



CISVic

2020/2021

FULL Annual Report

helping local communities
help local people



About us

Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic) is the peak body representing local community information and support services.

Our local services assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support services including Emergency Relief.

We direct people who need help to local centres for services.

We liaise with local, state and federal governments on behalf of local centres for funding and support.

We undertake research and training.

CISVic and its members are committed to volunteering and offer a range of opportunities for people to work with us.

And we seek and arrange funding from philanthropic organisations and private donors.

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President's report

It is with great pleasure that I present my report as President of the Board of Management of Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic). It is an honour to be able to reflect on the twelve months to July 2021. It goes without saying that the COVID-19 pandemic has provided both opportunities and challenges for CISVic, its member agencies, and staff team. It is inevitable that the pandemic has taken its toll on all of us in many ways. At the same time, it has also provided us with opportunities for growth in knowledge, skills, and experience.

On behalf of CISVic, I would like to formally acknowledge the support we receive from our primary funding bodies – particularly the additional funds from the Department of Social Services. This funding has proven to be critical for consortium and non-consortium members alike and has enabled member agencies to continue their Emergency Relief delivery and extend their support services to people impacted by the pandemic and approaching agencies for perhaps the very first time.

I would also like to acknowledge the local councils who have provided additional support to our branches during this period. This funding, and the meaningful relationships we have with them, ensure we can continue to provide services to their most vulnerable residents. Councils across Melbourne and Victoria are our key partners at the most local and critical level.

As with non-pandemic years, our member agencies continue to see people struggling with the costs of housing, food, education, and transport. COVID has exacerbated and crystallised those needs for so many households, including people who may never have had to seek support before. Most people who present to our member agencies for support have complex needs, and may be experiencing financial hardship, relationship breakdown, social isolation, unemployment, housing stress, or homelessness.

We remain committed to connecting people with our agencies to provide them with the services they need, and we are also committed to speaking out against poverty and inequity to raise awareness and redress the imbalance in some way. The fact that our member agencies can assist people on a one-to-one basis through the provision of emergency relief, backed up with good quality information, support and advocacy, means we are also able to make daily differences in people's lives.

I sometimes wonder how we will look back on the last couple of years – we have certainly proven that we can continue to support those in need even while having to adapt the way we work, and the way we deliver services. Our agencies have demonstrated incredible agility to respond to people in need in ways they never have before and I believe that CISVic agencies have proven the immense value of place-based, people focused support centres.

This year, more than any other, I would like to officially recognise the hard work and dedication of CISVic's wonderful team of staff, volunteers, students, and interns as well as the Board of Management. Supported by Executive Officer Kate Wheller they have been resilient and adaptable in some of the most trying times and need to be congratulated.

This year has taught us that we can never be sure what lies ahead. This year has also taught us that we are strong, agile, and flexible. For over 50 years from VACAB to VACIC to CISVic we remain, as always, helping local communities help local people.

Leanne Petrides

Executive Officer's report

It's impossible to talk about the last financial year without talking about the global pandemic. COVID-19 has shaped our world and its impact has been felt across all aspects of every Victorian's life. The only real consistent during the last year has been COVID. We had some brief respite and a spell of 'double donut' days, but the long periods of lockdown have been hard, and we have been on shifting sand.

I'm incredibly proud of the fact that, during all this, the CISVic team, our branches, and indeed our member agencies have remained resilient and strongly committed to helping local communities. That's not to say it hasn't taken its toll – this has been a hard year for most people – both personally and professionally I'd like to focus on some key highlights over the last 12 months:

We are strongly connected

We've not only maintained strong connections with our members during lockdown, by using now common-place video technologies for online meetings, e-newsletters, and social media, we have enhanced our connections and communication channels. These aren't our only channels of communication either - we're still using old school methods. We're in constant contact with individual members, via phone and email, and this is evidenced by our phone contact data, which has recorded over 700 phone calls with individual member agencies this year. Our collective sector has, even with reduced capacity and remote service delivery, continued to support almost half a million Victorians this year– with 476,511 contacts recorded across the membership.

Greater resources to meet greater need

Our strong and trusted relationship with the federal Department of Social Services coupled with generous cash injections by the Morrison Coalition government has delivered a 124% increase to our Emergency Relief & Financial Counselling consortia funding this year. This funding has been critical for our services to ensure they have the resources and flexibility to support the vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and families presenting to their services every day.

Our voice is getting louder

The service delivery of our members directly informs our advocacy and representation and we've increased our capacity to focus on an increasing number of areas and issues. We are preparing more submissions, writing more letters to members of parliament and decision makers, attracting more media, and partnering with key stakeholders, speaking loud and clear about the issues impacting our community and our members. We've been able to actively advocate on more than our 3 primary advocacy issues of school costs, housing, and inadequate welfare payments, responding to our members calls for action on other issues including energy hardship and affordable dental treatment. We'll add to this in the next financial year family violence, climate change, sector workforce needs, and the plight of asylum seekers and refugees. Our social media engagement has increased significantly, and this provides a broader platform for us to speak of our experiences, share our client's stories, call for action and promote our causes.

Working for Victoria worked for us

The Andrews Government COVID response initiative, Working for Victoria, was a game changer for our sector, delivering much needed professional staff to our local centres whose predominantly volunteer workforce had been inordinately diminished during the global pandemic.

We were able to place over 50 full-time staff – the majority of whom went into direct service roles as support workers and case workers, in our local centres to support the community and indeed, the existing staff.

As evidenced in our evaluation of this project, Working for Victoria delivered broad sector benefit. You'll find a summary of this evaluation in the body of this report. We employed some terrific workers who enhanced our services and provided comprehensive, holistic support to people in need.

This project was a huge undertaking for us, and it couldn't have happened without the exceptional and steadfast project team and the Department's support. Finally, this project demonstrated the value of dedicated, paid staff in a sector so reliant on volunteers. COVID has exposed the vulnerability of a predominantly volunteer workforce, and we need to shore up the sustainability of our critical sector by adequately resourcing each and every local centre.

We surveyed you, and then surveyed you some more

We conducted both our bi-annual Volunteer Census and our annual Member's Satisfaction survey during this financial year. Both reports help us understand our workforce and your needs consistently and comprehensively, and we're grateful to all who have taken the time to participate in these surveys. We've included summary reports for each in the body of this report.

The branches are out

While the operations of the 3 CISVic branches and the op shop remain firmly under the governance of CISVic, we've extracted their reports from this document and will instead, publish standalone operational reports for each. These will be available on our website. The standalone reports will allow us to publish more detailed accounts, giving each branch the credit and respect, it deserves.

Change it is a-coming

Lockdown has given us the opportunity to consider and test new ways of working, and we've decided to formally adopt a hybrid working model for the city team. This will see the actual closure of a permanent city office, with staff continuing to work both from home and at local branches, coupled with monthly city-based team days. The team has demonstrated during this period that this is a productive and viable model and money saved on a city-rental will be reinvested into building staffing capacity.

In addition to this, and in recognition of our evolution over 50 years, we have commenced a brand refresh, and aim to launch an updated logo, new assets and branding architecture early 2022. We're continuing to consult with members about this, and we look forward to both launching our new look as we celebrate 50 years of service in early 2021.

Thanks all round

Our team is extraordinary – each individual worker brings a unique set of skills, experience, passion, and commitment that adds value and supports the very foundation of our organisation and work. I'm so proud of all that we've achieved in such challenging times, and in fact one of the most challenging years of my professional life. The team have remained steadfast in achieving our goals and are ready to go where we need to.

