

SPANISH LATIN AMERICAN WELFARE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024



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Department of Social Services, Department of Health and Aged Care, Department of Families Fairness and Housing, Palliative Care Victoria, ELDAC- End of Life Directions in Aged Care, Mosaik Experiences, Sector Support Development Connect Alliance, The Centre & Spanish Language Fiesta, SBS Spanish Radio, 3ZZZ Spanish Radio, Victorian Government, Victorian Multicultural Commission, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Australian Human Rights Commission, Mariposa Trails, Anglicare, Latin Stories Australia, Turks Legal.



We are proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our workplace is located. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present.





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OUR

TEAM July 2023 to June 2024

SUPPORT WORKERS -

ABIGAIL MANCILLA ALDAIR RODRIGUEZ (UNTIL 02/05/2024) EVA SEGOVIA

ANA PERRY (UNTIL 22/01/2024) ANDREA NORIEGA

CAROLINA CANELEO (UNTIL 28/05/2024) GREDI VELIZ

CAROLINA CUADROS

CINDY VEAIZAN

CLARIBEL ESCOBAR

CLAUDIA GALLEGOS

CLAUDIA SIERRA (UNTIL 29/05/2024)

CONSUELO PINTO

DIEGO LEON

DORYS BUSTOS

ESTELLA SMITH

GINA RICO

GLORIA GALLEGO

HENRY PINEDA

HILDA BENITEZ

INGRID BENTANCOURT

ISABEL CARRASCO

JENNIFER ARAYA

JUANA GUERRERO

LEIDY COTAZO (UNTIL 03/11/2023)

LIZETH DELGADO

LUIS ACEVEDO

MANUEL BUSTOS

MARIA ALTAMIRANO

MARIA MIRANDA

MARIA ZAMBRANO

MARTA SOLIS

PAOLA ASPE

ROCIO DIANDERAS

SILVANA OTTELLI

SONIA CARRENO

VICTOR CARACCIOLO (UNTIL 26/06/2024)

VIRGINIA BELLIDO

YASNA TEJO

DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE

ANGELA SANCHEZ GLORIA GALLEGO (until 16/06/2024) CLAUDIA BARAHONA JENY SANCHEZ (until 30/08/2023)

COOK -

ELIZABETH SILVA (UNTIL 25/01/2024) JEANNETTE SAAVEDRA

BARBARA LEON

CECILIA SOTO

CLAUDIA ACERO

CRISTIAN URRUTIA

GISELA POZO

HEIDY GARCIA

HELENA MONSALVE

LINA ALVAREZ

MARCELA APONTE

PATRICIA RODRIGUEZ (UNTIL 22/09/2023)

PAULA ALBO

RUTH RINCON

SONIA FA JARDO

STEFANYA JIMENO (UNTIL 22/04/2024)

ADMIN STAFF ¬ ¬STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

ANGIE CUERVO (UNTIL 22/05/24)

CARLO TONIATO

DEYSLGONZALES

DIANA PAVA (UNTIL 23/02/24)

JEANNETTE SAAVEDRA

JESSICA ESTRADA

JOSE SOTO

JULIANA VANEGAS (UNTIL 21/11/2023)

MACARENA SAEZ (UNTIL 30/04/2024)

MARIA ZAMBRANO (UNTIL 24/06/24)

MARITZA OLMEDO (UNTIL 10/04/2024)

MARJORIE JOFRE (UNTIL 21/12/23)

NANCY RIANO (UNTIL 22/09/2023)

STEFANYA JIMENO (UNTIL 22/04/2024)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH TO ALL OF OUR TEAM WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU



Established in 1977 by a dynamic group of recent arrivals from Spain and Latin America, that included migrants as well as refugees, the agency was incorporated as the **Spanish and Latin American Welfare Centre**. Until seven years ago, the organization was known by the initials of its name in Spanish **CELAS** (**Centro Español Latino-Americano de Asistencia Social**).

For the past 46years, the agency has provided, and continues to provide community services.

For the first two decades following its establishment, the programs delivered concentrated on facilitating the settlement processes of new and recent arrivals. However, as

the Spanish-speaking communities aged and their

needs changed, the agency became the only approved provider of aged care services to our community. UNITED also continues to deliver an information and referral service, community education, well being programs, community development, and advocacy.

VALUES

INTEGRITY RESPECT DIVERSITY

ACCOUNTABILITY TEAMWORK



to be a leading provider of culturally appropriate services delivered with quality, integrity and respect, and to maximise the health and wellbeing of the unified Spanish speaking communities.



"Healthy, resilient Spanish speaking people and families advocating for an inclusive multicultural community"



WHO ARE WE SUPPORTING WELLBEING FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES



United (formerly known as CELAS – Centro Español Latino Americano de Asistencia Social) was founded in 1977 to support Spanish-speaking communities in Victoria. For over 40 years, we have provided a wide range of programs and services, adapting to the evolving needs of more than 20 Spanish-speaking communities in the state. Initially, our work focused on assisting new immigrants, but over time, our organization has evolved to respond to the growing elderly population, specializing in Aged Care services.

Our mission is to deliver high-quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate services, ensuring that our clients receive the support they need in their native language and within a context that respects their traditions and values. With 100% of our staff fluent in Spanish, language barriers are never an obstacle for our clients.

The Spanish-Speaking Community in Melbourne: A Focus on Aged Care

Melbourne is renowned for its cultural diversity and houses a dynamic and expanding Spanish-speaking community, consisting of individuals from diverse Latin American countries as well as Spain. According to the 2021 Australian Census, the largest Spanish-speaking groups in Victoria come from Colombia, Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Mexico, and Spain. These communities not only contribute to the cultural richness of the region but also have specific needs, particularly relating to the ageing population.

