



A Decade of Impact: CISVic's Emergency Relief Consortia Report

May 2024



Community Information
& Support Victoria

Helping local communities

Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic)

CISVic is the peak body for the Community Information and Support sector in Victoria. Member agencies assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support, including Emergency Relief.

CISVic acknowledges the true custodians of Country and pays our respects to Elders past and present.





Introduction

The CISVic Emergency Relief Consortia Impact Report celebrates almost a decade of service.

Since the beginning of our consortia, we've dedicated our collaborative efforts to supporting Victorians in times of need, through a network of connected and trusted place-based community agencies. This report highlights our achievements, the lives we've touched and our vision for a stronger, more resilient emergency relief program.

This program plays a critical role in providing immediate support to individuals and families facing financial hardship.

Our unwavering commitment is to provide a comprehensive, place-based service which both adheres to the program guidelines and responds to the needs of the local community.

We look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts with the Department of Social Services, our partners, and other service providers.

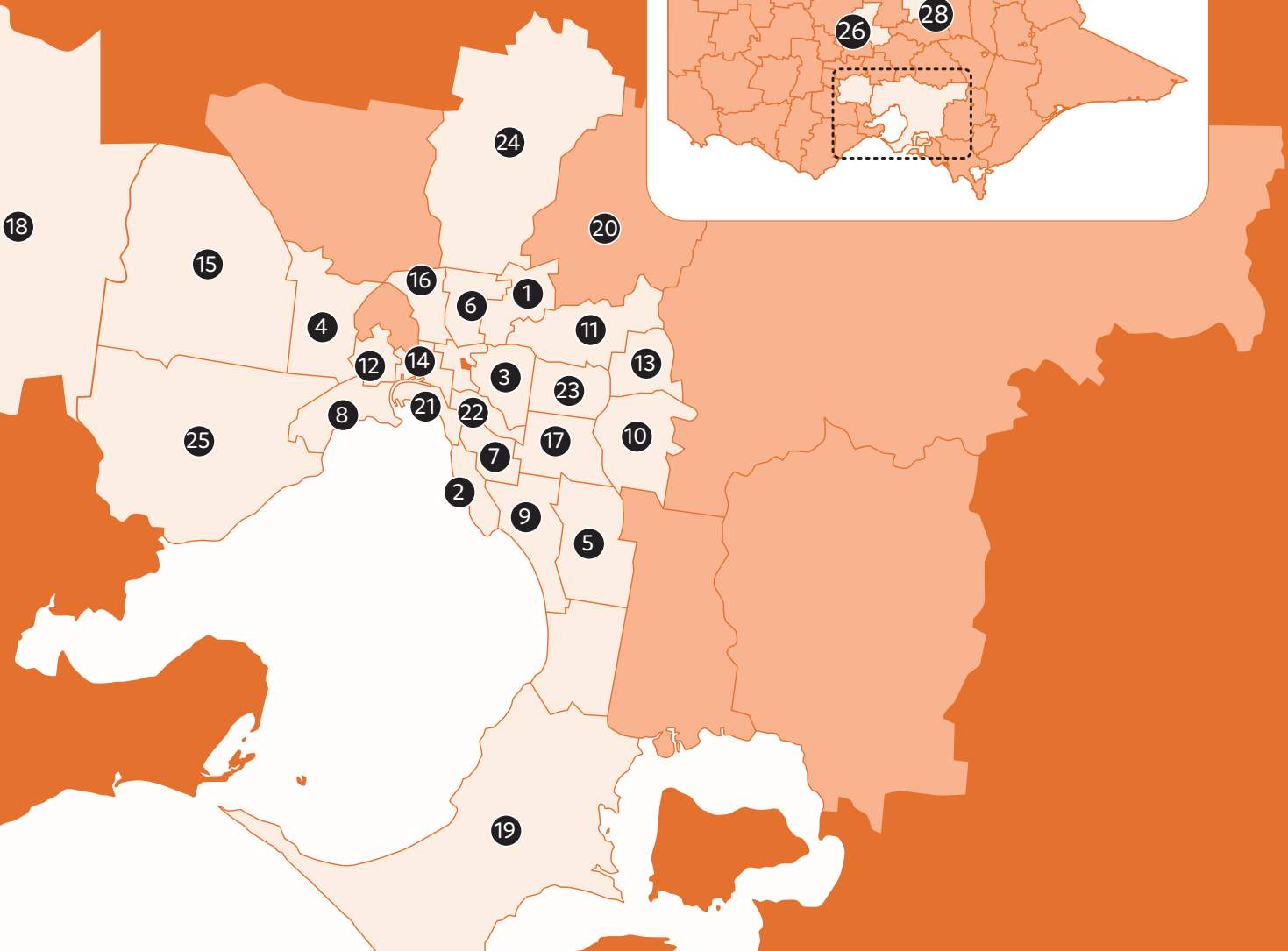
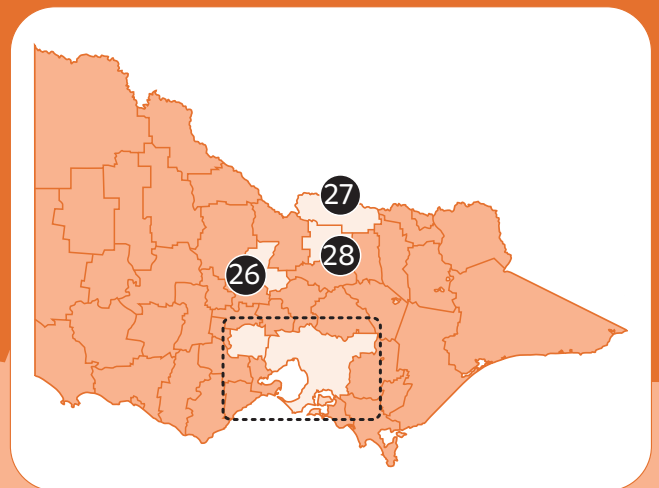