I am grateful to the Board, who continue to govern with critical analysis, diligence, and care. They have never failed me when I've required guidance and support.

I'm grateful to our members; you are our core business, you frame our work, and you trust us with your client's stories, your agencies experiences, and your data. Without your engagement and trust, we would be irrelevant.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and express our gratitude to our funding bodies; State Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, the Federal Department of Social Services, City of Glen Eira, City of Moreland, City of Yarra Ranges, Telstra, and philanthropic foundations, Australian Communities Foundation and & RE Ross Trust.

Kate Wheller

Membership: Connecting & Convening

CISVic members

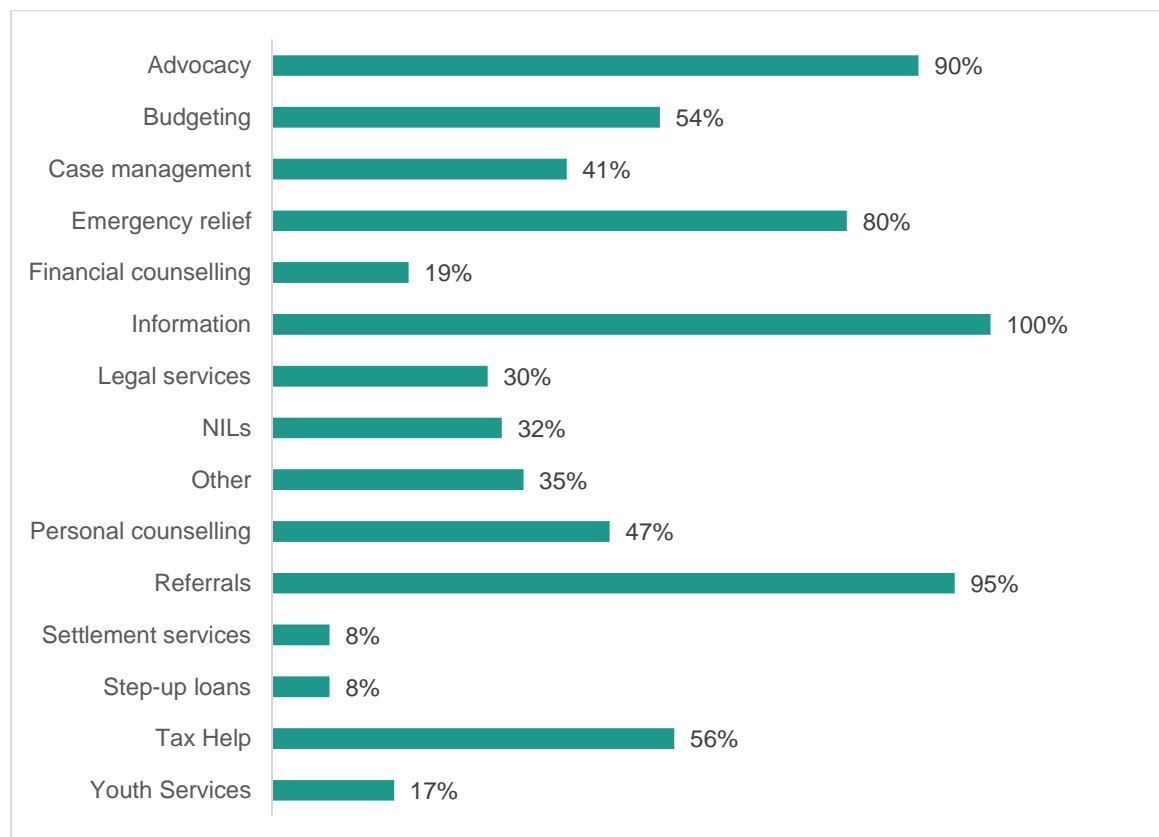
Our members are independent, autonomous, community-based information & support services. They are diverse in their size and scope. We have **53 member agencies (full and associate) delivering service from 61 sites**. CISVic now operates **3 branches**, all which were previously independently run member agencies.

We also have **3 individual members**; individuals from outside the CISVic membership who serve on the Board.

Collective contacts

We had a collective 476,511 individual contacts during this reporting period.

Services our members offer



Keeping members informed

We use a variety of platforms to share news, information and resources with our members and enable us to maintain open dialogue.

Newsletters



Twenty-four (24) standard editions and three (3) special editions of our **e-bulletin** produced.

1 edition of ***Informed***, our **policy and practice newsletter** which focused on research and what the sector learnt from our response to COVID-19.

Social media



We have significantly built our social media presence during the financial year and now have 7 active platforms: Facebook (CISVic page and one for each branch), Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The addition of newer platforms provides the opportunity for us to broaden our audience and tailor content accordingly.

Our increased presence can be directly attributed to the employment of our Media and Communications Officer in May 2020 who has helped us to strategically plan content & campaigns that are targeted, engaging, and professional.

Some key highlights:

- Growth in followers - CISVic's Facebook page followers increased by 89%.
- Increased activity - we made 733 posts across all 7 platforms.
- Stronger engagement – we have increased our reach, reactions, and comments.

Focus areas

Three key advocacy areas informed the bulk of the social media content (School Costs, Raise the Rate, and Housing). We also ran several campaigns where content was specifically created and posted over several weeks. These were:

- *What is Emergency Relief* (Aug to Nov 2020) – content discussing Emergency Relief and other services agencies provide. Created to raise awareness about the services available to the community and promote the CISVic sector generally. The campaign included videos, posters, case studies, infographics, and tiles.
- *International Student Support* (Nov 2020) – to raise awareness about the plight of International Students going without Governmental support during the pandemic and advocate on their behalf. Secondary aim to let International Students know about the support available to them through agencies.
- *Volunteer Census* (May 2021) - launch of the census report during National Volunteer Week. Saw the creation of our first stakeholder pack that included content for others to use.
- *Working for Victoria* (May to June 2021) - highlight the WfV initiative and its impact which coincided with the wrap-up of the initiative.
- *COVID-19 Report* (June 2021) - Virtual launch of report 'Change & Resilience during COVID-19'.

Networks, Roundtables & Consultations

Regional Networks: Given the state of Victoria was in and out of lockdown during this financial year, we decided against conducting the standard regional network meetings. Instead, we conducted regular State-wide Member's Meetings via a digital platform. These provided vital open, constant dialogue with members enabling the opportunity to share news, raise issues in real time.

We conducted **16 digital member's meetings** during this period.

Regional Network meetings will recommence in the next financial year.

Case Workers Network: These meetings are aimed to provide professional development for all generalist caseworkers across the membership. Four meetings were conducted during this period with a positive increase in new members.

Energy Mentors Community of Practice: Our sector and energy hardship have long gone hand in hand, with emergency relief providing an essential role in supporting our community's most vulnerable to manage bill stress. We have an important voice in the conversation of essential services. Throughout COVID, CISVic increased engagement with the Essential Services Commission (ESC) through community roundtable meetings, and the state Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) through consumer-advocate forums. To ensure our advocacy is directly informed from work with clients, we developed a community of practice for our Energy Mentors. These workers provide specialist, one-on-one support to enable

those experiencing bill stress to understand and take control of their energy bills. Two Energy Mentors meetings were conducted during this period.

Roundtables: This meeting format promotes the cross-agency sharing of expertise amongst member agencies. In this period, we conducted 1 roundtable focusing on Volunteer Support.