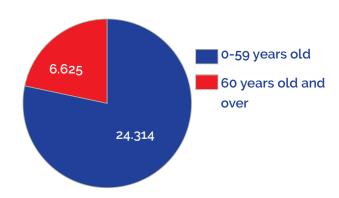
Growth and Geographic Distribution of the Community

Analysis of the Spanish-speaking population across Victoria shows a trend of growth in various metropolitan and suburban areas beyond central Melbourne. Suburbs such as Casey, Brimbank, Melton, and Wyndham show large concentrations of Spanish-speaking residents. This indicates that the community is not limited to specific areas but is spread across the region, highlighting the need for accessible services in various locations.

The Importance of United in Supporting Elderly Spanish Speakers

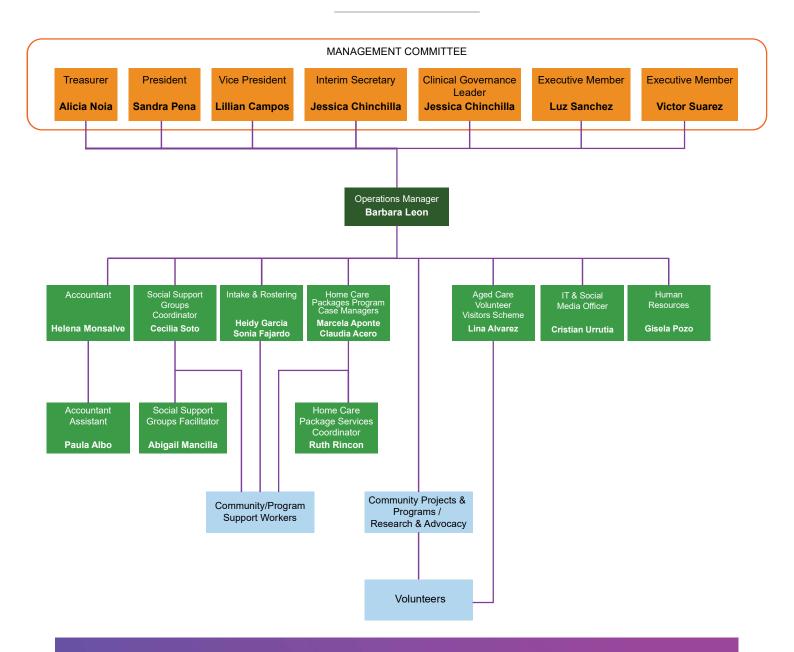
The ageing trend within the Spanish-speaking community in Victoria is also evident. Census data shows a considerable number of people aged 60 and over in this community

Spanish speakers in Victoria (Census 2021)



As this population ages, they face specific challenges related to language barriers and access to appropriate services. In this context, United positions itself as a key provider of care services for elderly Spanish speakers in Melbourne. As the only aged care provider 100% specialised in the spanish speaking community, United offers personalised services that are culturally inclusive and delivered in the native language of its clients. The fact that 100% of our staff speak Spanish ensures that clients receive high-quality care without the barriers they might face with other service providers.





Special Acknowledgments

United would like to express its deepest gratitude to the following members for their invaluable contributions and commitment during their time on the Board:

Cecilia Hernandez - President until December 11, 2023. Rafaela Lopez - Secretary until March 2023 Manuel Solano - Treasurer until July 26, 2023.

We sincerely appreciate their dedication and hard work in serving the organization and the community over the years.

OUR **GOALS** AND **STRATEGIC** PLAN

Our current priority goals are the following

GOAL 1 **PERSON CENTERED CARE**

United provides services of the highest quality, offering individualised and culturally appropriate care.

GOAL 2 **SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

United operates sustainably and grows. United makes a real difference to our community's health and wellbeing.

AND RISK MANAGEMENT enables effective and transparent operations.

GOAL 3 United is recognised for having sound governance and risk **SOUND GOVERNANCE** management that supports continuous improvement and

GOAL 4 **A STRONG** WORKFORCE

United implements best practice Human Resource processes to attract, recruit, develop and retain a capable and skilled workforce, upholding a culture of learning and professional development and of valuing people.

COMMUNI: **ENGAGEMENT**

UNITED will engage with and work in partnerships with relevant stakeholders and the spanish speaking Community.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

On the first year as the president of the United Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre, it is my privilege to present to you the 2023-2024 report. The Committee of Management goal is to maintain United's vision of being a leading provider of culturally appropriate services delivered with quality, integrity and respect, as well as to improve the health and wellbeing of the Spanish Speaking Communities.

Additionally, United is also preparing for the Aged Care reform which will take effect on July 1, 2025, when the Support at Home program will take the place of the Home Care Packages and Short-Term Restorative Care programs. Moreover, United has started and will continue to provide training at all organizational levels as part of the Aged Care Reform preparedness. This year we have been revising the processes policies and procedures in every area of United, and we will continue to do so as part of the organisation's continuous improvement. The Committee of Management together with the Operation's Manager and some key personnel have set up various subcommittees, to oversee the different areas of united operations.

Furthermore, United has maintained a strong presence in Victoria over the years, contributing to and supporting the Spanish-speaking populations, and will continue to deepen ties with them and others.

With gratitude and on behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank and acknowledge the work that united has received from all its previous and present volunteers, since it has made a significant contribution to United's sustainability. Also, many thanks to United's employees for their hard work, dedication and commitment to our clients, our organisation, and the community.

Second, special thanks to our volunteers Alicia Noia (Treasurer) and Rafaela Lopez for their enormous contribution as part of the committee of Management and for actively taking part in United's operation's as mentors, and for sharing with us their experience and academic expertise in the areas of community services, research and finance. The Committee of Management wishes you all the best on your future endeavors.

