

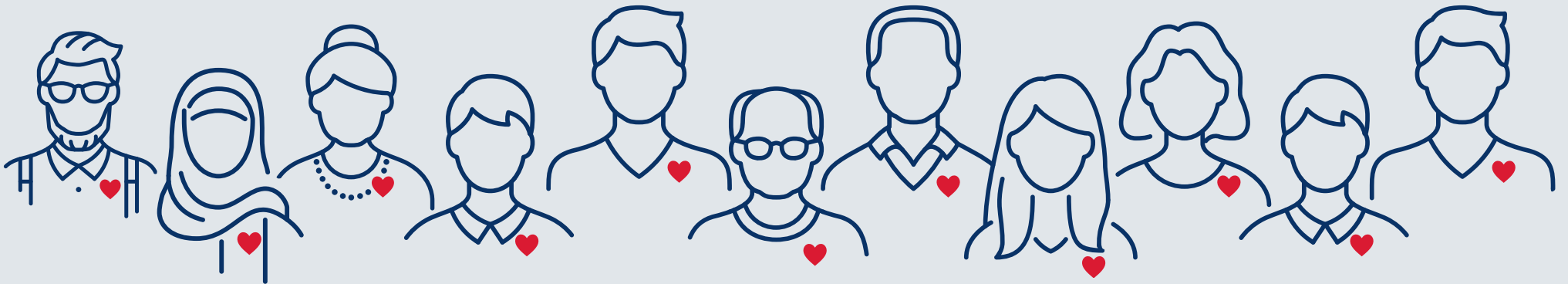


Annual Review

2023

Our Purpose

**We are leading
the fight to save
*Australian hearts***

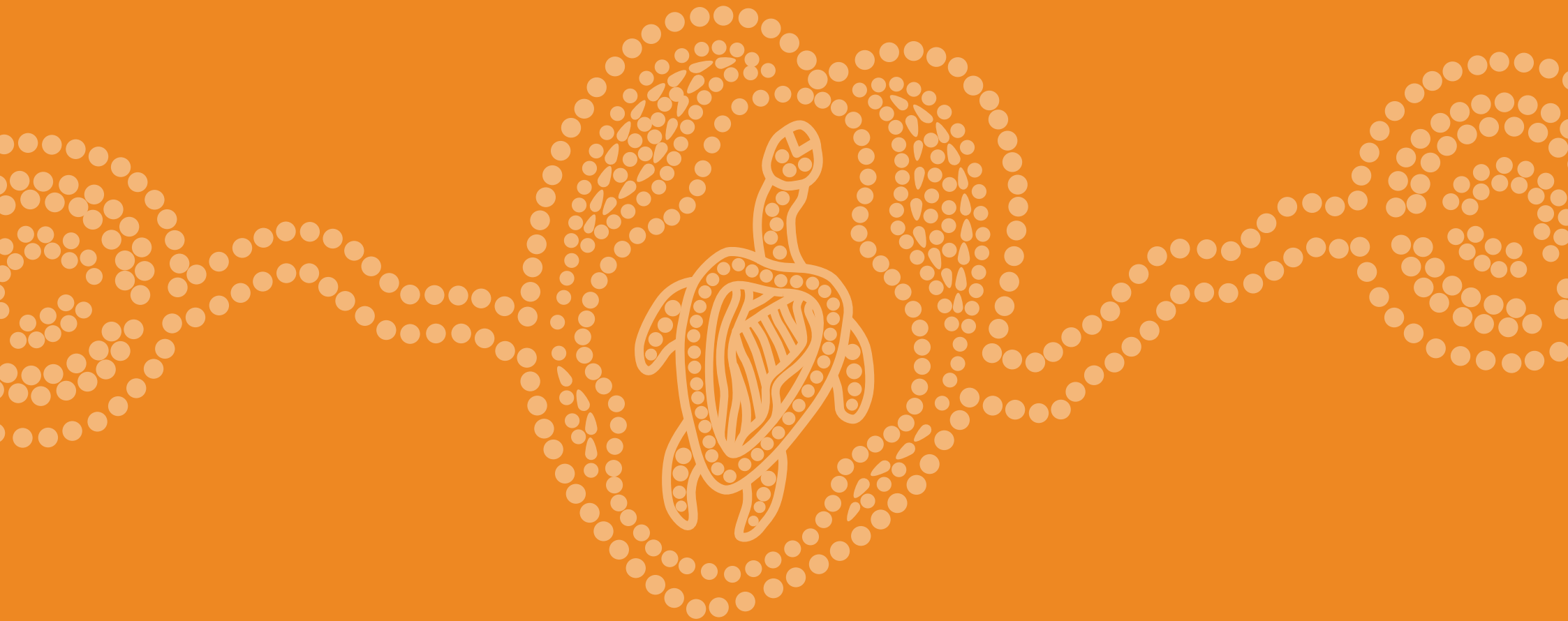


Our Vision

Towards an Australia free of heart disease.

