

Kindred Clubhouse

IMPROVING LIVES

ANNUAL REPORT



CONTENTS

1. Our Vision, Mission and Value Statements
Acknowledgment of Country
2. Our Board
3. Member's Report
4. Life Improvement
5. Theory of Change
6. President's Report
7. Jeff's Story
8. Director's Report
9. Michele's Story
10. Treasurer's Report and Financial Report
11. Staff Reflections
12. Garry's Story





We would like to acknowledge the Boon Wurrung people - the First Peoples and Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which Kindred Clubhouse operates.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognise sovereignty was never ceded.

VISION

Everyone living with mental health concerns will have the opportunity to realise their potential within a supportive community.



VALUES

- *Integrity - we strive for fairness and adherence to ethical principles. We are genuine in all our work practices. We are accountable for our actions.
- *Quality - we aspire to excellence in all our work services.
- *Equality - we believe in the equality of all people and are committed to inclusive practices with those with whom we work.
- *We are committed to ensuring a safe environment for staff, members and community.



MISSION

To provide a safe and welcoming space to anyone living with mental health concerns to develop the skills and confidence needed to live safe and purposeful lives in the community



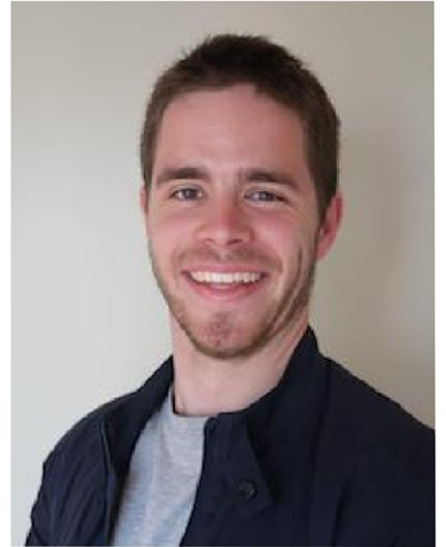
OUR BOARD



Michael Sillikens
President



Brad McClean
Vice President



Sam Holyman



Karen Dixon
Secretary



Eric Lindner
Treasurer



Neil Grun



Sarah Nyikos



Kim Kerr



Naaz Stojkova

Member's Report

**Dear supporters and friends,
We wanted to open this Annual Report
with a message to you about how our
lives have improved by taking up
membership at Kindred Clubhouse.**

Many of us felt alone and didn't have many, if any, friends. We largely lacked the confidence to go out and meet people because we were worried about the stigma and unfair stereotypes that exist around mental health diagnosis, especially complex ones. This led to genuine loneliness and isolation and made our recovery journey seem difficult.

We were then guided by family, services or others supports in our lives, to the Clubhouse. What we found was something wonderful. Greeted by nice people who welcomed us into the space, we got comfortable being in groups again and working in teams to achieve success. We started to offer others peer support through letting them be themselves and in turn offering ourselves as friends. These connections allow us to recover and put into practice the things we know will help us to maintain our wellbeing. We no longer felt like we were the only one with mental health problems.

The Clubhouse work ordered day gives us structure and purpose every time we attend. The daily tasks - everything from cooking, writing strategic plans, or hosting guests like politicians- proves our usefulness. The concept that the Clubhouse is successful because of us sets an expectation that we are needed each day. There are no other mental health services who say "we really could do with your help tomorrow" as you walk out the door.

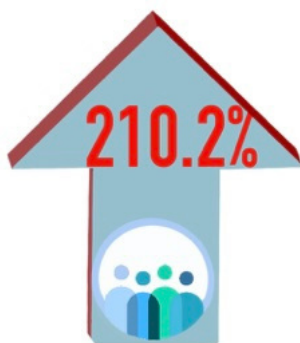
We have seen other members study or complete certificates and we have decided to give it a go too.

Some members have returned to work and we feel happy that they are well enough to do that. It takes small steps to recover and with no time limits to our membership, we have true hope for an improved future. For some that might just be feeling a sense of recovery, for others it will be the continued feeling of being part of a community. Either way, we all know we have a place to belong.