About the CISVic Emergency Relief Consortia

Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) is the peak body for Victoria's community information and support sector. Our community organisations have helped people experiencing personal and financial difficulties for over 50 years, providing information, referral and support services, including emergency relief.

The CISVic Emergency Relief (ER) Consortia was established in 2014 with the Department of Social Services (DSS) funding. Our consortia deliver services from 31 place-based centres operated by 27 agencies and one statewide phone service focused on single mothers in Melbourne's west. Our agencies range from entirely volunteer-run, to organisations with over 60 paid staff.



Metropolitan Melbourne

Local Government Area	Agency
1 Banyule	– Banyule Support and Information Centre – Diamond Valley Community Support
2 Bayside	– Bayside Community Information and Support Service
3 Boroondara	– Camcare
4 Brimbank	– Council of Single Mothers and their Children
5 City of Greater Dandenong	– South East Community Links
6 Darebin	– Darebin Information Volunteer & Resource Service
7 Glen Eira	– Community Information and Support Glen Eira
8 Hobsons Bay	– Laverton Community Integrated Services
9 Kingston	– Bayside Community Information and Support Services – Chelsea Community Information and Support Service – Mentone Community Assistance and Information Bureau
10 Knox	– Knox Infolink
11 Manningham	– Doncare
12 Maribyrnong	– Council of Single Mothers and their Children
13 Maroondah	– Maroondah Community Assist
14 Melbourne	– Port Phillip Community Group**
15 Melton	– Council of Single Mothers and their Children
16 Merri-bek	– Community Information and Support Merri-bek
17 Monash	– Monash Oakleigh Community Support and Information Service – Monash Waverley Community Information and Support
18 Moorabool	– Council of Single Mothers and their Children
19 Mornington Peninsula	– Mornington Community Support Centre – Southern Peninsula Community Support – Western Port Community Support
20 Nilumbik	– Diamond Valley Community Support *
21 Port Philip	– Port Philip Community Group**
22 Stonnington	– Stonnington Community Assist
23 Whitehorse	– Whitehorse Emergency Relief and Support Service – Uniting East Burwood
24 Whittlesea	– Whittlesea Community Connections
25 Wyndham	– Council of Single Mothers and their Children

*Based in Greensborough

**Based in St Kilda and South Melbourne

Regional Victoria

Local Government Area	Agency
26 Bendigo	– Bendigo Family and Financial Services
27 Moira	– Cobram Family and Financial Services
28 Shepparton	– Shepparton Family and Financial Services

Our consortia model offers a range of benefits including:

Strong Client Outcomes: Our approach to social support is designed with best practice methods in mind, and the goal to deliver significant improvements to the lives of our clients. We provide immediate relief and long-term support, addressing both urgent needs and their underlying issues.

Enhanced Capacity through Collaboration: By bringing together multiple organisations, each with their own experience, resources, and networks, we create a collaborative response to serve a wider range of community needs. This collaboration enhances our overall capacity to deliver services, allowing us to reach more people and deliver comprehensive support.

Diverse Perspectives Leading to Innovative Solutions: With a diversity of place-based organisations comes a diversity in knowledge, with each organisation bringing their own perspective to sector-wide issues. This diversity fosters innovation and ensures that our services respond to specific needs of different communities.

Shared Resources and Expertise: Through our collaborative model, member organisations share resources, training, and best practices, leading to more efficient use of funds. This shared expertise allows us to provide high-quality services that may not be possible for individual organisations to offer on their own, ensuring high value for investment.

Collective Voice Representing Diverse Needs: As a consortium, we have a united voice in engaging with government to relay what our services are seeing on the ground and highlight where the needs are.



Our Services

Our services are delivered by trained staff, many of whom are volunteers. Services are confidential, respectful, and delivered in a caring and compassionate manner.



Information & referral

Our members provide free information and referral service on topics such as housing, health, personal issues, families, education and much more. Referrals are made to the appropriate government or community services and other not-for-profit organisations.