Our Mission

To reduce heart disease and improve the heart health and quality of life of all Australians through our work in Risk Reduction, Support, Care and Research.



Acknowledgement of Country

The Heart Foundation acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respect to them, their cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.

About *us*

At the Heart Foundation, we remain passionate about our role as the peak body for heart research, education, patient support and advocacy programs in Australia.

Our mission – to reduce heart disease and improve heart health and quality of life for all – gives us a clear focus on supporting the more than 4.5 million people in Australia who are currently living with diseases that affect the heart and blood vessels. Through our work, we strive to keep families together for longer.

Over the last 60 years our work has reshaped the health care landscape in Australia. From developing the automatic pacemaker to identifying the link between cholesterol and heart disease, we have helped millions of people to live longer and healthier lives. Since our inception in 1959, we've invested an incredible \$720 million (in today's dollars) into world-leading research programs, including \$13.95 million in 2023 alone.



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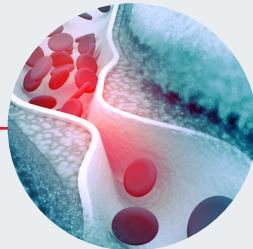
The Heart Foundation 60 years of *impact* for heart health



Key role in developing the automatic pacemaker



Introduced coronary care ambulances and free triple zero emergency phone number



Established the link between cholesterol and heart disease



Helped reduce smoking, a major risk factor for heart disease, through campaigns for advertising bans and plain packaging



Helped many people in Australia to eat more heart healthy diets

Today, coronary heart disease remains the leading cause of death in Australia — accounting for over 17,000 deaths each year.

We continue the fight by funding heart research, delivering interventions to prevent heart disease and providing the latest clinical evidence, education and resources to improve quality of care. Our program of heart research serves those at greatest risk of cardiovascular disease, including women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Message from the *Chair*

After three years of meeting remotely, the board of the National Heart Foundation of Australia started to meet face to face again in 2023 – and what a difference it made! The collegiality, passion and breadth of knowledge brought to bear on our work through the diverse skills and experiences of our board members is remarkable, and being in a room with this dedicated group of volunteers for days at a time has been a joy.

This year we added two new members to the national board.

Professor Ray Mahoney is a proud Bidjara man with family ties to Central West Queensland who brings deep experience in the codesign of a range of cardiovascular disease, health service evaluation and eHealth research projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisation partners and health services. He is the Discipline Lead of Population Health and Professor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in the College of Medicine and Public Health at Flinders University & Principal Research Scientist in the Australian eHealth Research Centre, Health & Biosecurity at CSIRO. Ray's contribution to our deliberations as a board and in particular to the complex task of guiding our work in First Nations cardiovascular heart health has already been remarkable.

Stephen Halliday has chaired our South Australian Advisory board ably for several years, bringing more

than thirty years' experience in a successful career across media, politics, government and government relations to the task. As a government relations specialist with an impressively broad experience, Stephen was Chief of Staff to Premier Mike Rann, with this following a career including work as a Media Adviser to both Governments and Oppositions in South Australia and as a journalist in TV and radio at the ABC. Stephen's insights and wisdom across multiple aspects of our work is very welcome.

Our Advisory Boards in every State and Territory continued to be a tremendous asset, ensuring that we understand local and regional issues and that we remain true to our aspiration to 'think national, act local'. The board is further supported in its work by specialist committees – Heart Health, Risk, Audit and Governance, Revenue, and Investment – each led by a National Board member. These committees deal with issues within their remit at a much more granular level than is possible at the board, and we are blessed to have strong and effective contributions from each of them.