Agency support

CISVic continues to conduct a range of formal and informal activities to support individual agencies as required. These activities include the provision of information, advice, and support, writing letters of support, acting as referees, facilitating merger discussions, co-opting onto boards, advocacy, developing governance policies and procedures, governance training and strategic plan development.

Contacts

In this reporting period, we had an average of **12 phone calls with individual agencies each week (over 700 this year)** and provided **intensive support to 1 member agency**.

Specific supports

- **TAFE student placements**

To enhance workforce capacity for members we facilitated 2 rounds of placements:

- 5 students across 3 agencies in March 2021
- 10 students across 5 agencies in May 2021
- Students attended a 2-day online general induction training and a follow-up online session - 'Job Readiness'

- **Volunteer Recruitment**

We supported 7 individual agencies with online volunteer recruitment.

New Factsheets

We produced 3 new factsheets:

- *Online CSW Course* (Feb 2021)
- *New Rental Laws* (May 2021)
- *Recognising Retiring Volunteers* (June 2021)

Emergency Relief program

Emergency Relief is delivered in the form of food parcels, food vouchers, travel cards, pharmaceutical assistance, swags for rough sleepers, vouchers for showers, op shop vouchers for second-hand goods, knitted good, toiletries, and assistance with household bills (utilities, medical bills, education costs).

Our Emergency Relief (ER) program is funded by the Federal Department of Social Services and we are mid-way through a 4.5-year contract. During this period, we have:

- Welcomed numerous COVID-related funding increases to the ER program during this reporting period, representing a 124% overall increase
- Maintained deep engagement with the department, through both regular meetings with our contract managers and the state ER sub-committee
- Experienced peaks and troughs in demand - impacted by a range of things; increases & subsequent decreases to Jobseeker, the Jobkeeper initiative, and lockdowns in different areas
- Enhanced the capacity of centres to deliver programs following workforce reductions (with loss of many volunteers) and remote service delivery
- Provided support to many clients who have never had to access such services before

In this financial year, service delivery continued to evolve to meet the needs of the client group, to work within the changing landscape i.e., access to food, remote service delivery, low volunteer numbers, Working for Victoria staff, increased reporting, increased food donations, closure of multiple sites and consolidation of service delivery to one site.

An overwhelming increase in the number of international students seeking support triggered a new mandatory data collection field in our CRM and a successful approach to philanthropy for additional funding to support this cohort.

The Department of Social Services introduced new and increased reporting on both financials and agency insights on the delivery of emergency relief. While these have imposed an administrative burden, they have enabled the department access to live data and a deeper knowledge of community need and agency responses.

As a response to both this engagement and ongoing COVID impact, DSS increased funding multiple times throughout the year:

Agencies reported seeing changing patterns in the emergency relief space. At times requests for food relief were greater than that of vouchers and other forms of ER, however this changed throughout the course of the year.

Many agencies reported increased donations in non-perishable food donations and financial donations. Examples of this include the donation of cooked meals from the RACV, wineries, local churches, and community groups, etc.

The demographics and demand for service varied so much across the consortia, where some agencies reported seeing an increase in new clients, other reported seeing fewer clients more frequently.

CISVic had more than 45 phone calls and zoom meetings with DSS during the year. Considerable time spent developing and maintaining relationship with changing DSS staff. Time spent with DSS was used to help promote the work of the CISVic consortia, build the reputation of CISVic and ensure that DSS have a better understanding of the issues faced by agencies delivering ER and those seeking assistance.

ER FY21 funding

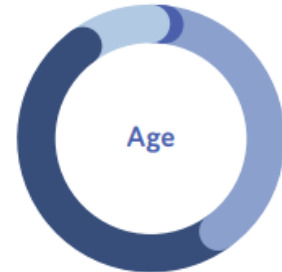
Date	Description	Total (exc GST)
2/07/2020	ER COVID Additional Funding	\$ 861,444.85
	ER SACS COVID Additional Funding	\$ 57,966.62
15/07/2020	ER Jul Milestone	\$ 975,702.38
	ER Jul SACS	\$ 65,655.02
28/09/2020	ER COVID Additional funding	\$ 430,722.43
	ER SACS COVID Additional funding	\$ 28,983.31
1/12/2020	ER Dec Milestone	\$ 975,702.38
	ER Dec SACS	\$ 65,655.02
22/01/2021	ER Indexation	\$ 66,862.93
	ER SACS Indexation	\$ 4,499.21
17/05/2021	ER COVID Additional funding	\$ 794,772.00
	ER SACS Supp Additional funding	\$ 53,480.21
	TOTAL	\$ 4,381,446.36

Our ER clients

During this period, we helped 20,394 emergency relief clients.



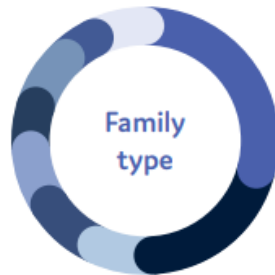
- 1% Intersex/other
- 60% Female
- 39% Male



- 2% 0-19 y.o.
- 38% 20-39 y.o.
- 50% 40-64 y.o.
- 10% 65 y.o. +



- 37% Private rental
- 23% Public housing
- 13% Homeless
- 5% Own home (no mortgage)
- 17% Not stated/
Inadequately described



- 29% Single
- 20% Single parent
- 8% Group (related adults)
- 9% Couple with children
- 8% Group (unrelated)
- 6% Couple
- 8% Group (related)
- 5% No household/Homeless
- 7% Not stated/
Inadequate description



- 39% No food
- 9% Utility bills
- 11% Housing bills
- 4% Transport costs
- 10% Other
- 4% Medical costs
- 2% Relationship issues
- 5% COVID related
- 6% Material aid
- 1% Family Violence
- 2% Education costs
- 7% Dept, changes in income,
no income

Financial Counselling

Our Financial Counselling (FC) program is delivered by just one member agency: Bendigo Family & Financial Services.

Once again, this has been a second very challenging and demanding year for the FC program. Client referrals continued to grow especially from local mental health and family violence agencies with presentations of complex issues requiring an immediate response time for appointments. The financial counselling team has seen an increase in clients presenting with multiple debts: utilities, short term loans, rental and mortgage arrears, outstanding rates and fines, and debt collection processes. Over the year the team have achieved some life changing waivers, reduced payment arrangements and asset protection for clients, and this is what keeps the workers going: striving for the best results they can achieve for the clients.

FC FY21 funding

Funding to the program was also bolstered during this financial year allowing additional hours for workers to respond to growing demand.

Date	Description	Total (exc GST)
2/07/2020	FC COVID Additional funding	\$ 27,282.70
	FC SACs COVID Additional funding	\$ 4,895.61
15/07/2021	FC Jul Milestone	\$ 55,715.50
	FC Jul SACs	\$ 9,997.59
1/12/2020	FC Dec Milestone	\$ 67,565.93
22/01/2021	FC Indexation	\$ 3,141.90
	FC SACS Indexation	\$ 563.78
	TOTAL	\$ 169,163.01

Our FC clients

During this period,
we supported
433 clients.