Advocacy

Our members can act on behalf of people to negotiate payments and discuss issues with a range of service providers, including:

- Utilities (gas, electricity, water)
- Telephone companies
- Centrelink
- Real estate agents
- Government departments

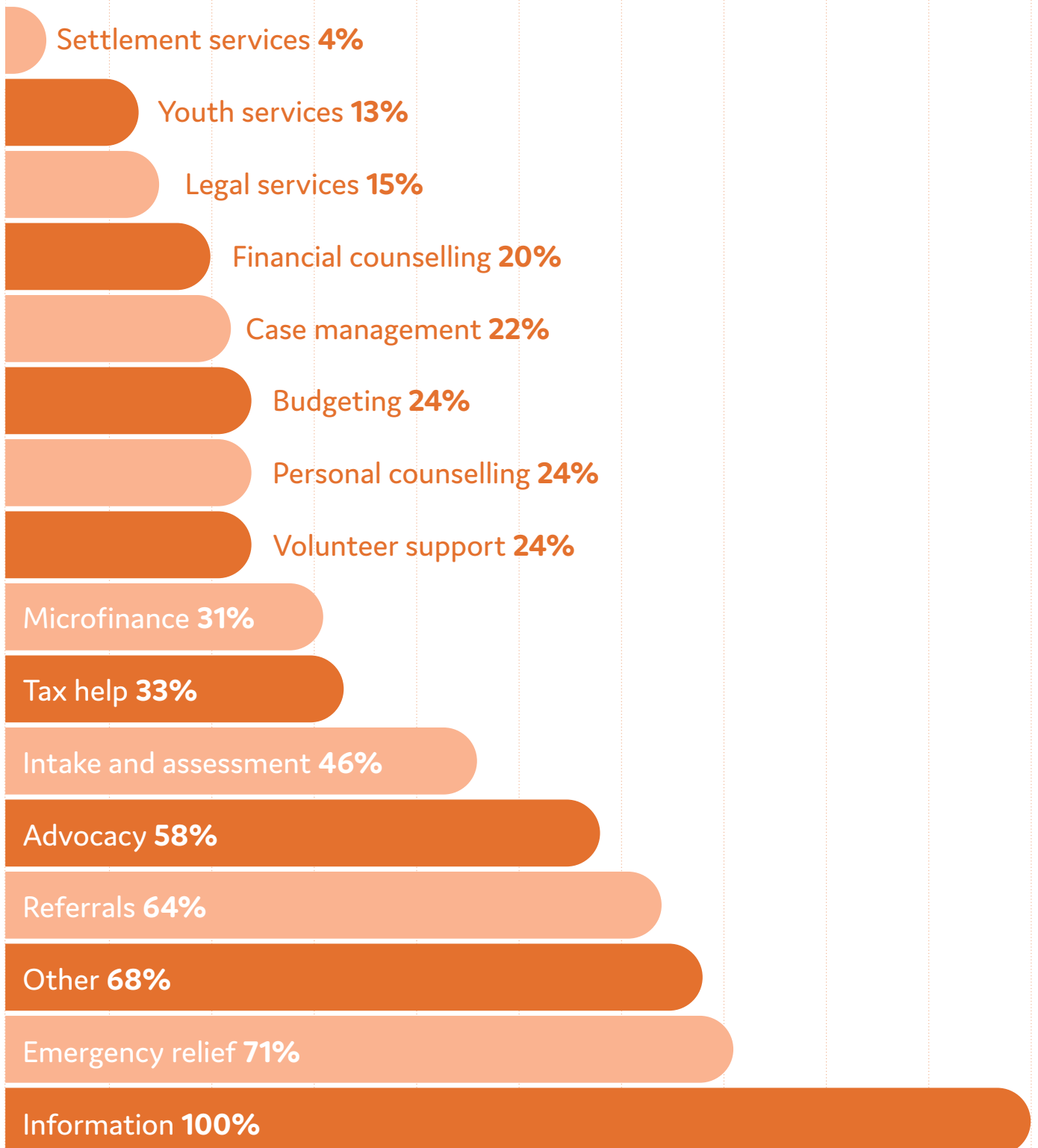


Emergency relief

Food, food vouchers and other assistance are provided to local residents experiencing financial hardship.



Services our members offer



Our Service Model

The CISVic Service Model is evidence-based, designed to provide holistic, empathetic, and place-based support, deeply integrated with community and individual needs. This approach not only addresses immediate needs, but helps those seeking our help achieve long-term well-being.

Empathetic and Holistic Approach

- We conduct in-depth intake and assessments to fully comprehend the needs of our clients. Our trained workers actively listen to clients stories to grasp their circumstances, and best respond to their needs.
- This approach allows us to identify and address both immediate needs, and deeper-rooted challenges, preventing the need for more complex interventions later down the track.



Comprehensive Support

- We offer more than just food relief. Our range of services include casework, personal and financial counselling, the No Interest Loans Scheme, educational support for uniforms and books, prescription medication and material aid like beddings and tents.
- Additionally, many of our organisations support the community through gardens and meal programs to foster social connection, helping clients to build supportive networks within their communities.
- By combining Emergency Relief with other programs run by State and Federal Governments, our centres become single home for generalised support to address the multifaceted needs of people experiencing financial hardship.

Integrated Services and Referrals:

- Our skilled staff and trained volunteers provide referrals to a wide range of additional services, including legal support, family violence services, counselling, health services and more.
- This integrated approach, and our relationships with other service providers, ensures that we can refer clients with specific needs to specialist services.
- Our strong networks ensures that appropriate referrals are made to the relevant local and statewide services.