Finally, thank you to the Management Committee and their families for volunteering their time to guide and respond to the organization's requirements; your dedication and effort are invaluable and very appreciated.





President Sandra Pena

TREASURER'S REPORT



On 15 November 2024, the Auditor, Mr. Tony Ager concluded the financial audit of United Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Inc. ('United') to discharge United's funding liabilities with the agreements made with the Federal and Victorian Governments as well as being a service provider for the Home Care Package Program (HCPP).

Income:

For the financial year 23-24, the income from all sources was of \$2,599,342 representing an increase of 20.4% when comparing to 22-23 financial year. This is due to:

- an increase in the number of hours and number of services provided to Home Care Package (HCPP) clients,
- the Social Support Groups (SSG) have been performing as planned as the total number of hours provided has met the Government's targets ensuring the 24-25 Grant to continue supporting our elderly Spanish Speaking Community, and
- the Community Visitor Scheme increasing the number of volunteers to meet its intended objectives.

Expenditure:

The total expenditure for the 23-24 financial year is \$2,345,327.

Total expenses increased 24.5% in relation to previous financial year indicating a significant rise in the organization's costs.

This is due to an increase in the cost of employment attributable to the expansion of HCPP services offered by United as well as the acquisition of new software, governance training, government reform training and the consumer price index increases in ongoing expenditure such as liability insurance, audit fees, software licences, printing and stationery to name some of the expenses.

Surplus:

United has made an operating surplus of \$254,015 for the 23-24 financial year, this surplus is in line with the surplus for the 22-23 financial year (\$274,015). Although there is a decrease of 7.6% in the total surplus compared with 22-23 financial year, overall, it has been a successful year. United has achieved all strategic planning objectives and was able to consolidate its financial health by having established liquidity (cash) reserves capable of protecting the organisation against future difficulties and face the challenges presented by the Aged Care Reform.

In closing, I wish to extend my appreciation to the Committee of Management, to all United team, employees and volunteers, and our stakeholders for their unwavering support and contributions to an outstanding year.

My special mention goes to Helena Monsalve and Barbara Leon for their exceptional commitment to United's mission and values.

As my term a Treasurer finish at the 28 November 2024 AGM, I want to express my gratefulness to Rafaela Lopez who has supported me with her invaluable advice and everyone who has accompanied me during my tenure as Treasurer and reiterate my sincere wish that United continues growing and providing more services to our dear Spanish Speaking Community.

STRENGTHENING CAPABILITIES AND GOVERNANCE

OPERATIONS MANAGERREPORT



It has been an important year at UNITED, as we continue to show excellence as a leader in the provision of culturally and linguistically appropriate services for the Spanish speaking communities of Victoria. Both the Home Care Packages program and our Commonwealth Home Support Program Social Support Groups successfully passed and met every quality and safety standard during the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's Audit in February 2024. The independent auditors commended our team for their unwavering commitment to providing quality care and support to clients.

Despite the critical aged care workforce shortages affecting the sector, UNITED's client base has maintained stable numbers within the HCP program and has shown some growth within the SSG program. UNITED's dedicated workforce (including volunteers) has worked solidly to adapt and meet the challenges of the ongoing aged care reform agenda, I sincerely thank all team members and congratulate them for their professionalism and diligence.

At UNITED, we aim to embed quality, respect, consumer choice and control, care and dignity into all areas of service provision. We have shown this through the various continuous quality improvement processes implemented this year across all services/departments, such as:

Ongoing training and professional development to strengthen UNITEDs' workforce capabilities, including Dementia Discovery course (University of Tasmania), Mental Health First Aid Introductory Workshop, Occupational Violence and Aggression training, Mental Health and Wellbeing Engagement of Diverse Communities Workshop through the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, to name a few.

Within our HCP program, we have implemented regular clinical care reviews for any client whose health needs require clinical oversight, and to ensure care planning processes are adapted to incorporate and meet clients' clinical needs

Implementing best practice Human Resource processes to attract, recruit and retain a capable and skilled workforce.

Ongoing access to a supportive workplace culture for all staff and volunteers, which has included Well Being sessions including Harmony Day celebration on March 2024, a self care and meditation session for admin team on May 2024, a session on Maintaining professional boundaries in Oct 2023, and a craft workshop for ACVVS volunteers in April 2024.

Upskilling and access to ongoing professional development for the Committee of Management as an essential strategy to meet the sector reform challenges ahead, including our clinical governance leader participating in the Strengthened Age Care Quality standards training.

Ongoing sound governance and risk management processes, including ongoing compliance with contractual, legislative and regulatory obligations, including sound financial management as evidenced by our stable financial sustainability.

As always, we continue to implement UNITEDs' Community Engagement Strategy which aims to strengthen our relationship with the community which we serve and to the community at large. As part of this strategy, we regularly participate in relevant networks such as the Ethnic Communities Council Positive Ageing Committee, North West Elder Abuse prevention network, the Department of Health and Aged Care Sector Support Development networks, and Aged Care Providers Association meetings and forums.

I had the privilege of meeting the 27th Governor General of Australia Mr David Hurley and his wife at an event hosted by Australian Multicultural Community Services, aswell as meeting the Consul General of Chile, Mrs Nasly Bernal, at the Chilean Club of Victoria, where in both cases, I advocated for our communities' needs. We have also attended and participated in community functions and festivals, such as having an information stand at the Spanish Language Fiesta on Saturday 16th March 2024.

Additionally, we have actively been liaising with Spanish speaking and mainstream community organisations and clubs, community leaders, Spanish speaking faith organisations, spanish speaking media outlets (such as SBS Spanish and 3ZZZ Radio) and other important stakeholders, including Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, Chilean Club of Victoria, Mosaik Experiences, Latin Stories, etc.