- 36.4% Female
- 63.6% Male



- 1% 0-19 y.o.
- 38% 20-39 y.o.
- 46% 40-64 y.o.
- 15% 65 y.o. +



- 39% Single
- 26% Single parent
- 10% Group (related adults)
- 9% Couple with children
- 8% Group (unrelated)
- 7% Couple
- 1% Other



- 82% Govt. payment
- 8% Wages
- 6% Not stated/inadequately described
- 4% No income

Financial Counselling Case Study 1

Client –A 42-year-old mother with teenage children aged 16 and 17. Client and children left the family home due to Family Violence. Client is working part-time and receives Centrelink payments. Client was referred to our Financial Counselling Team from local Secondary College. Client is struggling with depression and anxiety over her financial position. Upon advising the client about mental health care plans, the client contacted her GP who has now completed a mental health plan and the client is waiting to see a counsellor. Client had many outstanding debts Baycorp - \$3,907.71, Orthodontics \$4,416.00 for her children, Outstanding school fees from previous education - \$17,000 and a Money 3 loan \$4,392.00. The client explained to the financial counsellor that it was important to her to keep the children's orthodontic work going. The Financial Counsellor applied to the Walter and Eliza Trust Fund for \$2,500 for assistance with the orthodontic work and received the grant. The client is now in affordable regular fortnightly payments for remaining outstanding balance as well as work that is yet to be completed. Financial Counsellor wrote letter along with supporting documents to Baycorp and had the debt waived and removed from client's credit file. Financial Counsellor referred client to in-house NILS program for a new computer for one of the children. This was approved and client now able to repay loan at an affordable amount per fortnight. Financial Counsellor is still working on the other outstanding debts advocating on the client's behalf.

Financial Counselling Case Study 2

Client - 38-year-old mother of two children, a boy aged 7 and girl aged 5 with autism 5. Was financially secure, working full-time in a professional job until having to leave small rural town due to Family Violence. She relocated to a bigger town, however now she is struggling financially, emotionally, and physically, is unable to work and has taken 2yrs without pay leave while concentrating on herself and children recovering from the abuse. Client now receives Centrelink payments as sole source of income support, as well as a small monthly child support payment. Client is proactive in her recovery and the children's recovery and has support of family and professionals in Family Violence. Financially she has a mortgage and a line of credit. The Financial Counsellor is advocating with the Bank for a full waiver on the line of credit on compassionate grounds and 3month moratorium on fees, charges, and interest. Client has managed to pay her mortgage every month however is struggling to pay back the line of credit. Financial Counsellor referred client to in-house emergency relief department for food parcels fortnightly for the next 3 months while assisting her financial situation.

Volunteer Management Program

Changes to Funding

A redesigned to the VMA funding (federal funding for volunteer support) has changed the key focus of volunteer support provided under this contract. Changes include work to break down barriers to volunteering for identified priority groups (people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and newly arrived migrants) and provision of face-to-face services to support these groups to participate in volunteering. The program will continue to build the capacity of organisations offering volunteering positions.

COVID significantly impacted on volunteering – with many organisations putting a hold on existing programs, lockdowns, and volunteer’s own concerns about exposure risks. However, we continued to deliver a service which achieved the following:

- **2,302 volunteer referrals made**
- **118 face-to-face interviews conducted**
- **19,105 views of our volunteer videos**
- **2,143 website visits by 1,639 unique website visitors**

VSO Funding:

In November 2020, VOB was successful in receiving funding from Volunteering Victoria to provide targeted practical assistance with engaging volunteers, in the context of COVID-19.

The following project was delivered:

- Development of a guide profiling local evidence-informed strategies, practices or programs that supported engagement and retainment of volunteers through the pandemic - Profiling positive & proactive practice
<https://www.cisvic.org.au/sites/default/files/Profiling%20Positive%20%26%20Proactive%20Practice.pdf>
- Partnership with local RTO to deliver local digital literacy and skills training to volunteers.
- 300 volunteer involving organisations contact (via phone) to check-in and identify individual support needed post COVID.

Telstra Bill Assistance Program

The Telstra Bill Assistance Program provides an allocation of phone cards and vouchers which CISVic distributes to members throughout Melbourne and regional Victoria. It’s a program which assists disadvantaged individuals and families to remain connected with families, friends, and support services.

\$325,000 Telstra vouchers & phone cards distributed to help disadvantaged people stay connected. This comprised of \$275,000 vouchers and \$50,000 phone cards.

Better Access Better Education Program

Following the success of our Better Access Better Education (BABE) pilot in early 2019/2020, we launched Phase 2. This phase saw the broadening of the program from 3 to 17 member agencies, allowing them to make direct applications for State School Relief (SSR) assistance for families in need. This streamlined the process, especially as many families approach CISVic member agencies as the 'first port of call' when experiencing financial hardship and face barriers accessing SSR via their school.

During the reporting period, **17 agencies made 327 direct referrals to State School Relief.**

No Interest Loan Partnership with Good Shepherd

CISVic worked in partnership with Good Shepherd to enhance community access and engagement with safe, fair, and affordable credit by actively promoting NILs to the CISVic membership and supporting member agencies to become a NILS provider. As a result:

- 4 member agencies signed on as NILs providers
- We have embedded NILs information into the CSW training
- Good Shepherd conducted introduction to NILs to CISVIC partners, a total of 5 sessions were undertaken with an average of 35 attending each session.
- Good Shepherd Communications Officer delivered Social Media training to CISVic member agencies – approximately 15 agencies attended.

Supporting International Students

Funding of \$32,000 provided by the Australian Communities Foundation enabled CISVic members to distribute a 6-week support package of \$50 per week, paid by weekly instalments directly to the bank account of 98 international students who had no income. This was a critical support program for students who were effectively left destitute during lockdowns with reduced employment opportunities and absolutely no government support.

Member agencies made referrals to CISVic, who acted as broker and created 6 weekly payments of \$50 (total of \$300.00) paid directly to student's bank accounts.

These payments provided a reliable, albeit short-term, source of financial support for a period time and enabled agencies to engage with the client just once, rather than every week.

Professional Services

Our annual training program aims to ensure that our workforce has access to free/low cost, quality, relevant training to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to do their important and at times challenging work.

Accredited training

We deliver our nationally accredited training for our *Community Support Workers Course (CSW course)* under the auspice of The Salvation Army's registered training organisation Eva Burrows College.

The COVID pandemic all but shut down the delivery of face-to-face training programs, but we continued delivery of several online courses.

The development of the online *CSW Course* ensured our member agencies could continue to recruit new volunteers as required while we were in lockdown. It was also an opportunity for us review and refine content, ensuring it would be interesting and engaging. We continue to offer trainer-led classes (via videoconferencing), although as much of the material is available for participants to consume in their own time and at their own pace, actual class times has been reduced.

We trialled a night-time delivery *CSW Course* but found the participant numbers were not sustained and have no plans plan any future sessions at this stage.

Once COVID restrictions allow, we will offer both online and face-to-face training sessions, maximising accessibility.

Feedback from online CSW Course participant

'When I first started the course, I was quite nervous learning on-line. However, (I) have found the class to be very interactive and easy to navigate.'

Non-accredited training

The delivery of non-accredited training was heavily reduced during this period due the pandemic restrictions in movement and density quotients, when possible, we conducted videoconferencing or online training sessions, facilitated access to other training from other providers or delivered limited face-to-face content.