Research and Impact

- Our research of literature on provision of aid, and ongoing monitoring of our services is fundamental to providing this evidence-based support model. Studies have demonstrated that this holistic approach to service delivery provides substantial value to our clients, and cost savings to government.
- We continuously strive to improve our emergency relief provision through integrated services, collaboration, quality volunteer engagement to ensure our support is effective and efficient.
- By focusing on an empathetic, holistic and place-based approach, the CISVic Consortia ensures that people receive not only immediate support, but are also supported to address their long-term challenges. Our commitment to continuous training and collaboration drives our success in delivering meaningful support to Victorians in need.
- This is also reflected in our theory of change model, which aligns with DSS, which demonstrates our holistic support and how it benefits clients.

Our Theory of Change

Core values: We provide high quality holistic support that upholds the dignity of all, responds to community need, alleviates the impact of poverty and promotes social justice.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs
<p>Peak body (CISVic)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector development & support • Training • Networking • Research & Advocacy • CISVic consortium • Client management & data system • Reporting • Funding <p>ER providers - membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Volunteer contribution • Volunteer management & coordination • Casework (qualified professionals) • Reception/Administration • In-kind organisational (e.g. staffing, computers) • In kind other (e.g. venue, staffing) • Additional funding (e.g. social enterprise, fundraising, donations) • Material Aid • Community and inter-agency partnerships • Client management & data system • Interpreting • Quality and Accreditation 	<p>Provide information and support to individuals and families experiencing personal and financial crisis.</p>	
	<p>Service Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic transactional support. • Basic transactional support & advocacy. • Wrap around service support (case work). • Food security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual/family circumstances are assessed • Material assistance • Information and advice • Advocacy and support • Referrals and community links
	<p>CISVic Integrated Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistency and expectation of service (Practice Standards). • Place based services. • Integrating E/R into the suite of services provided in services delivering community information & support. • Flexible funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant set of guiding principles & standards • Wrap around & integrated service provision • Flexible funding options • Training • Sector Development position • Communication and information platforms
<p>Data Collection/ Advocacy & Reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capturing data – on portal or other system, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency Relief support - Casework - Client satisfaction - Volunteer satisfaction • Understanding & analysing data. • Reporting and advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online database to manage data and clients • Collective data to better inform research/advocacy • Research and Advocacy position • Client outcome measurement process 	

Outcomes		
Immediate Impact	Intermediate Impact	Long Term Impact
Meet immediate needs	Informed and connected community members	Responsive, strong, and resilient communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People’s immediate and underlying needs are assessed by trained volunteers and workers. • Basic needs are met (food, clothing, bills). • Additional needs are addressed, and where relevant, linkages made to appropriate services. • Respectful, non-judgemental and welcoming service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are making informed choices to address their financial/personal problems. • Increased financial literacy, including increased access to financial services (i.e. NILS). • Clients with complex needs (ie. family violence, homelessness, mental health) are linked into early intervention and prevention services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, families and communities are financially capable and resilient. • Strengthened families and relationships that enhance individual, family and community wellbeing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to a common set of service principles and standards. • Enhanced capacity to cross pollinate, share knowledge and innovate in service delivery. • Volunteer and workers are appropriately trained to support vulnerable and disadvantaged clients. • Support and sector development work that enhance capacity to deliver ER. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality, effective and consistent ER service. • Responsive, flexible and innovative delivery of ER services. • Recognition and valuing of volunteer contribution in delivering ER services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place-based, integrated and collaborative community-led programs. • Strong, inclusive and vibrant civil society sector.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent & efficient data capture. • Transparent and accessible evidence based data. • Identify trends & emerging issues that can influence practice and advocacy. • Centralised and supported client management system. • Capture client outcomes. • Efficient and accurate reporting to funding body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early identification and response to issues affecting vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. • Evidence-based advocacy on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. • Data and reporting integrity that provide reliable information about service and client outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based decision making by policy makers and local service providers. • Targeted and well-resourced programs that address the underlying causes of disadvantage and poverty.

Community Support Worker Course

Accredited 50 hour volunteer training runs over 7 weeks with experienced trainers. Distinct learning modules include:

1

Guiding Practice

Role parameters, boundaries, guiding values & practice principles, duty of care, WHS, privacy, confidentiality & consent and selfcare.

2

Assisting Clients

Interpersonal communication, interview skills, strength-based practice, holistic assessments and empathy in communication.

3

Understanding Clients

Poverty, disadvantage & financial hardship, vulnerable groups, psychosocial assessment topics, co-existing needs, risks and customer service.

4

Working in the Agency

Agency procedures, co-existing needs, information delivery, referrals, client advocacy, case planning, case noting and networking.

5

Complex Needs

Child safety, suicide prevention, mental health, family violence, drugs & alcohol, conflict management and emotionally-charged interviewing.

6

Reflective Practice

Understanding our assumptions, challenging our values, improving our support & practice and external feedback.

7

Conducting Interviews

Key client issues: utility hardship, tenancy & homelessness and school costs, maximising income & financial supports and interpreter training.

Our Intake and Assessment Framework

Our comprehensive Intake and Assessment Framework is drawn from best-practice theory. Using a client-centred model, our worker's approach is characterised by empathy, respect, and a non-judgmental attitude.