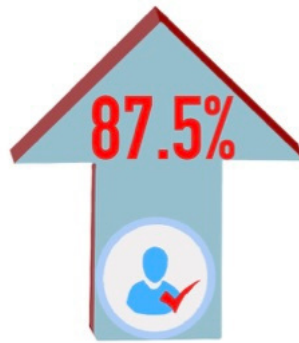
A true, heartfelt thank you to all the funding bodies, donors, board, staff, volunteers and students for creating and running an incredibly special space - our Kindred Clubhouse.

~ Written by the members of the Kindred Clubhouse, October/November 2022

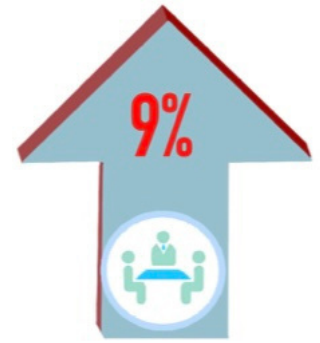
Where our members live



Membership



Daily attendance



Staffing



Members using less clinical services due to Clubhouse membership



Members hospitalised for mental health issues before and after clubhouse membership

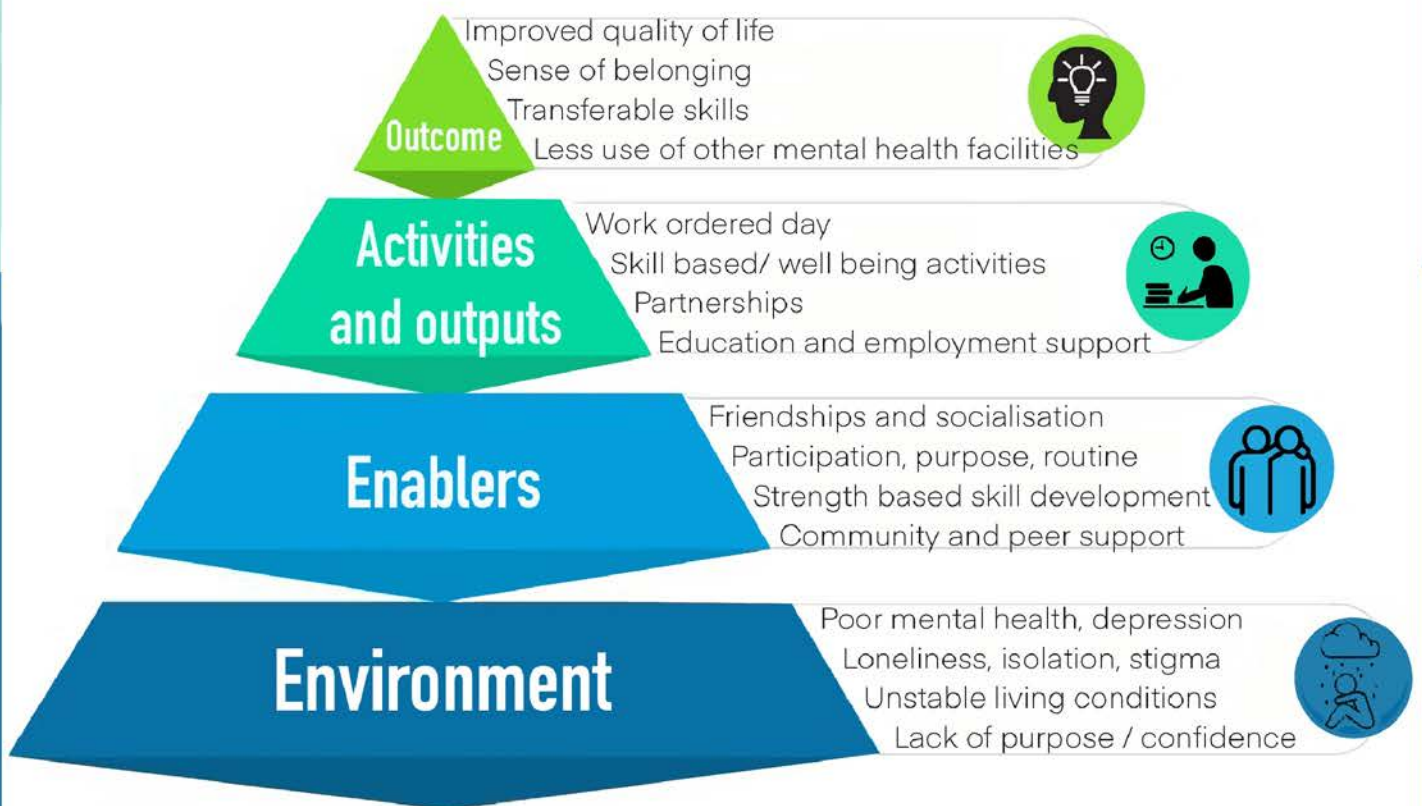


Members who have returned to work, study or vocational education

Life Improvements

THE THEORY OF CHANGE

Created by Clubhouse members in December 2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In preparing the President's report for the year, I reflect on my own journey over 30 plus years working as a clinician in mental health.

Originally starting in an old institution called Lakeside Hospital - Ballarat, where over 850 people lived in 29 wards, from acute admissions to short and long term rehabilitation and aged, spread across huge grounds quietly hidden behind a six foot brick fence. I often recall a story about Hans, who had lived there for 40 years at that stage, having been admitted as a 15 year old in the 1950's and how he had become a product of routine and structure. In the aftermath of 'chickengate' at Armadale, a review in the early 90's paved the way for deinstitutionalisation and the closure of the the asylums so crudely referred to as the 'big bins'. This led to an increased focus on community care with the formation of crisis teams to provide care at home as an alternative to hospitalisation. Prevention and early intervention was introduced into our thinking and delivery of care with an emphasis on mild to moderate emerging rather than just treating the very unwell. Next came the establishment of services such as headspace for young people and the commencement of the NDIS for those with long term/lifelong disability. And now in the aftermath of the Royal Commission we move towards a new era with the embedding of a peer workforce recognising the importance of a lived experience, taking the focus off medications as the only solution, working under a new mental health act and a correction of the power imbalance between patient and clinician.

The new adult mental health locals will be a game changer in the system I've loved working in over many years.

The reason for this trip down memory lane was prompted by what we are doing at Kindred Clubhouse, so ably led by Brendan and his dedicated team. If in this new era where personal

