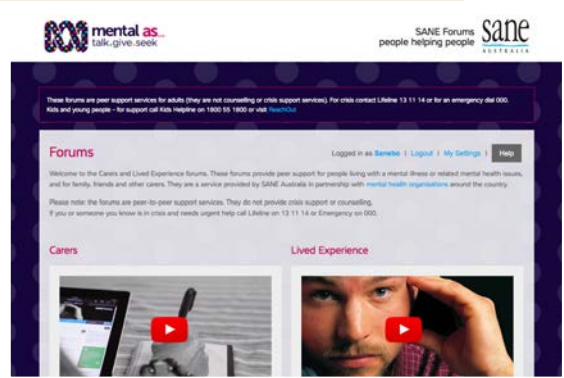


Colonial Foundation

Colonial Foundation has provided a substantial multi-year grant to facilitate a major extension of the SANE Forums. With this generous support, the SANE Forums are now providing live moderation 24 hours a day, seven days a week to ensure a safe and supportive community. The Forums have extended their reach from 13 to 27 mental health organisations now covering every State and Territory in Australia.

Thanks to Colonial's support, the SANE Forums were able to partner with the ABC for their Mental As promotion to continue the many conversations started by the Mental As initiative. This has led to tens of thousands of Australians visiting the SANE Forums in 2015.

Importantly, Colonial is providing ongoing funding to ensure the continuation of 24/7 moderation, as we build partnerships with more mental health organisations around the country.



'SANE is an innovative organisation doing amazing work on a relatively modest budget. Proactive in reducing stigma, SANE employs new technologies as well as more traditional methods of supporting those living with a mental illness and their loved ones. On a personal level I give to honour family members who lived with mental illness.'

Christine Healy

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KING & WOOD
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Special thanks to King & Wood Mallesons for generously providing pro bono legal advice.

‘King & Wood Mallesons has been very proud to support SANE’s work for over a decade. Our partners and staff donate to SANE through our Workplace Giving program, and we provide pro bono legal advice to assist SANE with its operations. With statistics showing an increased likelihood for lawyers to suffer a mental health issue, we recognise the importance of investing in the mental health of our employees. Whether it’s implementing a system of Wellbeing Officers, or simply encouraging our staff to check in on each other, we are committed to removing the stigma associated with mental illness. Our partnership with SANE reflects this commitment, and allows us to support SANE’s valuable work in the greater community across the spectrum of mental health issues.’

Taryn McCamley, Pro Bono & Community Manager, King & Wood Mallesons

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Special thanks:



As this Annual Report demonstrates so clearly, there are many hundreds of families and individuals across Australia who support SANE’s work and we thank you for that.

This year we would like to make special mention of the Calvert-Jones Foundation for their continued support for the SANE Speakers program.

The SANE speakers sit at the heart of our work, providing powerful and inspiring stories of resilience and hope to so many fellow Australians dealing with the challenges of mental illness.

We know from the international evidence that the most powerful way to reduce stigma and discrimination is through social contact with people living with a mental illness.

That’s why we salute each and everyone of our SANE speakers and say a huge thank you to the Calvert-Jones Foundation for their very kind support in making this all possible.



SANE’s mission has been helped in very significant measure by our partnership with digital agency Isobar Australia. Under the lead of Dr Rod Farmer, GM of Isobar’s Sydney office, Isobar has helped SANE achieve a distinctive visual identity for our new website and, together with SANE’s Faruk Avdi, is in the process of developing a ground-breaking mobile and watch app to help people with bipolar disorder identify the potential onset of mania. This design partnership has been made possible due to Isobar’s very generous low-bono and pro-bono assistance. Their commitment to the people SANE seeks to assist has delivered high quality results for the visual design for SANE Forums, the new website service, and the apps mentioned above.



One of SANE’s great partnerships this year has been with Lithium Technologies which provides the software platform that drives the SANE Forums. Thanks to Lithium’s support, we have built a safe and supportive online community for tens of thousands of Australians affected by mental illness. Through the technology platform, we are opening up the huge untapped resource of peer support across the nation. Lithium has also enabled us to support mental health organisations in every state and territory and give them an enhanced service to the people they already serve. Importantly, just under a third of the people using the SANE Forums are from rural and regional Australia where people have limited access to mental health services. We thank everyone at Lithium for their fantastic support – both in Australia and in their San Francisco office.