We will consider the presenting issues, while providing a space to explore an individual's situation, looking at all aspects of their life, and identifying underlying issues.

Key areas of focus include looking at their:



Income and financial situation



Housing



Relationships and supports



Social and physical wellbeing



Our Impact: A Decade of Support

Over the past 10 years, the CISVic ER Consortia has been providing holistic support to Victorians in need.

Our impact is in the lives we've touched, the communities we've strengthened and our extensive network partners.

Key Achievements

- **Supporting over 99,000 people:** We have supported 99,160 unique people, providing them with the necessary assistance through challenging times.



- **Delivering over 1.1 million types of support:** Our consortia partners have collectively delivered 1,181,416 sessions, offering a wide range of supports beyond just food relief, including casework, personal and financial counselling and material aid.



- **Meeting increasing demand:** Over the last decade, the demand for our services has doubled, reflecting the growing need for increased ER relief for our communities. In FY24, we have supported an average of 7,600 individuals and families each month.



Our data indicates a growing need for services like ours, to fill the gaps created by the cost-of-living crisis, and inadequate income support.



- **Cost of living:** rising costs of food, utilities, housing, transport and medical expenses.
- **Inadequate Income Support:** Many of our clients rely on social services to meet their basic needs. Significant portions of our clients receive Disability Support Pension (33%), JobSeeker (30%), Aged Pension (12%) and Single Parenting Payment (8%).



"The CISVic Consortia provides a sound base of shared knowledge and skills that enhances the overall capacity of those agencies involved. Having access to a wide range of resources allows agencies to provide the most appropriate and relevant assistance to clients who are seeking support. The consortia ensures CISVic Member agencies are always providing the most comprehensive and informed options to clients, facilitated by staff and volunteers who have had access to the most current professional development and training opportunities.

The power of numbers cannot be denied and as stand-alone agencies we most certainly would not have the financial capacity to offer the essential staff and volunteer resources required."

"The power of collaboration, shared expertise and strong advocacy is so important when supporting those most vulnerable in our communities."

"Too often I am seeing organisations and well-meaning people deliver food and material aid (mainly food) into our communities with no other support for the people affected. When people need crisis support there has to be so much more going on in their lives that has led them to ask for help. It seems to me that as the cost-of-living hits harder and the need for emergency relief grows agencies are reducing their wrap-around supports to save money. I believe this to be very short-

sighted as you entrench disadvantage, you actively don't provide a way out of the situation, it's both disrespectful of the person and economically unsound as you lock yourself into an ER model with no end."

"We believe our role is to provide a dual focus, firstly, address people's immediate needs and then secondly, help them address the longer-term issues in a respectful and meaningful way. We have been a member of the CISVic consortium for many years and we have done so because we believe in their philosophy of wrap-around support, in doing it they provide the vital framework and training that supports us in using this holistic approach. We know that in real terms this allows us to be even more effective in providing emergency relief and crisis support."

"Being a part of the CISVic Consortia you are supported and have access to staff who can assist you in a timely manner. Training is available for new and existing volunteers, which is very important for the work we do supporting the most vulnerable people in our community."