experience guides the work we do and the care and support we offer, then I invite you to look no further than Kindred to see this in operation every single day. I have had the pleasure of being on site a few times this year during events like Christmas in July or for special announcements, having lunch and talking with members and seeing first-hand how all decisions go through the lens of the members before being endorsed. As a board we have commenced work on our new strength plan for the next 1,3 and 5 years and a vital inclusion into the plan will be that all decisions of consequence go through the members before they can be endorsed. We have started a conversation about the make up of the board to make sure we have real representation at board level and not tokenisation involvement. Reflection on my early years working with people like Hans on the "back" wards, I know we have come a long way.

The theme selected by members for this year is "Improving Lives which I find fitting as the world continues to recover from two years of living under the Covid cloud. Living your best life has been a phrase I've often used over the years, using the report card from Mental Health Australia as a guide. Improving lives allowed us all to live our best life and the members focus has been on things like general happiness, quality of life satisfaction, feeling purposeful and being connected to community. We know loneliness is a killer. We know isolation often results from mental health issues and we know that meaningful social connection and a sense of purpose can counteract both.

Moving focus slightly from members to talking about the challenges for the board this year in terms of achieving a sustainable and financially viable organisation in a time when government funding can be very difficult to obtain. Through amazing advocacy work by the team, we were incredibly happy to receive some funding before Minister Hunt retired. The support of Greg Hunt and Zoe McKenzie has been such a lifeline that without it, we would have faced some very difficult decisions about our future. Alongside our other amazing supports of individual donors, our

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

continued...

volunteer crew, the students who have become part of the family and our partnering organisations, we have managed to keep our doors open for another 12 months and will keep going for the next 18. The challenge in the coming year is how to remain viable in times of very tough economic rationing by the government and their commitments to the Royal Commission recommendations which ties up the mental health funding for specific projects. The work of Brendan and the team to get Kindred included in the conversations for funding has been so important to hopefully laying the ground work for future funding opportunities.