As can be seen, it has been an exciting year as the UNITED team continues to give its best in order to meet our communities' needs. I take the opportunity to thank each member of the UNITED team (committee of management, staff and volunteers) for their continued commitment and dedication, which has resulted in quality service provision for all our clients.

I am extremely honored and proud to work alongside each and every one of you and look forward to the continued growth and sustainability of UNITED!





Operations Manager
Barbara Leon

A COMMITMENT **TO EXCELLENCE**



Since our founding in 1977 as the Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Inc (CELAS), United has been a cornerstone for Spanish-speaking communities in Victoria. For over 45 years, we have evolved to meet the changing needs of our community, with a special focus on aged care and culturally appropriate services.

In 2024, we celebrated an extraordinary achievement: the audit conducted by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission certified 100% compliance with the eight Quality Standards. This result not only reflects our operational excellence but also our commitment to providing services that respect and value the cultural diversity of our consumers.



Consumer dignity and choice





Assessment and planning



Personal care and clinical care





Services and supports for daily living





Organisational governance





Service environment





complaints



Human resources



United achieved 100% compliance in the Aged Care Quality Audit.

This achievement would not have been possible without the collective effort of our team, volunteers, and consumers, who inspire us every day to reach new levels of excellence. Thank you for being part of this success story!

Culturally Appropriate Care

Each consumer is treated with dignity, respect, and a deep understanding of their cultural identity. Our bilingual and diverse team ensures effective communication and care that honours their traditions.

Innovation in Service

We implement technological tools and advanced processes that enable us to respond quickly to the changing needs of our consumers.

Personalised Services

From social activities to clinical and personal support, we work to enhance quality of life and promote the independence of those we serve.

Recognition and Testimonials

The audit results highlighted the positive impact of our services. Consumers and their representatives expressed their gratitude, emphasising how our care helps them "live the best life possible." These testimonials validate our mission and inspire us to continue improving.

IT IMPROVEMENTS PROGRESS & INNOVATION PLANS



In the last financial year, United has made notable strides in improving our IT systems, promoting innovation with the goal of optimizing our services and increasing operational efficiency. We are committed to modernizing processes, enhancing communication, and providing a higher quality of service to our community. Additionally, we actively participate in industry forums to stay at the forefront of technology and care services, ensuring that our actions reflect the best practices in the sector.

Embracing Innovation: Automation, Security, and Digital Transformation

Automation and Security

We implemented automation tools in our communications with staff and clients, enabling us to become more agile and efficient, reducing human errors and unnecessary interactions. Additionally, we strengthened our cybersecurity practices, aware that nonprofit organizations are the third most targeted industry in Australia. We are prepared to face cyber threats and ensure the security of our data and services.

Government Health Non-profit

Participation in the Technology Transformation Forum

In May 2024 we had the opportunity to participate in the Technology Transformation Forum for Aged Care and Disability Services in Sydney. This event provided us with valuable insights into the latest trends and innovations in aged care and digital transformation. This knowledge will help us better guide our future initiatives and stay updated on technological advancements within the sector.

Digitization and Efficiency in Internal Processes

In response to the increasing amount of information related to rostering and case management processes, we implemented digital dashboards to efficiently organize and manage these services, reducing the use of emails and improving task visibility. We also digitized manual processes, such as checklists and payments for the Social Support Group (SSG), using online forms and automated reminders to ensure that all information is always accessible and organized.

IT Services in a Connected World

In an increasingly interconnected world, all services heavily rely on technological infrastructure. At United, we understand the importance of aligning with these trends, and we have prioritized technological innovation. Our goal is to ensure that our services are supported by modern technology, consistently investing in IT to deliver high-quality, efficient, and accessible services to our community.

Our performance on Facebook and Instagram has been positive. This growth reflects the interest and engagement of our audience.





IT improvements over the past year have significantly impacted our ability to serve the community efficiently. We have modernized key processes, strengthened security, and enhanced operational efficiency, all of which have increased the quality of service we provide. Our focus on innovation prepares us to face the challenges of an increasingly digital environment.

Looking ahead, we will continue to prioritize digital transformation to further strengthen our services and respond effectively to the needs of our community. We are committed to remaining leaders in service delivery, using technology to continuously enhance our capabilities and create a positive, lasting impact.

Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme ACVVS



Working with volunteers in the community will always be a dynamic challenge for United due to the different circumstances surrounding the program, such as the changing needs of older adults or the turnover of volunteers. However, the ACVVS (formerly Community Visitors Scheme) program has always maintained its strength with committed volunteers who dedicate their time to improve the quality of life of older adults in the Spanish-speaking community.

As of 1st July, 2024, the Department of Health and Aged Care carried out a restructuring of the CVS program, which, despite its long history since its creation in 1992, had not had significant changes in its structure and delivery. The Department undertook a thorough review of the objectives of the program and created the newly designed Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme (ACVVS).

This year, we have worked solidly to ensure that all volunteers are aware of and are up to date with the changes stipulated by the Australian government, and have updated our volunteer handbook, along with streamlining volunteer recruitment, and expanding on the information provided at the time of induction.

It is important to note that in this annual period 2023-2024, there has been an increase in interest on the part of the Department of Health and Aged Care to encourage virtual and in-person bi-monthly meetings with all the organizations in the program. These meetings have facilitated the exchange of experiences between ACVVS coordinators, which promotes continuous improvement of the service offered.

United provided volunteer visits to 41 older adults in our community, with a total of **1,052** visits of approximately two hours duration per visit, that is, a total of **2,104** hours were offered to older adults, creating a positive impact on their quality of life.