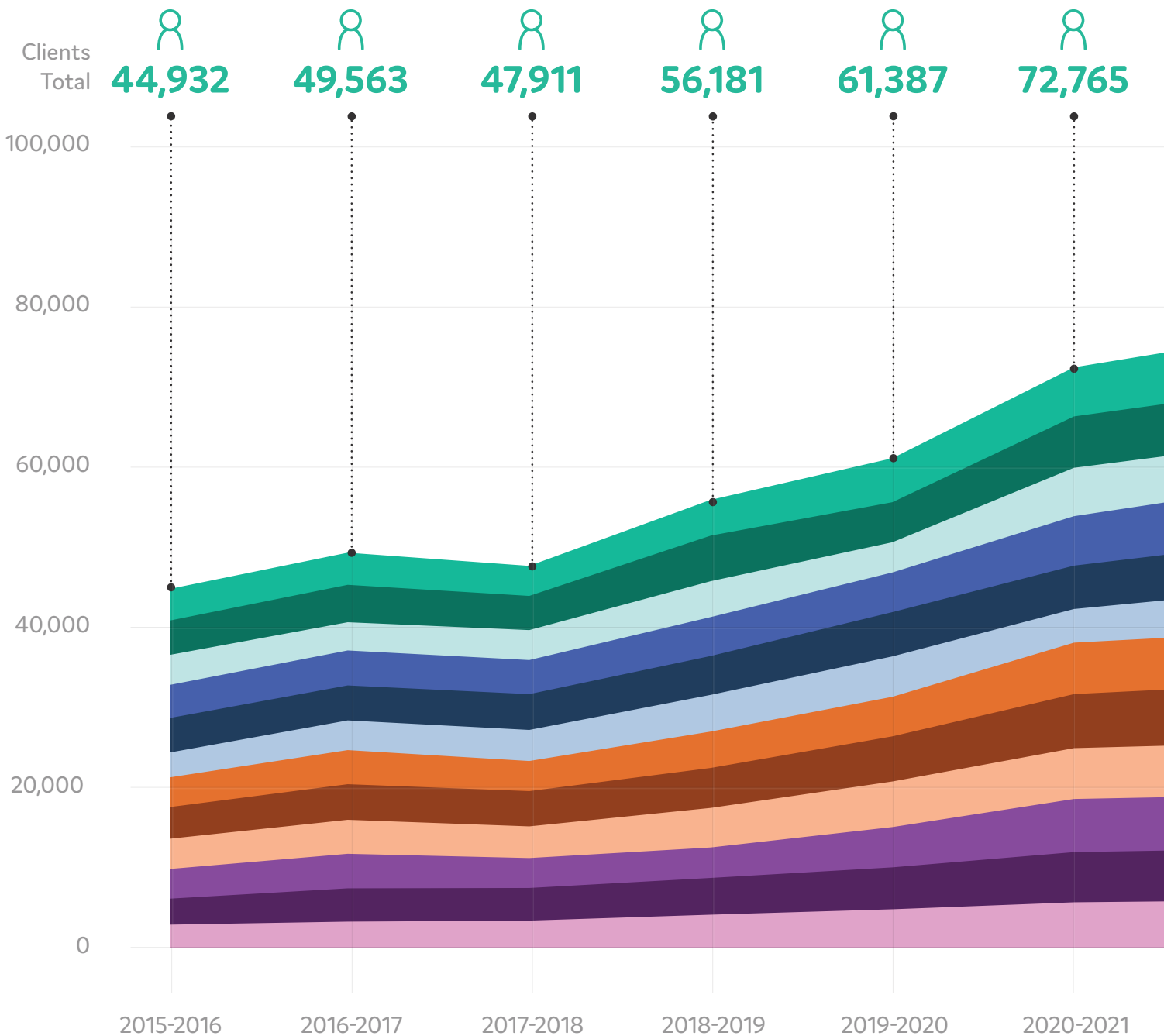
Our Impact in Numbers

Episodes of Support:

550,628

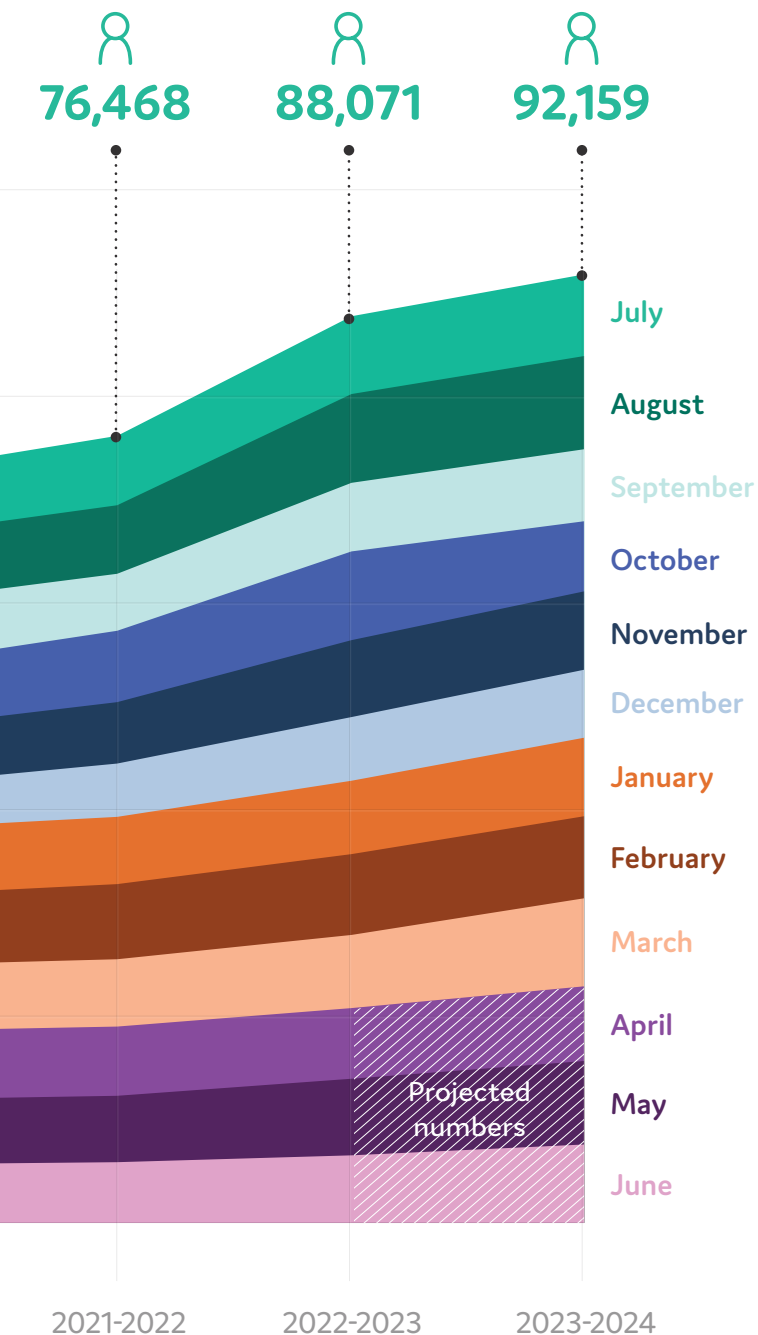
Supports provided:

1,181,416



Busiest Month on Record:
May 2023 with

8,611 people supported.