A snapshot in regards to what has been achieved from a performance perspective:

*We now have 120 members and growing.

*Daily attendance is regularly between 20 - 30

*50 Vocational training outcomes and

*5 Employment Outcomes with an exceptionally special shoutout to 2 members joining Frankston Local Lived Experience Council.

Finally, I'd like to end with a different trip down memory lane and do my annual reflection on kindness and being kind. Sadly the world has too many people waiting to be outraged at a comment or opinion and you don't need to dive too deep into social media to see some pretty horrible stuff. In a world of carbon offsets to influence climate change, perhaps we can adopt kindness offset to counter bad vibes in the world. I'll leave you with this short poem from Rumi front eh 13th Century as perhaps a starting point for us all:

"Before you speak, let your words pass through three gates.

At the first gate, ask yourself "Is it true?"

At the second gate ask, "is it necessary?"

At the third gate ask, "Is it kind?"

~ Rumi

Take care all
Michael.

JEFF'S STORY



Before I came to Kindred I had 4 hospital stays in mental health facilities. When I was there I felt isolated, lonely and even more depressed than before I was admitted. Staying in a facility that was meant to improve my mental health made me feel far worse. I didn't feel that the staff were sympathetic or that they understood me. I know that they were very busy but I think they still need to show compassion if they want patients to feel better and have better mental health. One psychiatrist told me that the next time I had a mental health episode I would end up in a prison cell. That sentence made me feel so judged and insecure at a time when all I needed was to feel accepted and to know that there was hope for me.

My sister who is a support worker heard about Kindred and suggested that we give it a go. I didn't really want to go and at first I was a bit stand offish. However she persuaded me to give it a try. I was really shy on my first day and didn't stay long. My sister insisted I go again and I was a bit better this time and signed up as a member. I started by helping Caryl in the kitchen with cleaning dishes and preparing food. It felt really good to be contributing to the clubhouse. The kitchen was such a friendly environment and I felt relaxed and accepted and not judged at all. Being in the kitchen first was a stepping stone to feeling comfortable with others as I made friends who also helped in the kitchen. Then I started to socialise with others and eventually did courses such as RSA, food handling, and barista training. I got a certificate for all three which gave me a sense of pride in my achievements. I have not had a single hospital visit since joining Kindred. Unlike that psychiatrist, no one judges me or makes me feel bad about myself. I know that all the staff and members care about me and want me to do well in my life.

I feel at home here.



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



As I reflect on the last twelve months, it's hard not to focus on what was the most trying period of our operation, the pandemic management.

We are incredibly proud that to this day, we have not had to manage any transmissions or clusters of Covid 19 cases resulting from our Clubhouse. This is due to our continued commitment to Covid safe operation and every member, staff member and guest realising that we had a role to play in each other's safety. It was a complex time as we juggled a sense of community and purpose from online sessions to in-person sessions, but we got through it. The days we could return became more special and the fire and passion of members to help others take the first step back into community drove our first new program for 2021.22 - The Walk and Talk program.

The Walk and Talk program, funded generously through the Mornington Peninsula Shire, was simple in its concept but tasked our members with one of the most difficult things to achieve - reach people who were feeling isolated by the lockdown measures and bring them back into a social environment. Community members were offered a free coffee and the chance to walk around the foreshore of beautiful Hastings with someone who understands. We had seven members offer to run the program, but, in no surprise to anyone who has visited the Clubhouse, most of the new people who came decided they'd rather spend time inside, meet the members and enjoy a lunch. To this date, seventeen new people directly joined the Clubhouse because of this fantastic member led initiative and 5 others have visited and had their opportunity to meet new people and gain support.