Training delivered

Course	Sessions	Participants
Community Support Workers (CSW) Course	10	113
CDS Portal Training	online	165 views
CSW Refresher	1	12
ER Training for non-CISVic members	2	20
Helping clients with tenancy issues (in partnership with Tenants Victoria and VCOSS)	1	34
Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training	online	105 views
Introduction to EWOV	1	36
Working with Interpreters	online	233 views

Student Placement Program

The CISVic student program is a partnership with RMIT where CISVic employs a qualified social worker to provide professional supervision to students on placement in our member agencies. Supervision is provided in both a group setting and individually to students, all of whom are following a learning plan specific to the opportunities available at their placement agency. RMIT provides support by matching students to our agencies and through regular liaison meetings.

In semester two, 2020, the student program was greatly impacted by COVID lockdowns and the decision by RMIT to withdraw all students from placements that could not be undertaken remotely. As our agencies could not provide work for a remote student, only CISVic offered a semester two placement. The program proceeded in a highly modified way, without the provision of group supervision and with only two students. By semester one, 2021, RMIT had reviewed our program and granted permission for students to undertake on-site placements, given that our member agencies are essential services. This enabled the program to return fully this year, though some students are doing telephone, rather than face to face work with service users.

Students continue to highlight the usefulness of group and individual supervision as key to their learning. They feel well supported by task supervisors and develop a sound understanding of the Emergency Relief sector, a sector that students have commonly not heard of before placement.

While agency-based students mainly undertake E.R interviews, they value the opportunity to do more complex casework where possible. Along with the emergency relief interviews, student tasks have included activities such as completing research projects and undertaking policy review and development.

- Semester 2, 2020: **2 students** began placement. One chose to withdraw some weeks in due to family circumstances.
- Semester 1, 2021, **6 students** completed a placement
- In 2020-2021, **3 agencies** participated in the program, across **4 sites**

Working for Victoria

In March 2020, the Victoria Government announced a \$1.7 billion economic survival and jobs package including a \$500 million Working for Victoria (WfV) Fund. This was to help people losing their job due to COVID-19, and employers looking for suitable employees. CISVic successfully applied for \$2.1 million of WfV funding so that member agencies could employ staff, at a time when most had lost most of their volunteer workforce due to the pandemic.

Over the next 12 months, from July 2020, 56 staff were recruited to help deliver support services at local centres. Most staff were employed for ER, community support worker, case work and the provision of food and groceries. All staff were employed on a temporary basis, usually about 6-months.

The specific aims of the project for us were to:

- Delivery information, referral, advocacy, and support services in local centres to people in need, particularly those affected by COVID-19
- Build a back-up workforce
- Meet immediate needs of the members and respond to community needs

We seconded our case worker from CIS Glen Eira to head up the project, and this role, her performance and that of her project team were critical to the success of the program.

Member agencies were either hosts for CISVic employed staff, or they directly employed (and hosted) staff under sub-contract with CISVic.

Key activities	Deliverables
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We created and posted 57 job ads and reviewed more than 1850 applications before shortlisting 260 candidates for our positions. • The team conducted almost 300 phone screening interviews, coordinated, and held over 170 panel interviews with member agencies and completed more than 115 reference checks • Successfully recruited and onboarded 14 full-time Case Workers, 35 full-time Support Workers, 4 Administrators, and 3 Project Coordinators • Working for Victoria staff were employed across 25 of our member agencies and branches. They were predominantly metro sites, with one regional site. A number of staff worked remotely from home while most were based onsite.
Addressing employment disadvantage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63% of staff were experiencing employment disadvantage and assessed as priority jobseekers. Furthermore: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 46% of our recruits were aged over 45 years ○ 43% of these recruits were women aged over 45 years, with 46% of these women aged between 50 and 60 years, and 21% above the age of 60 ○ 7% of recruits were classified as young people aged under 25, with 20% aged between 25 to 29 years ○ 3 recruits were newly arrived migrants from a CALD background

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2 individuals were previously employed under the Working for Victoria initiative
Graduate opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We recruited 7 new Social Work graduates within the project who secured their first paid position. ● 5 of these were offered extended employment with their agencies on completion of their Working for Victoria contracts.
Pathways to employment for volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 29% of our staff were existing volunteers working within a CISVic member agency, winning the roles on merit, and providing them with a pathway into community services employment.
Intensive training & support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 14 people undertook a condensed version of CISVic's <i>Working for Victoria Community Support Worker</i> training which was accredited. This included the following key learning components: <i>Interpersonal Communication, Interview and Client Assessment, Agency Procedures, Practice Guidelines, Ethics and The Law, and Complex Situations.</i> ● 17 of the staff who were assessed for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), completed <i>Emergency Relief Support Worker</i> training, which covered three of the key learning components: <i>Assisting Clients, Guiding Practice and Complex Situations.</i> ● We planned and delivered 8 group supervision sessions with themed discussions and guest presenters.
Positive employment experiences	<p>CISVic wanted to ensure that this employment experience would positively lead to further employment outcomes for participants. Of the 56 staff recruited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 75% have obtained further employment ● 68% have secured ongoing work in the <i>community services sector</i> with 43% extended at their current organisation and 25% gaining roles in new organisations. 3 of our staff moved into other Working for Victoria funded positions. ● 7% have secured new roles outside of the community services sector (administration, fashion, retail). ● 9% have started or continued with formal studies in the sector (Social Work).

Finally, we conducted a formal evaluation of the project to assess the value of the project against the WfV aims, its general value and to make recommendations for future program design and implementation. Overall, we found that the project was highly successful in increasing the capacity of agencies to meet individual and community needs and enhanced with improved employment outcomes for recruits. The project also clearly demonstrated how invaluable and necessary paid support staff are to our sector, with a clear recommendation that the state government provides ongoing funding for professional support staff at every CISVic agency.

A summary of this evaluation is included overpage.

WORKING FOR VICTORIA EVALUATION



The aim of this evaluation was to assess the value of the project against the Working for Victoria (WfV) aims, its value in general, and to make recommendations for future program design and implementation.

Key findings



Increased agency capacity to meet individual and community needs:

- The WfV project was evidently very successful, enabling 25 member agencies to continue supporting local communities under the difficult circumstances of the pandemic, even with the loss of the usual volunteer workforce.
- All agency managers (100%) agreed that 'employing staff through WfV funding enabled our agency to address critical needs in the community during the COVID-19 crisis'.
- The vast majority of WfV employees (92.3%) agreed with the statement 'I believe I added to my agency's capacity to deliver support services to vulnerable clients during the pandemic'.

Improved employment outcomes for recruits:

- The WfV project surpassed expectations in enhancing the employment prospects of the 56 recruits. Many were actively supported into ongoing employment on completion of their contracts, despite two thirds experiencing 'employment disadvantage' prior to recruitment for the project.
- In the WfV Employee Exit Survey, 88.5% agreed that ongoing training while in the WfV position provided them with opportunities to develop professionally.
- In their comments, WfV employees expressed feeling supported, working as a team, seeing positive outcomes for people assisted, having a good learning experience, and gaining knowledge about local communities and organisations.
- In the Manager Survey, 96% agreed that WfV staff became more employable, and 92% agreed that WfV employees developed new skills.

Background

In March 2020, the Victorian Government announced a \$1.7 billion economic survival and jobs package, including a \$500 million Working for Victoria Fund (WfV). This was to help people losing their job due to COVID-19, and employers looking for suitable employees. CISVic successfully applied for WfV funding so that interested member agencies could employ staff, at a time when most had lost the majority of their volunteer workforce due to the pandemic.

Over the next six months from July 2020, 56 staff were recruited to help deliver support services at local member agencies. Most staff were employed for emergency relief, community support work, case work, and the provision of food and groceries. All staff were employed on a temporary basis, usually about six months.