Providing our ACVVS program volunteers with up-to-date information and relevant resources is essential to ensure a safe, enriching and satisfying experience for all. On 08/11/2023, we conducted a volunteer wellness session where we talked about the importance of setting healthy boundaries in volunteers' personal and professional lives.





Volunteer Wellness session held on November 2023



As part of the celebration of International Volunteer Day, we organised a special event at Bunnings Maribyrnong. The main activity was a pot-making workshop, promoting wellbeing and togetherness.



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UNITED celebrated our volunteers during National Volunteers Week in May 2024 through a beautiful event that brought together volunteers of all generations. This celebration is always an excellent opportunity to share experiences, strengthen ties and recognize the invaluable contribution made by our volunteers.

Aged Care Volunteer Visitors
Program (ACVVS) is a
successful initiative that has
had a positive impact on the
lives of Spanish-speaking older
adults in Victoria, Australia. The
program is a valuable source
of support for older adults and
contributes to improving their
quality of life.

As the program coordinator, it is always a pleasure to work for the community, giving volunteers the opportunity to be part of this project that connects everyone's stories and hearts, it is one of the most enriching work experiences. We know that we have great challenges for 2024-2025, in which we will continue to work together with our volunteers, to them my deepest admiration and respect for giving love, understanding and encouragement to people in need.

Program Coordinator Lina Alvarez

Below, I share a letter from one of the program volunteers:

C Adapting to life in a new country with a different language can be challenging, with hurdles like communication issues and cultural differences often feeling overwhelming.

During this adaptation process, I found United's Aged Care Volunteers Program, and I decided to join because it seemed as a perfect opportunity to make a meaningful impact and in this way express my gratitude to the country that gave me the chance to study and live here.

Although I had never worked with senior people before, I had participated in volunteering programs in my home country and I already knew how rewarding it can be to contribute, even in small ways. Personally, all my volunteering experiences have expanded my perspective, and provided me with a deeper sense of purpose and this program wasn't the exception.

In this program, I met Ken, who became my friend thanks to our shared love for Cuban music. Each visit was a chance to share and learn. Whether through conversations or simply spending time together, these moments allowed me to offer support, gain valuable insights from Ken's experiences and build genuine connections.

It was deeply rewarding to see how my presence and interest made a positive difference. This experience enriched my own journey with a sense of fulfillment and personal growth.



"

PACKAGES PROGRAM



United's Home Care Packages Program provides culturally and linguistically appropriate support and services for Spanish-speaking older adults, assisting them to live independently and safely in their homes for as long as possible.

United aims to empower Spanish-speaking older adults to live with dignity, independence, and a sense of belonging, enhancing their overall quality of life. This year we have seen steady growth of our Home Care Packages program, which supported **99 clients in 2024 in total** (including discharged clients during the year).

Person-Centered and Culturally Sensitive Service Provision

Our program includes a diverse range of services designed to meet the unique needs of our clients, such as personal care services, companionship, flexible respite, transportation, domestic assistance, home maintenance and modifications, allied health services, equipment provision, clinical assessments and assistive technology.

United is committed to providing personalised and age-appropriate, culturally sensitive support to the Spanish-speaking community in metropolitan Melbourne. From July 2023 to June 2024, we reinforced our commitment by strengthening our person-centered approach, promoting a supportive and empathetic environment where clients feel understood, valued, and respected. We align our services with the needs and preferences of Spanish-speaking seniors, focusing on the following key pillars:

Empathy

Understanding client's feelings and experiences from their perspective, fostering a deeper connection and validating their preferences and values. We actively listen to our clients' needs and ensure that all information and support are delivered in Spanish, English, and other accessible formats. This helps clients engage fully with their care plans and fosters clear, open dialogue.

Bilingual and culturally diverse staff

Our bilingual workforce has an understanding of Hispanic and Latin American cultures, enabling effective engagement and fostering culturally appropriate care tailored to each client's background.

Culturally appropriate service provision

Services are designed with an awareness of and respect for cultural values, beliefs, and practices, which enhance the relevance and effectiveness of the care provided.

Individualized Care Plans

Every client participates in ongoing assessments to define their unique needs and preferences, allowing us to craft tailored care plans that reflect clients' specific circumstances and aspirations.

Responsive Feedback Loop

We encourage ongoing feedback from clients and their families, which allows us to adapt and refine services continually, ensuring that support and services are aligned with clients' changing needs.

Refining our Clinical Approach to Care

Within our newly established Clinical Governance framework, we have enhanced our service provision to incorporate on-going clinical reviews/assessments for clients, refining and solidifying our unique approach to care. As of June 2024, we have implemented a process of ongoing clinical reviews conducted by subcontracted experienced nurses, allowing case managers to gain a comprehensive understanding of each client's needs, enabling tailored care plans and high-quality support.

Additionally, case managers and one support worker undertook palliative care training and clinical placements in the Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA), enhancing our ability to support clients facing end-of-life care.

External Services Coordination

The coordinated involvement of external service providers has significantly enhanced our ability to meet our clients' needs. Our current network includes 45 external providers, such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, podiatrists, nurses, gardeners, deep cleaning services, and home modification companies.

Responding to Workforce Challenges

In the face of the aged-care industry's unprecedented workforce shortages in recent years, United has made significant efforts to recruit skilled aged-care support workers, addressing the growing demand for our services. Our support workers receive ongoing training and professional development to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for themselves and our clients. Trainings completed this year have included: occupational health and safety updates, infection prevention and control, manual handling techniques, elder abuse awareness, aged care code of conduct, to name a few.

Furthermore, to upskill and strengthen the clinical capabilities of our aged care workers and our Case Management team, we have undertaken trainings in the following areas: dementia care, Anglicare's suicide prevention training, Montessorri for Dementia and Ageing, and ECCV Workshop on Mental Health and Wellbeing of Diverse Communities.