The next challenge that faced our small organisation was the greatest yet. With the entire world's focus on Covid recovery and

transition to a new normal, Kindred needed to get back on the Government's agenda to secure its future funding. Members were the key to this advocacy, inviting politicians and government staff to come and meet us and discuss our situation. It is with great pride that we were successful in our aim of having lunch with every major party candidate in both the Federal and State elections during this time. We could not have expected this outcome but it did highlight that what we are doing resonates with people from all walks of life. It was the former candidate; and now sitting member for Flinders, Zoe McKenzie, who was able to get us our breakthrough. After helping serve our lunch and spending time with the members and our founder Stefanie, she set off to gently nudge former Health Minister Greg Hunt in our direction, and in May 2022 two further years of funding was announced. We could not do what we do without this kind of support so I would like to thank Zoe and pass on our best wishes to Greg post retirement.

With some clear air in front of us, we recognised that unfortunately many of our fellow services had not had the same opportunity to take a breath. This fuelled our desire to create new focal points for our support so that we can play a genuine role in alleviating the mental health services backlog. We have a new informal partnership with Adult Prevention and Recovery Care (APARC) that puts together their visiting clients with our members for peer support and an offer of somewhere to go post stay. This has seen APARC become one of the Clubhouse's largest new referral points and as our data shows, will help people stay out of hospital for mental health concerns. The other place being overwhelmed by mental health presentations is General Practice. This led to our final major program for the year - The Social Prescription. This program was awarded

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

continued...

funding again through the Mornington Peninsula Shire, a terrific supporter who believes in our purpose. Over the next 6 months, the Clubhouse will market directly to local GP's with care packages and recourses such as a Social Prescription pad, brochures and posters, to encourage them to refer people who are having mental health difficulties to the Clubhouse for a coffee with a supportive community. Please keep an eye out for these resources as they are developed and share our media content far and wide.

It would be remiss of me not also to mention the Clubhouse's support of other like minded organisations. Kindred was a supporter of the winning bid for the Frankston Hospital Redevelopment which will see fantastic new services for our community. We look forward to providing support as this rolls out of the next few years. Kindred was also a supporter in the largest new investment in Mental Health Services, The Frankston Local, and we wish Wellways, Mentis and Peninsula Health all the best with its implementation. We will be cheerleaders for your success!

To our amazing members, thank you for making my workplace one that I look forward to attending and for always siding up to me when we need to get things done. I am in awe of your ability to create a warm environment, come up with fantastic initiatives and most keep an eye out for each other

To our paid and voluntary crew Stef, Caryl, Santosh and Doug, most people would be overwhelmed with the idea of a staff ratio of 1 to 25 people but you get it. You tackle that role every day with tenacity and devotion and you are truly appreciated.

To the Kindred Board, your ability to manoeuvre and change tack at the drop of a hat to safely guide us through one of the most difficult and risky times in history is awesome. Then to back it up with steering us through funding challenges while keeping an eye on the future, that's remarkable. You all meet challenges with passion and purpose and I am incredibly proud of the partnership we are building.

To our founders and donors, we take your support very seriously and we will always use your contributions to help us reach our goal of providing a safe and welcoming space for people with mental health concerns to develop the skills and confidence needed to lead satisfying and purposeful lives in the community. We couldn't do any of it without you and we look forward to working together long into the future.

Brendan O'Connell.

MICHELE'S STORY



My problems with mental health started when I was very young. I was adopted and my parents had a difficult relationship which ended in divorce. I was diagnosed as highly strung and was put on medication. Years later I developed schizophrenia when my daughter was born. I had suffered from post natal depression which was followed by schizophrenia. Many things went wrong in my life after the birth and that is when I really struggled with my physical and mental health. I found it difficult to find help and I felt very alone. I was always sad and stressed. My husband didn't realise how seriously my mental health was being affected and eventually he left me and my daughter who was then a teenager.

At that time I received some help from doctors and the church that I had joined.

Despite this help, I carried on with my mental health struggles.

I have been admitted twice into hospital with problems because of my schizophrenia. The first time I was put into a padded cell in a straight jacket. I could hear voices and I thought they were evil and were coming from the roof. I was scared stiff. The doctors gave me medication and eventually the voices stopped. I was an involuntary patient at Caulfield and then I was transferred to Monash Medical Centre in Clayton and they were the ones who eventually diagnosed me with schizophrenia.