Specific project aims were to:

1. deliver information, referral, advocacy and support services in local centres to people in need, particularly those affected by COVID-19
2. build a backup workforce
3. meet immediate needs and respond to community needs.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in the WfV project. It has been an amazing experience and entry into paid work in the industry I am most passionate about."

- WfV employee survey

Factors underpinning the success of the project:

- the provision of the funding by the Victorian Government
- the trusting relationships, commitment, good will, collegiality and flexible responsiveness of all involved, including CISVic staff, the WfV team, managers at member agencies, and the new recruits
- the high quality and skill level of WfV staff, including members of the WfV team itself, notably mature women with years of training and experience.

Difficulties encountered in the project:

- the very short time frame, low level of resourcing for such a large recruitment, and some overly bureaucratic processes.

"The WfV project allowed our agency to continue to operate, and not only that, to grow and develop its services to meet the need of the community that was in desperate need of an agency like ours."
- Manager survey

CISVic sector is critical and under-resourced

Finally, the WfV project highlighted the vital nature of the support that CISVic member agencies provide in their local area. While COVID showed us how fragile volunteer-reliant services are, the WfV project demonstrated how absolutely valuable and necessary paid support staff are too - not just during a crisis but in general. Resourcing for professional staff would assist agencies to address the increasingly complex issues of people seeking help, and ensure the ongoing sustainability of the agencies themselves.

Thus, a key recommendation from this evaluation is that the state government provides funding for professional support staff at every CISVic member agency.



Evaluation Design

The evaluation activities gathered both quantitative and qualitative data and included the following.

1. Integration of basic personnel data
2. WfV employee exit survey (N=27)
3. CISVic member manager survey (N=26, from 25 agencies)
4. CISVic staff focus group (including two branch Managers) (N=6)
5. WfV team focus group (+ one interview) (N=4)

Employment Outcomes

Post-project the employment outcomes for exiting staff were impressive. Toward the end of the project, of the 56 staff recruited:

- 75% obtained further employment
- 68% secured ongoing work in the community services sector (with 43% at their current organisation, and 25% in new organisations)
- 7% secured new roles outside the community services sector (i.e., administration, fashion, retail)
- 9% started or continued with formal studies in the sector (i.e., Social Work).

"I was able to learn a lot and gain more hands-on experience in assisting vulnerable clients. My agency and its members supported me well through their advice, encouragement and mentoring which helped me confidently grow in my role."

- WfV employee survey

Advocacy, Research & Data

Our **Advocacy Working Group** continues to provide guidance to the team around key focus areas and specific related campaigns. While we remain focused on three key areas, over the course of the year, we've had capacity to broaden our support to other important issues.

Primary areas of advocacy 2020-21:

- Housing and homelessness
- Centrelink payment levels
- School costs

Secondary areas of advocacy:

- Affordable dental treatment
- Utilities and energy
- CIS sector (e.g., WfV, ER, ongoing funding for sector)
- Advocacy for people struggling during COVID-19

Moving into the new financial year, we are looking to also focus on the following:

- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Family violence (collaborations in development)
- Climate change
- Revitalisation of members' Advocacy Working Group with the Origami house campaign

Activities summary:

- 5 radio interviews
- 37 letters to politicians
- 4 joint-signatory to letters to politicians
- Various meetings, phone calls with politicians
- Campaign action, coordination, and resourcing on key ongoing issues (see issues above)

Media (other than social media):

We were either directly interviewed or facilitated interview on social media.

Topics	Activity	Date
International students	Facilitated interview of community leader with Rafael Epstein on ABC Drive (radio)	Nov 2020
	SCR radio, Branch Coordinator interviewed on 'Think Again'	Nov 2020
Housing	Facilitated client interview for 3CR ' <i>Housing and homelessness: one man's story</i> '	Aug 2020
Centrelink payments	EO Interviewed on 3CR re need to retain COVID supplement to Jobseeker	Jul 2020
Sector advocacy	Interviewed on 3CR about agencies seeing increasing numbers of people in financial stress and with complex issues	Jun 2021

Letters to politicians:

We wrote **37 letters about 10 issues** to state and federal government members of parliament:

Topics	Activity	Date
Housing	Homelessness Week - Letter Tim Wilson MP	Aug 2020
	Thank-you letters to Victorian Premier and to Minister for housing for substantial commitment to public, social, and affordable housing over next few years. (Response received from Vic Minister for Housing, Richard Wynne 9/2/21).	Nov 2020
	Letter re homelessness along the peninsula to MPs for Dunkley, Mornington, Flinders, Frankston, Nepean, Hastings	Dec 2020
Centrelink payments	Letters with Centrelink case studies to Anne Ruston, Josh Frydenberg, PM	Jul 2020
	Emails to Anne Ruston, Josh Frydenberg, letter via website to Prime Minister	Sept 2020
	Letters to four female federal ministers with new positions - Senator the Hon Marise Payne Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Anne Ruston Minister for Women's Safety, Senator the Hon Jane Hume Minister for Women's Economic Security, Senator the Hon Amanda Stoker Assistant Minister for Women	Mar 2021
	Email & electronic greeting card sent to all members of Expenditure Review Committee (9)	Nov 2020
	Emails to Anne Ruston, Josh Frydenberg, letter via website to Prime Minister	Sept 2020
	Letters to four female federal ministers with new positions - Senator the Hon Marise Payne Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Anne Ruston Minister for Women's Safety, Senator the Hon Jane Hume Minister for Women's Economic Security, Senator the Hon Amanda Stoker Assistant Minister for Women	Mar 2021
	Email & electronic greeting card sent to all members of Expenditure Review Committee (9)	Nov 2020
Sector advocacy	CISVic cosignatory to letter from VCOSS to Vic Treasurer Pallas, seeking urgent intervention to resolve a looming crisis in Victoria's community sector	Jun 2021
International students	Email sent to Alan Tudge, Simon Birmingham and Dan Tehan via Get Up platform and invitation to do the same - posted on Facebook	Nov 2020
Legislation to loosen safe lending	Letter opposing axing of responsible lending laws to Senators: Henderson, Hume, McKenzie, Paterson, Ryan, Van	Nov 2020

Signatory to joint letters:

Topics	Activity	Date
Housing	Signing of open letter re housing crisis to Prime Minister	Sept 2020
Housing (services)	CISVic signed letter by Homelessness Australia asking the government to commit to ERO supplementation funding for homelessness services from mid-year.	Feb 2021
Centrelink payments	CISVic logo on 'Raise the Rate for good' one-page statement in The Age	July 2020
Legislation to loosen safe lending	CISVic logo on an open letter to save safe lending (organised by FCA and CALC)	Nov 2020
Volunteer Support Services	Joined <i>Save our Volunteer Support Services</i> campaign with key volunteer services with letters to state and federal MPs	Jul-Dec 2020

Other communication with politicians:

Topics	Activity	Date
Centrelink payments	Called Prime Minister's office to express our deep disappointment about reduction in JobSeeker payments at end of March with only new \$50 pfm on old rate.	Feb 2021

Meeting with politicians:

We either met with or facilitated meetings with MPs

Topics	Activity	Date
Housing	Meeting with Peta Murphy MP (Labor) Federal Member for Dunkley (Frankston)	Jan 2021
Dental	Facilitated CISVic member being part of VOHA delegation in meeting with four Victorian MPs including Pauline Richards MLA.	Feb-Mar 2021