United supports its workforce through regular debriefing opportunities and wellness initiatives, including access to United's Employee Assistance Program and internal wellness programs for staff and volunteers.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated workforce—support workers, external providers, intake and rostering team, support coordinator, case managers—for their commitment to quality care and exceptional customer service. United's commitment to best practice was reflected in the successful outcome of our quality audit undertaken by the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission in February 2024.

These excellent audit results have motivated our team to continue providing exceptional care to all clients and expanding our workforce to ensure every client receives the support they need.

Case Manager
Barbara Leon
Claudia Acero
Marcela Aponte



SOCIAL ACTIVITY GROUPS



As we reach the end of another financial year, we cannot help but evaluate our work, review and assess the effectiveness of our programs, and appreciate the service we provide to our Spanish-speaking community through our four Social Support Groups.

OUR GROUPS

Armonia Group – Avondale Heights
Valle del Sol Group – Burnside
Horizonte Group – Hallam
Craft Group – Maidstone

From 74 to 81 clients this financial year



During the 2023-2024 period, we were able to carry out many entertaining group activities, with enthusiastic participation from the majority of our clients. The attendance, engagement, and smiles on the faces of our participants are the best way to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of this program.

The plans and strategies we have implemented have allowed us to meet our clients' needs in a respectful and culturally appropriate manner, whilst also fulfilling the objectives of the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). We focused on promoting independence by leveraging clients' strengths and enhancing their quality of life, providing a professional, safe, and respectful service aimed at addressing their unique needs and preferences.

SOME OF OUR MOST NOTABLE ACTIVITIES THIS YEAR

July 2023

We celebrated Christmas in July.

August 2023

Recycling Day and a visit to the Melbourne Art Centre (Horizonte).

September 2023

We celebrated Nations Month and visited the Tesselaar Tulips Festival.

October 2023

Intergenerational Day (Horizonte) and Grandparents' Day.

November 2023

Melbourne Cup Day Celebration and Music Day.

December 2023

We held our End-of-Year Party.

January 2024

We celebrated Australia Day and the Australian Open.

February 2024

Visit to Blue Lotus Water Garden (Horizonte) and celebrated Latin American Carnivals.

March 2024

We celebrated Labour and Professions Day and visited the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (Horizonte).

April 2024

We celebrated Book Day and hosted a Hat Party.

May 2024

We celebrated the Mexican 5th of May Fiesta and Mother's Day.

June 2024

In June, we welcomed winter and also celebrated World Paper Airplane Day.

OTHER IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES WE CARRIED OUT THIS YEAR INCLUDED

In March 2024, we welcomed Tania Thodis from NARI. She brought us a talk to better understand dementia and introduced the "Draw-Care" project for people with dementia and their caregivers. She informed us that the lack of knowledge about dementia in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities often leads to delayed diagnosis, a poorer prognosis, and a greater caregiving burden on families and healthcare systems.

In June 2024, to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), we prepared a pamphlet with information on how to help someone who may be experiencing elder abuse. This material was provided in Spanish to each of our clients.

For the fourth consecutive year, we continued the "Knitting Life, Stitch by Stitch" project, through which we were able to gift around 15 warm and colourful blankets, as well as some scarves and woolly hats, all hand-knitted by a group of our participants. These items were delivered directly to some nursing homes with the support of United's Aged Care Volunteer Visit Program. United provided 99% of the wool.

Silvana Otelli - SW
Gredi Veliz - SW
Yasna Tejo - SW
Diego Leon - SW
Jeannette Saavedra - Cook
Abigail Mancilla - SSG Facilitator
Manuel Bustos - SW
Claudia Barahona - Cook

In conclusion, I would like to thank our volunteers: Jeannette Saavedra and Elias Soto in NW, and Deysi Gonzáles in SE, who have generously given their time and dedication on a weekly basis, making the activities more engaging and of higher quality.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the entire SSG team for their hard work, dedication, and committed participation this year, consistently offering the best of their skills and experience each week. Their efforts have ensured a high-quality service delivered with dignity, respect, and recognition for each of our clients. Working with each of you has been a great pleasure for me.



SSG Coordinator Cecilia Soto









PROJECTS &COLLABORATIONS



ELDAC - End of Life Directions in Aged Care Linkages Program

This year our activities within the ELDAC (End of Life Directions in Aged Care) "Linkages Program" (funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care) by enrolling three key staff members in PEPA (Program of experience in Palliative Approach) placements within community palliative care services. The learnings from this project have enabled UNITED to embed enhanced workforce capability in Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning in order to meet the growing needs of our communities. We sincerely thank Diana Harrison, our facilitator, mentor and coach for her valuable support in assisting us to meet the goals we set for our ELDAC journey.



NATIONAL AGEING RESEARCH INSTITUTE (NARI)- DRAW CARE STUDY Developing Multicultural Digital Care for Dementia

Caring for an older person at home can feel overwhelming at times, especially for carers of a loved one with dementia. Many carers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds do not access relevant supports and services due to systemic and language barriers

CALD carers experience 2.5 times more psychological distress than other carers in our community (www.nari.net.au).

There are many different challenges facing such carers, including high expectations on family members to provide care, and on women to increasingly take on caring duties.

The Social Gerontology team at the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) and Curtin University have developed an innovative project designed make information accessible to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) carers.

The Draw Out Care Study aims to support CALD family carers and people living with dementia using animations, digital fact sheets, and a multilingual chat-bot that can provide support at home, around the clock.

UNITED has worked with NARI in the past in the development of Dementia Awareness videos (in spanish). This year, we are proud to have collaborated

with NARI again in this important research study, by connecting carers to the study to provide feedback on the resources being developed.