The second time I was admitted into hospital was a few years ago. I thought

I was taking my schizophrenia medication properly but I wasn't, and when I went back to hospital they said I had no anti schizophrenia medication in my system.

This time they treated me much better and I was not put in a padded cell or straight jacket. They talked to me nicely and also discovered I had OCD.

After that visit I went to APARC for a month which really helped me a lot. In the hospital I felt terrified because of the other people in my ward who were screaming and fighting, maybe they were coming off drugs but they were very paranoid and scary. In APARC the other people were nice and I felt more comfortable. They had different classes which really helped me and gave me good tips for recovery. I joined Kindred just before Covid hit. During Covid it helped to be chat to staff on the phone, and Caryl came to walk with me and my daughter. I felt supported and cared for. I was so happy when lockdown ended and I could get back to see everyone in person.

I haven't had seasonal depression since joining Kindred which I normally get in winter. I am a social person and love mixing with all the members and staff. The outings I have been able to do with Kindred give me joy. The outings give me a chance to go places I can't usually visit. The staff are very supportive. All the members are very lovely and I feel at home here. I have not been admitted into hospital since joining Kindred.

TREASURER'S REPORT



The Treasurer's Report for July 1 2021 to June 30 2022 (Financial Year 2022)

This report summarises the key financial outcomes for the 12 months ending 30 June 2022 [Financial Year {FY} 2022], with the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss statement included in the Annual Report, providing more detail.

The FY 2022's revenue was \$381,207, which was substantially above the previous Financial Year's income of \$220,322. This significant growth in income was as a result of the extension in the Commonwealth Government, Department of Health's grant, new Mornington Peninsula Shire grants and generous personal and organisational donations. The increase in revenue enabled Kindred Clubhouse to almost cover its operating expenditures, which rose from \$266,660 over FY 2021 to \$385,063 over the FY 2022. The growth in operating expenditures was primarily due to the increase in employment costs, with staffing reaching a level demanded by the scale and scope of the current operations. The FY 2022's Net Profit was a slight deficit of \$3,856.

The total assets of Kindred Clubhouse at the end of FY 2022 were \$170,033 with cash of \$137,544 being the major component. Total assets at the end of the previous Financial Year were \$159,494 with \$100,078 cash. Offsetting the increase in assets over FY 2022 was an increase in liabilities from \$19,500 at the end of FY 2021 to \$33,803 at the end of FY 2022. The equity of \$136,230 at the end of FY 2022 was slightly below the equity of \$139,994 at the end of FY 2021.

Looking forward, the extension of the Commonwealth Department of Health's funding for a further two years at \$300,000 per year, significantly contributes to the ongoing support of Kindred Clubhouse's operations.

This extension was formalised in August this year. However, to sustain current operations over these two years, additional funding in the order of \$100,000 per year is required.

In submitting this report, it should be recognised that I assumed the role of Treasurer late in FY 2022, taking over from Sam Holyman. I have appreciated Sam enabling the smooth transition of the Treasurer's role. Up to then, Sam had performed the role of Treasurer since the Annual General Meeting in 2018. Over that period, with Kindred Clubhouse's financials increasing in scale and complexity, his contribution to Kindred

Clubhouse in the development of the accounting systems, managing financial reporting and establishing financial controls, has been enormous.