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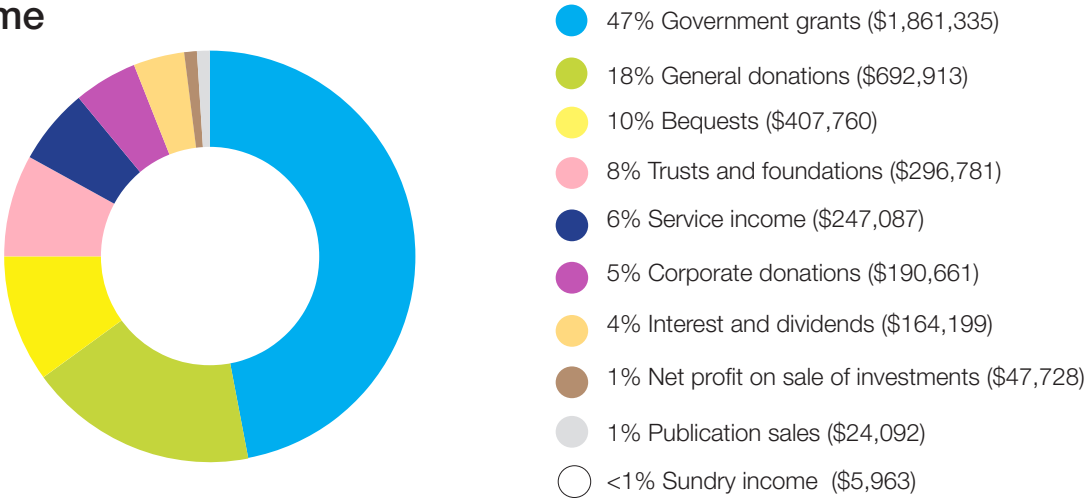
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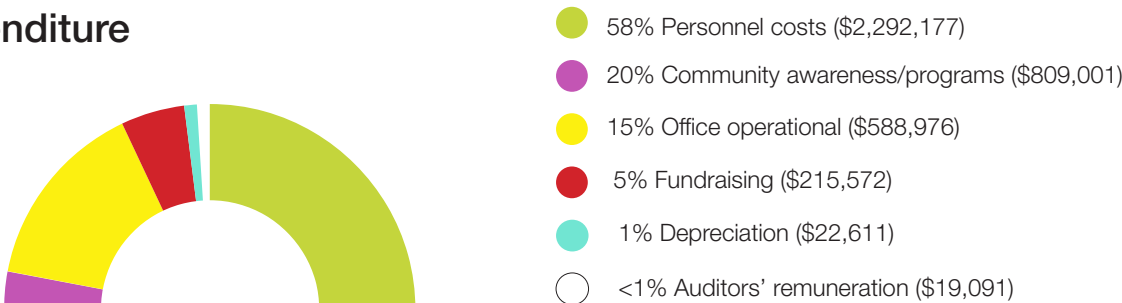
Money matters: Our financial report 2014–2015

Income



Total income	\$3,938,519
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Expenditure



Total expenditure	\$3,947,428
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Unrealised gain on investments	\$57,547
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Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year	\$48,638
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Notes

The attached financial information has been extracted from the audited financial statements of SANE Australia at 30 June 2015. Full financial statements are available on the SANE Australia website at <https://www.sane.org/images/drfs2015.pdf>. SANE Australia is a registered tax-exempt charity with DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) status: 900 306 329.

SANE Australia

ABN 92 006 533 606

Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Revenue	3,890,791	3,574,103
Net profit/(loss) on sale of investments	47,228	103,217
Net profit/(loss) on sale of plant and equipment	500	–
Write-off of investment	–	(3,000)
Personnel costs	(2,292,177)	(1,946,622)
Community awareness and program expenses	(809,001)	(791,923)
Fundraising	(215,572)	(96,801)
Auditors remuneration	(19,091)	(22,264)
Depreciation	(22,611)	(80,920)
Office operational	(588,976)	(400,944)
Costs of publications sold	–	(1,330)
Current year surplus/(loss) before income tax	(8,909)	333,516
Income tax expense	–	–
Net current year surplus/(deficit)	(8,909)	333,516
Other comprehensive income		
Unrealised gain on investments	57,547	163,670
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year	48,638	497,186