It is vital that the Spanish speaking community participate in research such as this as it will inform and shape visual and written resources to support our community, enhancing our community's long term health and well being outcomes.

Tax help Program

Our Tax Help Program, in collaboration with an accredited ATO volunteer, successfully assisted 106 Spanish-speaking individuals, including 79% international students, during August-October 2023.



This initiative highlights our commitment to providing culturally relevant support and ensuring that everyone has access to vital tax resourcessegurar que todos tengan acceso a recursos fiscales vitales.

- Coordinator: Helena Monsalve
- Volunteer: Carlo Toniato

i-Support Research Project: Collaboration with Flinders University

UNITED is participating in the research project: A 'culturally tailored iSupport model' for carers of people with dementia' by Flinders University.

This longitudinal project is funded by Australia NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council) via the Cultural Ethnic and Linguistic Diversity in Dementia Research.

In this project, Flinders University is working actively with ethno-specific aged care organisations (like UNITED) to implement the World Health Organization's iSupport for Dementia program to improve support for carers of people with dementia from these language speaking groups: Spanish, Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Bahasa.

However, before the program is implemented, researchers are adapting the i-Support Manual/Resources with input from relevant stakeholders (family carers and professional carers) so that the resources are fit-for-purpose in the local Australian context.



The iSupport program is a skills training program for carers. The Australia iSupport program and Manual will include additional resources and support mechanisms for carers to navigate, access and utilise dementia and aged care services in their preferred language.

The first phase of the research is now complete, whereby researchers have undertaken a consultation with family/carers and professional care workers/support workers to gain their feedback on the i-Support Manual. Having such valuable feedback will enable the researchers to adapt and update the Manual information to the local context and align the information to the needs of such carers. We are looking forward to the next stages of this collaboration which we envisage will bring a host of benefits to the carers within our community.

Decision-making and mental health in migrant Latin-American older adults Collaboration with Federation University

This year, UNITED has supported a research study undertaken by PHD Nursing student Raul Hormazabal Salgado from Federation University on exploring the way older adults make decisions about their mental health.

The communities of Latin-Americans in Australia are underrepresented in research in general, and mental health research in particular. The research shows that older Latin-Americans in Australia tend to live in closed communities, and some have not been fully integrated into Australian society despite residing in this country for more than three decades. This lack of community participation can have detrimental effects in their health and well-being.



UNITED supported the researcher to access possible participants by disseminating information about the project to all our networks, with a number of UNITED clients participating in the study.

Older people of spanish speaking backgrounds make decisions about their mental health autonomously and take into account their personal experiences and identity, their levels of connection, and their perceptions of health and ageing healthily.

- Older people understand the importance of social connections for their mental health and address loneliness and isolation through friendships, religious practices, social groups, and family interactions.
- The findings provided fresh insights into the significance of dependable information, introspection, and the influence of life experiences, trust, independence, adaptability, and cultural background on people's decision making.
- The study promotes that services must ensure that older people have access to education and information on well being and mental health and ensure that older people trust the sources of information.
- The findings suggest that transparent, culturally sensitive information can help older adults cope
 with stressors and make better health choices, promoting mental health and improving health
 outcomes. These findings align closely with UNITED's aims of providing culturally and linguistically
 appropriate services to the spanish speaking community.

KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

SECTOR SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SSD



Sector Support Development (SSD) activities at UNITED (funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Program-CHSP) have the aim of supporting providers and consumers to prepare for the new in-home aged care system, which is being proposed by the aged care reforms currently under way.

Diego Leon, our dedicated SSD officer actively engaged with the Department of Health online Community of Practice (CoP), where we networked and exchanged ideas with other CHSP providers. UNITED achieved Active Participant badge within the online CoP, achieving 78 days of active participation in CoP (including reading 1100 posts, creating 40 post and Viewing 254 topics).

Enhanced Organisational Preparedness for Reform:

Our online engagement with the CoP ensured that UNITED had access to reform focused information and guidance, assisting us to prepare and adapt to the reform changes. UNITED has accessed the following training opportunities, workshops and conferences focused on reform preparedness:

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

Nov 2023: Top Innovations in Home Care Workshop

Nov 2023: Workforce Attraction and Retention Webinar for CHSP Providers

Feb 2024: Preparing for the Aged Care Code of Conduct for CHSP providers

May 2024: SSD National Planning Conference

May 2024: Planning For Reform Bootcamp

Through this project, UNITED has also supported older people, families and carers (from the Spanish speaking community) to engage with the aged care system and access aged care services in a timely manner.





Enhanced Community understanding of My Aged Care:

We provided 2 My Aged Care Information Sessions to Spanish speaking community, a total of 40 individuals attrnded these sessions. The overwhelming majority of participants (over 90%) reported high satisfaction levels with these sessions, and with the info/resource kits which were distributed.

System Navigation Support

provided face to face and telephone support to a total of 34 people, assisting them to navigate, access and understand the My Aged care system, providing a total of 56 hours of contact time.

Out of 34 clients, about 50% were not registered with My Aged Care and we assisted them to register. The remainder of clients were assisted to either access CHSP services or assisted on how to follow up CHSP services. Most clients had barriers in navigating the aged care system, including linguistic and cultural barriers, and low digital literacy.

SSD Connect Alliance Collaboration

As part of this project, UNITED is also a member of the SSD Connect Alliance (a network of CHSP funded aged care providers in the North West/Loddon Mallee regions) and we actively participated in a Working Group to plan and deliver a Social Support Forum.