Participation in cross-sector advocacy:

Topics	Activity	Date
Energy	Energy Consumer Advocates Forum – DELWP	5 meetings
	Essential Services Commission (ESC) community roundtable meetings	Quarterly
	Energy & Water Ombudsman Victoria Community Consultation meetings	5 meetings
	VCOSS – Utilities working group	6 meetings
	Advocacy with FCVic, VCOSS and Consumer Action Law Centre on URG reform	Jun 2020
	'Water for Life' Strategy stakeholder consultation (50yr Urban Water Security plan)	May 2021
	ESC -Public forum for the draft strategy on vulnerability	11/5/21
	Essential Services Commission Stakeholder Survey 2021	4/6/21
	VCOSS member consultation current issues in energy hardship and bill stress	7/6/21
	EWOV Energy Vulnerability Roundtable (included retailers)	9/6/21
Advocacy (Some Centrelink payments missed in Power Saving Bonus) email to Victorian Energy Compare Branch, DELWP	22/6/21	

Policy Submissions were made to both state and federal government concerning relevant issues:

1. *Submission to Federal Senate Inquiry into the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Strengthening Income Support) Bill 2021* (March 2021)
2. *Submission to Victorian Government 10 year social and affordable housing consultations* (April 2021)
3. Co-signatory to VOHA's (Victoria Oral Health Alliance) *Submission to the Inquiry into Regional Australia* (November 2020)
4. Co-signatory to VOHA's (Victoria Oral Health Alliance) *Budget Submission on public oral health services* (February 2021)
5. Co-signatory to CSMC Submission to Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights: *'Parents Next: examination of Social Security (Parenting payment participation requirements - class of persons) instrument 2021'*

Research projects:

1. *Emergency Relief: Helping people in need* (Report September 2020)
2. *Implications of COVID-19 for CISVic member agencies and communities: A thematic analysis* (Report November 2020)
3. *Evaluation of 'Better Access Better Education': Pilot project for CISVic member agencies to refer directly to State Schools' Relief* (Report December 2020)

4. *Change and resilience during COVID-19: How CISVic member agencies experienced the pandemic and adapted to support local communities* (Report March 2021)
5. *More than a bandaid: Emergency Relief in Victoria* (Report May 2021, produced in collaboration with VCOSS)
6. *Volunteer Census 2020* (Report May 2021)
7. *Evaluation of CISVic Working for Victoria project* (Report June 2021)



A policy and practice newsletter for the community information and support sector

Policy and Practice newsletter *Informed*:

1. *Informed 2021 Winter: Change and Resilience during COVID-19, a CISVic research project*

Change and resilience during COVID-19, a CISVic research project

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to change the way people live and work. CISVic's role as a peak body includes advocacy to governments on behalf of agencies and communities supported by solid research, and obtaining funding to deliver the best quality services. Early in the first COVID lockdown in March 2020, CISVic recognised the importance of documenting the crisis in real time and decided to conduct research on delivering community, information and support services to communities during a pandemic.

In this issue of *Informed*, we discuss the findings of our report *Change and resilience*

during COVID-19: How CISVic member agencies experienced the pandemic and adapted to support local communities. Amongst other things, the study investigated the impacts of the pandemic on communities and member agencies, the issues and challenges communities and agencies faced, and relevant government responses and actions at all levels. The purpose of this research was to inform future service delivery, both in day-to-day circumstances and further crises, and to provide recommendations on how CISVic, member agencies and governments could respond to similar events in the future.

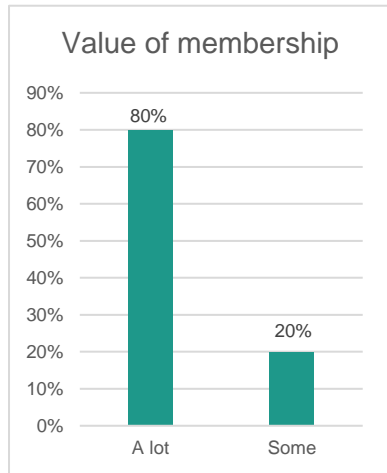


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Annual member satisfaction survey

Our Annual Satisfaction Survey was sent to all members in May 2021 and the key findings are:

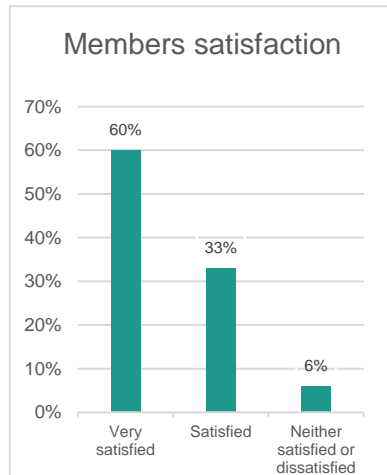


Members believe that a CISVic membership adds a lot of value to their agency. According to members, the top five benefits of a CISVic membership are: advocacy, collaboration, information, funding, and support.

Twenty-eight (93.3%) people were satisfied or very satisfied with: '*CISVic's performance over the last 12 months*,' with 18 people (60%) reporting that they were *very* satisfied. Two people were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Members were most satisfied with CISVic's provision of news and information during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other key areas of performance that members were satisfied with during the COVID-19 pandemic included: CISVic's facilitation of online membership meetings, the Working for Victoria fund, provision of additional Emergency Relief funding and sector advocacy. Many members commented that the general support CISVic provided throughout the pandemic was helpful.



In general, over the past 12 months, members were most satisfied with CISVic's advocacy on behalf of vulnerable clients. Members were also happy with CISVic's interactions with stakeholders to meet organisations' needs.

A few members expressed their appreciation of the CISVic staff, explaining that they are inclusive, understanding and uphold the values and culture of the organisation.

Members suggested improvements could be made to CISVic's training - both during the COVID-19 pandemic, and

in general. Members would like more frequent training sessions, more online training and face-to-face training in more diverse locations, and training that covers more topics such as working with complex and heightened clients.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, members suggested improvements could have been made to the access members had to CISVic staff, the International Student Brokerage fund, information sharing between agencies and the assistance CISVic provided regarding formal policies and procedures.

In general, members suggested that improvements could be made to CISVic's advocacy, particularly their advocacy of organisations' needs. Members would also like CISVic to advocate for more funding to hire ongoing staff, advocate to the state government for funding and to raise the government's awareness of the Emergency Relief sector and push back against onerous data reporting requirements.

The most important challenges facing agencies in the next 12 months are: complexity of client issues, client demand, recruitment and retention of volunteers, community recovery from global pandemic and organisational finance and funding.

Members were generally supportive of the Hybrid Working Model for CISVic staff. They do not believe that a permanent CISVic office is important, however, they believe that a physical premise and regular face-to-face contact are important. The biggest concerns members have regarding the model is a loss of cohesion and 'team'.