SANE Australia

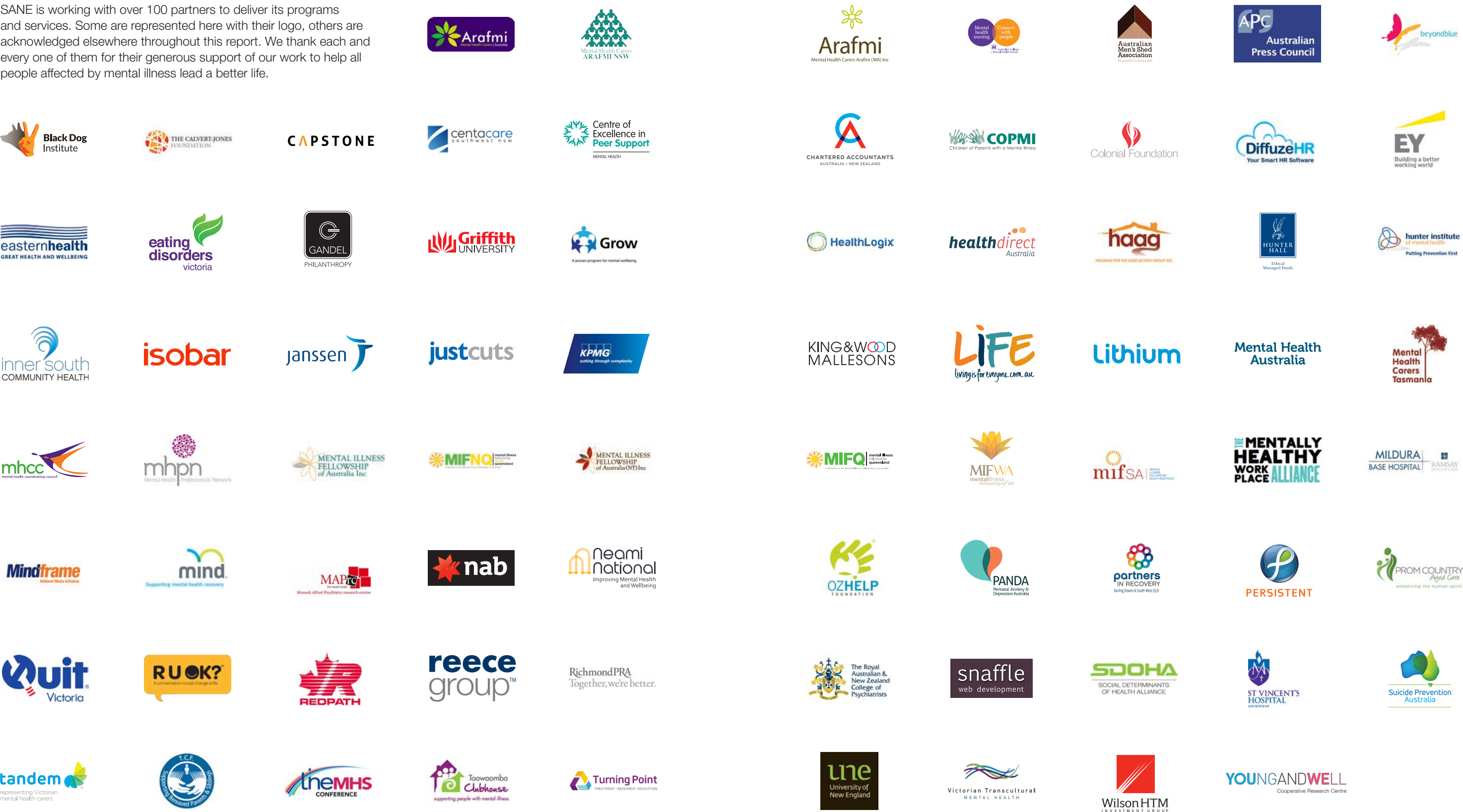
ABN 92 006 533 606

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash on hand	1,098,036	1,251,410
Accounts receivable and other debtors	115,319	283,378
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,213,355	1,534,788
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Financial assets	2,234,066	2,133,258
Plant and equipment	100,449	25,368
Other assets	32,565	24,300
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	2,367,080	2,182,926
TOTAL ASSETS	3,580,435	3,717,714
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	222,196	208,281
Income received in advance	21,316	–
Provisions	218,038	145,397
Grants received in advance	268,259	568,095
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	729,809	921,773
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	22,169	16,122
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	22,169	16,122
TOTAL LIABILITIES	751,978	937,895
NET ASSETS	2,828,457	2,779,819
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	708,240	717,149
Investment fluctuation reserve	370,217	312,670
Endowment fund	1,750,000	1,750,000
TOTAL EQUITY	2,828,457	2,779,819

Partners

SANE is working with over 100 partners to deliver its programs and services. Some are represented here with their logo, others are acknowledged elsewhere throughout this report. We thank each and every one of them for their generous support of our work to help all people affected by mental illness lead a better life.





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For the past 29 years, SANE Australia has been a leader in getting mental health on the public agenda. We are an international pioneer in the reduction of stigma and have always taken a national approach to our work. We span the full spectrum of mental health issues and we always put people before their diagnosis. With our deep-seated commitment to working directly with people affected by mental illness, SANE Australia brings a unique combination of history, skills and commitment to its work.

**We want to create a better life for all Australians
affected by mental illness.**

Please join us on the journey.

www.sane.org
www.saneforums.org