The forum (held on 23rd Aug 2023) was held to celebrate the achievements of Social Support groups across the CHSP sector, in particular the achievements made in the past few years post-COVID. The forum highlighted the enormous work that Social Support Groups staff and leaders do to make a difference in older people's lives.







FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024 2024 2023 \$ \$ Revenue 2,597,101 2,156,665 Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method 2,241 1,246 **Expenses** Corporate and administration expenses (68,464)(46,284)Rent and office related expenses (9.853)(8.816)(2,067,258) Employee benefits expense (1,577,405)Depreciation and amortisation expense (50,724)(42,012)Other expenses (144,833)(203,237)Finance costs (4,195)(5,256)Surplus before income tax expense 254,015 274,901 Income tax expense Surplus after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of United - Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Inc 254,015 274,901 Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax

254,015

274,901

Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the members of United

- Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Inc

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME ___

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	Reserves \$	Retained surpluses \$	Total equity
Balance at 1 July 2022	-	229,854	229,854
Surplus after income tax expense for the year Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	<u>-</u>	274,901	274,90
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	274,901	274,90
Transfers	120,000	(120,000)	
Balance at 30 June 2023	120,000	384,755	504,755
	Reserves \$	Retained surpluses \$	Total equity
Balance at 1 July 2023	120,000	384,755	504,75
Surplus after income tax expense for the year Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		254,015	254,01
Total comprehensive income for the year		254,015	254,01

	AS AT 30 JUNE 2024		
		2024 \$	2023 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents		882,024	565,971
Trade and other receivables		276,904	398,778
Other		15,801	13,282
Total current assets		1,174,729	978,031
Non-current assets			
Right-of-use assets		110,275	139,305
Other		12,134	12,226
Total non-current assets		122,409	151,531
Total assets		1,297,138	1,129,562
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables		167,581	196,389
Lease liabilities		50,078	41,748
Employee benefits		65,874	39,444
Financial liabilities		149,723	121,623
Other		4,500	95,170
Total current liabilities		437,756_	494,374
Non-current liabilities		77.040	100.000
Lease liabilities		77,018	108,966
Employee benefits Total non-current liabilities		23,594 100,612	21,467 130,433
Total Hori-current habilities		100,612	130,433
Total liabilities		538,368	624,807
Net assets		758,770	504,755
Equity			
Reserves		120,000	120,000
Retained surpluses		638,770	384,755
Total equity		758,770	504,755

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

In the officers' opinion:

- the incorporated association is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. Accordingly, as described in note 1 to the financial statements, the attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and Victorian legislation the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, the Fundraising Act 1998 and associated regulations;
- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Accounting Standards as described in note 1 to the financial statements:
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the incorporated association's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the incorporated association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

On behalf of the officers

Alicia Noia -Treasurer

14 November 2024

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of United - Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre Inc (the association), which comprises the Officers Declaration, the Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes In Equity and Statement of Cash Flows as at 30 June 2024, and a summary of significant accounting policies giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the association as at 30 June 2024 and [of] its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

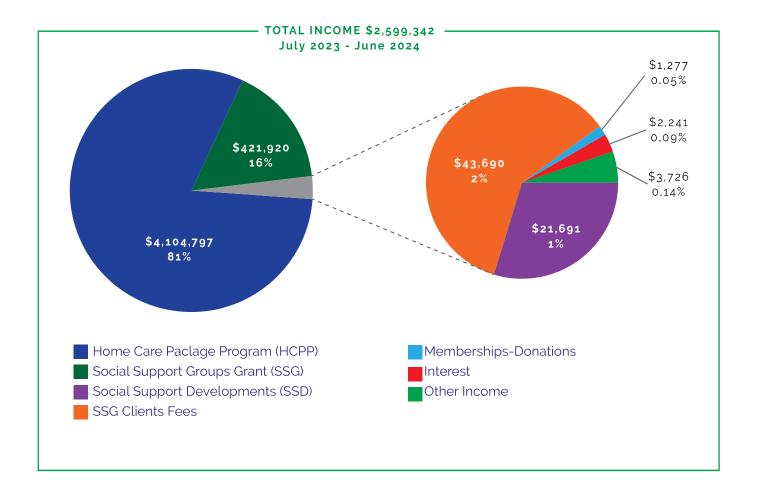
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

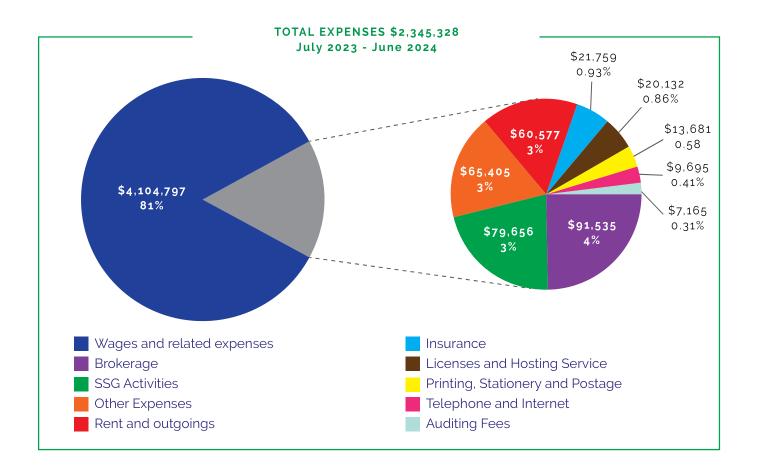
We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Signed on: 15 November 2024

CONNECT NATIONAL AUDIT PTY LTD
Authorised Audit Company Number: 521888
Chartered Accountants

Anthony Ager Audit Principal Registered Company Auditor Chartered Accountants





TOTAL SURPLUS \$254,015 July 2023 - June 2024





We are proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri People as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our workplace is located. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present.

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