How We Help

- **Casework and Support:** We provide personalised casework to address both immediate needs and long-term challenges.
- **No Interest Loan Schemes (NILS):** We facilitate access to NILS for essential goods and services, helping people avoid high-interest debt traps.
- **Educational Support:** We assist families with education costs including uniforms and books, ensuring children can participate fully in schooling.
- **Material Aid:** We distribute essential items such as clothing, bedding and tents to ensure people can meet their basic needs.



- **Community Engagement Programs:** Foster social connections through gardens and meal programs, building supportive networks within communities.



Client testimonials

"Without judgement, you swung into action, ready-made meals, groceries (all delivered to my home), and made phone calls to expedite other services that I had tried to access for assistance. Your assistance and support has literally been life changing for me. You have helped keep me afloat during some of the most stressful and challenging times of my life. I dread to think how I would have coped without you."

"Staff were very welcoming and warm towards me, extremely understanding, kind, helpful and willing to assist. I felt heard, valued as a struggling human, and not judged. I left the appointment feeling much lighter and more able to cope with my own situation. I feel very fortunate to have had interactions with the staff and volunteers."

"Staff were very approachable and friendly, most importantly genuinely empathetic. Also advising and giving suggestions of referrals which, we may not be aware of but that can help us in our situations"

"I have always found this service great. I was homeless for 3 years prior to moving to this area. From day one this service has been an uplift when things are hard. Caring, compassionate, non-judgmental and a relief when things are too much and overwhelming"

"I thought I was going to be homeless, and this place was my first stop.... Just to have someone to speak to was the main thing, sometimes you can feel like you've got no-one and that's where it all started. It is a family environment here, that's what it feels like, happy faces, have a coffee just makes you feel better about yourself."

"The help and support I have personally received has made the greatest difference in my life. I would be lost without your support."

"You have helped me since 2016 and always shown me respect and treated me like a person and not a number. That I appreciate from the bottom of my heart. Thank you all so very much!"



Supporting Consortia Partners

At CISVic, we believe that our responsibility extends beyond supporting clients to come to our organisations for support – we also strive to uplift the entire community sector. With funding, we implement a range of programs designed to keep the sector informed, provide comprehensive training, and support our member agencies. This holistic approach ensures that we are not only addressing immediate needs, but supporting the sector to grow, be sustainable and resilient in the long-term.

Keeping the Sector Informed:

179 e-bulletins

- We have distributed 179 e-bulletins, keeping our member agencies up-to-date with the latest news, best practices for governance and management, funding opportunities and programs available.

70 regional network meetings

- We convene regional networks, bringing together member agencies to share information, resources, and news. Over the past decade we have hosted 70 regional network meetings.
- We convene roundtables to keep agencies updated on the latest information and collaborate effectively. The focus of some roundtables has included, Emergency Relief delivery, Making Data Work for You, Fundraising, Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, Telling your Volunteer Story and Supporting Families at Christmas.

Training, Development and supporting the future workforce:

- Our training programs ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to provide high-quality support.
- Between 2015 and 2024, we provided training to 3,399 participants on a range of topics.
- Training programs include the Community Support Worker Course, Family Violence Awareness, Mental Health training and more. Each program is designed to address the specific needs of member agencies and their clients.
- We explore new ways to support our member agencies and their clients on an ongoing basis. For example, the introduction of VITAL (Volunteers, Information, Training and Learning) offers flexible professional development through webinars, information videos and podcasts.

Supporting Volunteer-Run Services

- Our ER workforce is primarily volunteer-driven. We provide comprehensive accredited training to ensure that volunteers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to assess and meet the complex needs of clients.
- Initiatives like the Communities of Practice offer volunteers from different agencies the opportunity to come together, share experiences and learn from each other, enhancing the overall quality of support provided.

The Future Workforce

We collaborate with universities and TAFEs to provide student placement opportunities, ensuring the next generation of community support professionals are well-prepared and experienced. Our Student Placement Program, in partnership with RMIT places social work students at member agencies, providing additional resources and enhancing service delivery for those agencies, and mentorship and support for students.

A Skilled and Strong Workforce

Our ER workforce is volunteer driven. Our key volunteers, 'Community Support Workers' assess the complex needs of people accessing community information and support services and provide assistance to meet those needs. To ensure these volunteers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to carry out this work, CISVic provides specific and comprehensive accredited and non-accredited training. We provided training to 3,399 participants on a range of topics.



Participants testimonials

"Thank you for your assistance throughout the course. I am so grateful that I undertook the course, I feel that I have learnt so much and the knowledge and skills I have developed will allow me to contribute so much more in my role."

"The training I did was extremely useful and equipped me for the role."

"The training I have had has been exceptional."

"The Community Support Worker course is the only course that I have truly enjoyed. It has really helped me in my role in supporting people seeking our assistance. Thanks for making it all happen."