Eric Lindner

PROFIT AND LOSS

	Jun-22	Jun-21
Income		
ATO Cash Flow Boost	\$0.00	\$6,215.00
Commonwealth Grant Income	\$300,000.00	\$177,083.33
Donations	\$81,200.00	\$35,300.28
Interest Income	\$7.14	\$1,723.30
Total Income	\$381,207.14	\$220,321.91
Gross Profit	\$381,207.14	\$220,321.91
Plus Other Income		
Positivity Book - Donations	\$0.00	\$3,836.20
Total Other Income	\$0.00	\$3,836.20
Less Operating Expenses		
Depreciation	\$4,910.80	\$5,303.84
Entertainment	\$88.18	\$0.00
Foreign Currency Gains and Losses	\$35.92	\$0.00
Freight & Courier	\$0.00	\$200.00
General Expenses	\$0.00	\$604.21
Petty Cash Expense	\$0.00	\$171.86
Accommodation		
Cleaning	\$1,211.17	\$466.40
Light, Power, Heating	\$2,092.46	\$1,694.37
Rates & Outgoings	\$12,292.20	\$10,259.30
Rent	\$50,598.79	\$41,611.26
Repairs and Maintenance	\$337.95	\$635.22
Total Accommodation	\$66,532.57	\$54,666.55
Employment		
Annual Leave expense	\$2,781.04	\$0.00
Staff Training	\$3,428.50	\$350.00
Subscriptions	\$2,057.28	\$0.00
Superannuation	\$23,469.56	\$14,891.98
Wages and Salaries	\$244,435.01	\$164,869.65
WorkCover	\$2,821.42	\$1,933.52
Total Employment	\$278,992.81	\$182,045.15
Financial		
Bank Fees	\$99.94	\$0.27
Consulting & Accounting	\$9,196.00	\$8,425.96
Insurance	\$3,717.97	\$4,348.67
Travel - National	\$384.36	\$278.59
Total Financial	\$13,398.27	\$13,053.49
IT & communications		
Advertising	\$5,153.96	\$288.94
Telephone & Internet	\$1,756.20	\$1,744.62
Total IT & communications	\$6,910.16	\$2,033.56
Operations		
Food & Drink	\$7,506.92	\$455.03
Kitchen Expenses	\$67.64	\$117.48
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$3,461.39	\$3,467.39
Office Expenses	\$1,122.49	\$1,219.46
Printing & Stationery	\$1,745.63	\$2,817.38
Program Expenses (Food Card)	\$290.49	\$504.42
Total Operations	\$14,194.56	\$8,581.16
Total Operating Expenses	\$385,063.27	\$266,659.82
Net Profit	-\$3,856.13	-\$42,501.71

BALANCE SHEET

Kindred Clubhouse As at 30 June 2022

30 Jun 2022 30 Jun 2021

Assets

	30 Jun 2022	30 Jun 2021
Bank		
Kindred Clubhouse	137,103	99,473
Term Deposit	-	(7)
Westpac AU 033046358260	441	612
Total Bank	137,544	100,078
Current Assets		
Prepayments	-	24,076
Security Deposit	4,583	4,583
Total Current Assets	4,583	28,660
Fixed Assets		
Less Accumulated Depreciation on Coffee Equipment	(563)	(205)
Computer Equipment	2,954	2,954
Less Accumulated Depreciation on Computer Equipment	(2,245)	(1,669)
Kitchen Equipment	4,364	4,364
Motor Vehicles	31,809	31,809
Less Accumulated Depreciation on Motor Vehicles	(10,473)	(6,497)
Office Equipment	2,060	-
Total Fixed Assets	27,905	30,756
Total Assets	170,033	159,494

Liabilities

Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	2,391	116
Annual Leave Provision	18,003	15,222
GST	1,471	(841)
PAYG Withholdings Payable	11,046	3,696
Salary Sacrifice clearing	-	756
Superannuation Payable	891	3,388
Suspense	-	3,954
Wages Payable - Payroll	-	(6,791)
Total Current Liabilities	33,803	19,500
Total Liabilities	33,803	19,500
Net Assets	136,230	139,994

Equity

Current Year Earnings	(3,764)	(42,502)
Retained Earnings	139,994	182,496
Total Equity	136,230	139,994

STAFF REFLECTIONS

STEFANIE POOLE
MANAGER

When I reflect on the past twelve months, the words that come to mind are growth and development, both from an organisational and personal level.