Comments from members

Advocacy:

'Having a united representation for the sector and advocating on our behalf to stakeholders is fantastic. Facilitating the extra funding and Working for Victoria staff during the pandemic has been invaluable'

'They have a good reputation in the sector. Their advocacy on issues affecting our client group. Their advocacy to funding bodies. Provision of information issues/opportunities. Providing a sounding board on issues. They have a level of expertise gathered in the long term on issues and responses to need within the communities, which they share provision of training for staff and volunteers'

Collaboration:

'CISVic provides a lot of guidance and helpful advice. We are a 100% volunteer agency. Its is great to be able to communicate with knowledgeable people when we have something to work out'

Information:

'Good information about what is happening in the sector'

'Fantastic communication maintained throughout the pandemic ensuring we were always provided with the most up-to-date information and details in a world of rapid change'

Providing funding:

'Not only provides advocacy and financial support, but also the policies and procedures etc provided in the members area (of the website) is very helpful'

General comment:

'CISVic staff were impressive with their adaptability and information sharing/provision during what was, uncharted territory with the global pandemic. Guidance, practical supports, documentation, and information was shared and distributed in a timely and appropriate manner ensuring member agencies continued or managed the changes in a responsive and positive manner. This helped reduce down-time and closures in what was an extremely challenges space. Our agency relied very heavily on the information provided including guidance on how to keep our agency open abiding by government legislation and compliance. We were also extremely encouraged to continue our services with flexibility and proactively thanks to the guidance and information received'

Volunteer Census 2020

We conducted our second bi-annual *Volunteer Census* in mid-2020. We introduced new and specific questions related to volunteer's experiences during the pandemic. Key findings are highlighted in the infographic below.



Volunteer involvement is critical to our sector & how we support the community. It is important to Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) that we regularly hear from our volunteers, to understand how we can better support them.



Volunteers have gained a sense of community, purpose and improved personal wellbeing from volunteering at a CISVic agency.



Volunteers feel that volunteering has given them a greater awareness of the challenges that community members face.



Over half of CISVic volunteers have similar lived experiences to the community members they assist.



Agencies and CISVic could be doing more to facilitate networking between volunteers of different member agencies and between other organisations in the community sector.



Volunteers were impressed with how their agencies handled service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic by meeting community need while keeping volunteers safe, paid staff and community members safe.

Characteristics of our volunteers:

59% Aged 65+ years old (28% 55-64 yrs, 12% other)

83% Female (16% Male, 1% Gender Diverse)

1% Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

23% Born outside Australia

24% Speak a language other than English

10% Have a disability

65%

have volunteered between 2-10+ yrs

9102

collective average hrs volunteered monthly

CISVic sincerely thank all volunteers and agencies for taking part in the Census, your willingness and openness in sharing your experiences and views is greatly appreciated.

Branch Reports

Branch reports for CIS Glen Eira, CIS Moreland and CIS Yarra Ranges have been extracted from this report in favour of individual overview reports for each site.

Our team

The Board

Anjali Ilsley, Treasurer
Anne Catanese
Bill Morton
Denise Budge
Hiyah Rahman
Ian Parker
John Lambert, Vice-President
Kathy Hosie
Karyn Doyle
Leanne Petrides, President

Charlotte Chompff
Christine Falzon
Emily McGenniskin
Faizee Nathan
Georgie Wilton
Gerard Regan
Jessica Dalrymple
Joanne Vlachos
Katie Does
Kylie Farrugia
Lori Kawasaki
Louise Broadby
Phillipa Gavin
Ruchita Chandra
Sarah Fahey
Sofie Aspinall

CISVic team

Anne-Marie Yung, Office Coordinator
Deborah Rosenberg, Student Program
Coordinator
Freya Kulasegram, Media &
Communications Officer
Helen Byrne, Trainer
Dr Jennifer Borrell, Advocacy & Research
Jill Wilson, Volunteer Development
Kate Wheller Executive Officer
Meagan Skehill, Sector Development
Michael Cooney, Trainer

CIS Glen Eira

Anne Coughlin, Branch Coordinator
Daniela Markovic, Case Worker
Louise Howe, Administration Officer

CIS Moreland

Claire Kartsidimas, Branch Coordinator

CIS Yarra Ranges

Barbara Laug, Branch Coordinator

CIS Yarra Ranges Op Shop

Michele Swarbrick, Manager (volunteer)

Working for Victoria

Based at CISVic

Daniela Markovic, Project Manager
Rachel Perkins, Project Coordinator
Katina Nomikoudis, Project Coordinator
Claire Corbet, Support Worker
Clare Perkins, Admin Support
Leanne Trueman, Admin Support
Sandra Inglis, Admin Support
Zoe Evans, Support Worker

Based at branches or member agencies

Amanda De Fazio
Amy O'Neill
Arshdeep Janjua
Chantelle Van Achteren

Volunteers

We have many volunteers across all sites, and while they are equally valued and respected like paid staff, not all wish to have their names recorded here. To this end, we have not included any names of our wonderful and committed volunteers, many who have served the community for decades.

Acknowledgements

CISVic would like to thank and acknowledge the following for their support:

Asela Perera (91 Concepts)
Australian Communities Foundation
City of Banyule
City of Glen Eira
City of Moreland
City of Yarra Ranges
Department of Families, Fairness & Housing (formerly DHHS)
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
Department of Social Services
Eva Burrows College
Frances Gianinotti (City of Banyule)
Good Shepherd Microfinance
John Corcoran (Russell Kennedy Solicitors)
Jonathan Teh (Russell Kennedy Solicitors)
Magistrates Court of Victoria
Nancy Bugeja & team, HM Group
RE Ross Trust
Robert Morsillo (Telstra)
Volunteering Victoria
Working for Victoria Fund

Celebrating Milestones

Long service certificates have been awarded to the following people:

5 YEARS

Bayside Community Information & Support Service: **Molly May**
Casey North Community Information & Support Service: **Mary Polglase, Charlotte George**
CIS Glen Eira: **Bernard Brady, Diana Cole, Susan Rutherford, Kay Schmidt**
Community Support Frankston: **Lorraine Pato, Diane Spender**
Darebin Information Volunteer & Resource Service: **Marie-Louise Drew, Albina Dal Santo**
Knox Infolink: **Robyn Brown, Teresa Walker**
Maroondah Community Assist: **Jenner Carter, Gwenda Moffatt, Marion Payne, Ron Major**
Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service: **Sana Dabbous, Maria Lia-Szabo**
Monash Waverley Community Information & Support: **Sharon Smith, Carol Richardson, Elsie Teer, Genevieve Cormick**
Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre: **Joyce Hanley**
Western Port Community Support: **Janet Round**

10 YEARS

CISGlenEira: **Izabella Hobeika, Maryann Katz, Adrienne Kraus**
Community Support Frankston: **Gail Forbes**
Maroondah Community Assist: **Laurel Kennedy, Yvonne May**
Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service: **Sue Brown, Judy Collard**
Western Port Community Support: **Alison Smyrk, Peter Stevens, Rhonda MacDonald**

15 YEARS

Monash Waverley Community Information & Support: **Sue Ratcliffe**
South Gippsland Citizens Advice Bureau: **Nicholas Peck, Judith Holmes**
Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre: **Pam Capper, Rose Mynott**

20 YEARS

Bayside Community Information & Support Service: **Greg Lay**
Casey North Community Information & Support Service: **Nancy Mitchell**
Community Support Frankston: **Anthony Glenwright**
Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service: **Sue Pinchbeck**
Knox Infolink: **Cherry Fuller**
Maroondah Community Assist: **Barbara Watson**
Monash Waverley Community Information & Support: **Dorothy Archer**
Western Port Community Support: **Babs Peters**

25 YEARS

Bayside Community Information & Support Service: Rowland Hassall
Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre: **Jill Fearon**

30 YEARS

Community Support Frankston: **Rhonda Holloway**

35 YEARS

Bayside Community Information & Support Service: **Michael Heffernan**



.....
CISVic

Community Information & Support Victoria

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