Training delivered between 2015 – 2024

Course	Number of participants
Community Support Worker Course	742
Building Financial Capability	30
Building Relationships with Clients and Colleagues	17
Case note webinar	230 views
Client Management System	267
Community Support Worker Communities of Practice	5
Community Support Worker Mentor Intro and Refresher Training	25
Community Support Worker Refresher Training	124
Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training	227
Introduction to LGBTIQ+ Cultural Awareness Training	25
Media Training	16
Mental Health Awareness Training	21
Recognising and Responding to Family Violence	127
Suicide Conversations and Safety	10
Tenancy Rights and Responsibilities	261
Understanding the Role of the Energy and Water Ombudsman	42
VITAL (5 hr training & intro to services sessions)	462
Working with Challenging Behaviours	56
Working with Interpreters	499
Working with People Affected by Ice	213

Powering up with Partnerships

At CISVic, we understand that collaboration can amplify our impact. By partnering with various organisations, we deliver more comprehensive services to our communities, ensuring that every dollar invested goes further. Our partnerships enhance our service delivery and increase the overall value and efficiency of support provided to those in need.

The CISVic Consortia receives \$2 million in emergency relief funding from DSS. During the last financial year, our consortia partners attracted a further \$2.8 million in additional emergency relief funding from a variety of sources including philanthropy, community donations, social enterprise, and local government. With this additional support, CISVic is well positioned to leverage funding for an even greater impact.

Utilities

Victorian Government Energy Assistance Programs

Addressing energy hardship is critical to our sector's support of vulnerable Victorians. To support this work at the start of 2023, with funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), CISVic led a partnership of member agencies to provide cost-of-living relief through the \$250 Power Saving Bonus and energy assistance to vulnerable and hard-to-reach community members. The 32-member strong partnership delivered three programs, including the Power Saving Bonus 3 & 4.

Energy Assistance Program outcomes:

- \$1,191,000 worth of cost-of-living relief provided to vulnerable Victorians.
- 5,059 Victorian households supported to access the program.
- 14,386 different occurrences of light affordability information and advice provided.
- 2,844 episodes of advocacy provided to access different energy affordability supports.

Estimated savings of:

- \$255,024 in Utility Relief Grants.
- \$26,578 in savings from switching to the Best Offer or a cheaper plan with another provider \$20,910 in missing concessions applied.

Energy Affordability Training Partnership

Rising energy prices disproportionately affect vulnerable consumers. In 2019, we partnered with the Consumer Policy & Research Centre and Elis Jones to develop training and resources to help consumers manage their energy costs. This project:

- Engaged workers, volunteers, and clients in co-design sessions.
- Trained 600 workers in energy hardship support.
- Deployed 24 Energy Mentors to deliver specialised energy support.

Telstra Bill Assistance Program

Over the course of Telstra's program supporting people in financial hardship, our member agencies delivered over \$1.6 million in vouchers.

Supporting International Students during COVID-19

During the Melbourne lockdowns, international students faced severe financial hardship. CISVic secured \$32,000 from the Australian Communities Foundation, which enabled us to:

- Distribute a 6-week support package of \$50 per week to 98 international students.
- Provide a reliable, short-term financial lifeline, allowing students to focus on their studies and wellbeing.

Education Costs

State Schools Relief Partnership Education costs are a significant burden for many families. Our collaboration with State Schools Relief streamlined the process for obtaining school uniforms, helping thousands of disadvantaged students. This partnership:

- Supported 2,463 applications for school uniforms and educational resources.
- Ensured students could fully participate in their education without financial barriers.



A Workforce Lifeline

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.

CISVic was 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.

Working for Victoria delivered broad sector benefits. 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 every local centre.

Professional Development

During this period, we conducted two statewide conferences comprising guest speakers and workshops, which enabled our workforce the opportunity to meet and network with peers, expand their knowledge, and find solutions to problems.



Supporting the Broader Sector

Our track record of supporting the community sector extends beyond our consortia partners; we aim to uplift the entire sector through strategic partnerships and programs. By fostering collaboration and sharing knowledge, we ensure that the sector remains informed, resilient and ready to address emerging issues.

Victorian Financial Wellbeing and Capability Network

- In 2015, CISVic founded the Victorian Financial Wellbeing and Capability Network. This informal network brought together key representatives from the Salvation Army, Foodbank Victoria, Good Shepherd Microfinance, Catholic Care, Financial Counselling Victoria, Financial Counselling Australia and Anglicare Victoria.
- Until the pandemic, this network met quarterly, providing a platform to share news, informational and build partnerships among FWC providers.

National Emergency Relief Network

- In 2023, CISVic established the National Emergency Relief Network, uniting emergency relief providers from across the country to share best practices, resources and identify trends.

Specialised Training Programs

- In 2018, we partnered with national training provider Matrix On Board, and received funding from DSS to deliver ten ten distinct ER training sessions to Melbourne-based organisations.
- We delivered training that was comprehensive and tailored to the specific needs of participants.

ER training for other ER providers

- We adapted our accredited Community Support Worker Course to design and deliver specialist emergency relief training for Anglicare Victoria staff recruited through the Working for Victoria Initiative.
- The training equipped new workers with the specific knowledge and skills needed to effectively deliver emergency relief, addressing three components: assisting the client, guiding practice and managing complex situations.



Consortia Partners







Community Information
& Support Victoria

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Helping local communities