From an organisational perspective Kindred has shown enormous growth in our membership and daily attendance. 70% of members are using less clinical support since joining Clubhouse and have significantly decreased their visits to medical services. We have created ongoing partnerships with local organisations such as Advance College, Westernport Community Support and Campbell Page who have worked with our members to provide vocational, educational and financial support. On a personal development level, our members have demonstrated their willingness to engage in new opportunities whether it be leading workshops, partaking in training and education, organising and leading Kindred Committees, increasing their weekly attendance, helping with daily tasks or participating in our monthly excursions. Every member has made steps towards creating and maintaining their mental wellness just by walking through the door each week.

I am honoured to witness the growth, development, bravery and courage our members display each day. Thanks to our members, staff, volunteers, our Board and all our community supporters who believe in our vision and mission. We look forward to continued growth, success and achievements as we enter 2023!

CARYL BLOMKAMP
ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR

Now, more than ever, we understand the important role that Kindred plays within the mental health arena.

Coming out of Covid lockdown was a stressful time for many and the increase in doctors visits for depression and anxiety shone a light on mental health issues within every community. We opened our doors to many more members, resulting in an energetic and engaging environment. I love beginning each day guiding our members in a group meditation session. It gives us a dedicated space to feel centred and calm, and readies us to face the day ahead with gratitude and positivity.

Members are encouraged to express their individual creativity through participation in art projects such as updating our coffee bar counter, doing self portraits or creating Christmas ornaments for our upcoming market.

Our spring market was a great success with members showing wonderful initiative in the Hastings community - getting donations for our raffle and interacting with store owners in order to put posters in shop windows. All members participated in the event, and it was a great initiative to get all involved.

Our excursions are immensely popular and give members a chance to experience parts of Melbourne they may otherwise not see. It also helps them feel part of a greater community and increases their sense of independence.

Our principles are simple - spread positivity and wellbeing, strive to be a productive part of the community, focus on all your positive attributes and accept yourself and others without stigma or prejudice.

SANTOSH DASS
MEMBER SUPPORT

I joined Kindred as a student in 2020. When my placement ended I decided to join as a volunteer as I liked the clubhouse concept.

After 7 months as a volunteer I was offered employment every Saturday, which I gladly accepted.

The thing I like most about the concept is that people felt free to be exactly who they are, and no one will judge them or show any kind of discrimination. All members know exactly what it is like to have a mental health issue and so support and kindness is all they show each other.

I enjoy working with members and staff, they give me motivations and every day is a learning experience for me.

I find it interesting work when we are at the clubhouse, but I also see how much it benefits members to go out into the community and do things that they probably wouldn't do alone. I have been with them on outings to the city, to the Moorabbin Air Museum, Redhill Show, The Car Museum, Dandenong Market, Rosebud markets...etc. For members its an important adventure to be part of these groups and it gives them confidence.

When we are at the clubhouse we cook together, do laughing yoga, go for walks and play bingo. The clubhouse model has taught me a lot about how best to help people with mental health issues in my future life.

GARRY'S STORY



When Covid hit I was studying for a Cert 4 in Mental Health. Due to Covid I decided that it would be better to return to labour work and I started back in my previous profession of fencing. While working on a fence I injured my back, causing 2 slipped discs and nerve compression which led to sciatica.

The doctor gave me Lyrica which caused really terrible side effects. I suffered chronic anxiety.

I also had delusional thoughts which I had never had before. I admitted myself into APARC through Frankston Hospital triage. I had been there before a few years earlier for depression and I found it highly beneficial. I was an alcoholic at the time and APARC gave me the sense to book myself in to a rehabilitation centre.

It took a few attempts but I really wanted to give up alcohol so I stayed until it worked for me - in total 5 months.

Now, on this second visit, I was admitted because of delusional thoughts and chronic anxiety. I was there for 2 and half weeks and it was so beneficial.

Then APARC referred me to Mentis, who told me about Kindred. I was keen to give it a try as I live an isolated life with suicide ideation so its good for me to be part of a community. When I joined Kindred, I felt I had a purpose and the ideation stopped. I love to help out in the garden and the kitchen. It brings purpose and hope back into my life, which gives my life value.

I have been waiting for another service to set me up with a psychologist appointment for months and nothing has happened. Brendan set this up for me in one day!

I am grateful for a place like Kindred.