We determined in 2023 that we would begin the process of developing a very long range vision for the Heart Foundation, and to consider what we might be able to achieve over a generation – from 2025 to 2050. This is ambitious, but essential. We know that heart disease takes decades to develop, and that ignorance of the risk of developing it in today's

20 year olds will emerge as disease in the 2040s and 2050s unless we think far ahead. The work of preparing ourselves for the launch of this long term vision began in 2023 and will occupy us during 2024, to be ready for the next generation of impact from 2025 onwards.

This will see the Heart Foundation extend its efforts across the decades to come and be bold in imagining what we can achieve by 2050. Our aim will be nothing less than to ensure that 2050 is the heart-healthiest year Australia will have ever experienced, with heart disease in clear decline across all parts of Australian society. I would like to thank the board, our advisory board and committee members, and indeed all volunteers to the National Heart Foundation for their support of this vision during 2023. We have much to do, but in 2023 the foundations of truly generational impact were clearly being laid.



Mario d'Orazio

Board Chair,
Heart Foundation

Message from the CEO

The Heart Foundation is an unashamedly ambitious organisation, run and governed by ambitious people, and generously supported by ambitious donors, volunteers, patients, clinicians, researchers and members of the general public. We make no apology for this. Heart disease prematurely ended 40,000 Australian lives in 2023, and we have a responsibility to the community that surrounds and supports us and every day to aim high in our response to that fact. We're as ambitious as the Australian patients and their families who depend on us need us to be.

Our long term vision remains to achieve an Australia free from heart disease, and our work towards this end extends from prevention, to the better management of heart disease, to funding research. It's a long term vision that we share with other Heart Foundations in similar countries to Australia around the world, and with which we share ideas and where possible, join forces. We're part of a global response to the issue, and Australia's connection to the global fight against heart disease.

Whilst we know that 90% of heart disease is preventable, we are equally aware that prevention is made easier by favourable economic circumstances, access to services, healthy built environments and affordable, nutritious food. That's not true of everyone in Australia, and in fact if all of us enjoyed the heart health of those in the most favourable economic circumstances, there would be 25% less heart disease and 10,000 fewer deaths caused by it every year.

This insight informed the publication of the Heart Foundation's first Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy in 2023, and that strategy encourages us to reach further into the communities most affected by heart disease and least able to enjoy heart health. Our work has to take us to where the need is greatest.

One area in which our ambitions don't measure up to the global performance one would expect of a first world country is rheumatic heart disease (RHD). That RHD still exists and causes so many deaths in our remote First Nations communities is a surprise to many who have not yet been directly exposed to the fact, but should shame us all, and in partnership with and led by the insights of the communities in which it is still such a serious problem, the Heart Foundation is determined to play our part in putting an end to it.

In other areas however, 2023 was a year to celebrate. With the support of 46,000 supporters who signed our petition we were able to persuade the Australian Government to keep Heart Health Checks on the Medicare Benefits Scheme, and by the end of the year 600,000 Australians had taken advantage of this. Taking their heart health seriously was also key to the astonishing 260,000 members of our walking groups around the country, the 62,000 amongst them who signed up for personal walking plans, and the 16,840 people who downloaded our recipe e-books.

Research remains fundamentally important to our work – and in 2023 we allocated a further \$14m towards cardiovascular research in our medical research

institutes and universities. Heart Foundation fellowships and grants support discovery and innovation from fundamental biology through to public health research, and for decades have played an important part in making sure that our cardiovascular research community is supported with the resources it needs to do its vital work.

Beyond research grants, in 2023 we supported the revitalisation of the State and Territory Cardiovascular Research Networks (CVRNs) with new staff appointments to work for these groups in South Australia, Queensland and Victoria. The growing national network of CVRNs is a fast-growing asset for the research community and one that we hope will help to build collaborations and careers into the future.

The work of the Heart Foundation is almost entirely funded by tens of thousands of generous donors and volunteers, without whose support we would simply cease to exist. All of us fortunate enough to work here understand the profound responsibility we have to these supporters, to explain our work and respond to community views about how we can do it better, and to honour their contributions. Every day, we take care to manage the resources gifted to us wisely and well, and we do our best to ensure that whatever we do will make our donors proud of their association with us.



David Lloyd

Chief Executive Officer,
Heart Foundation

Connecting Hearts:

Our strategy to improve heart health for all

2023 marked the final year of our Connecting Hearts Strategy, where we continued our focus on five strategies for impact to deliver on our mission. Achieving these strategic goals is built on five key values that guide the way we work.

Our strategies for impact

Strategic pillars



Risk reduction

Encourage more people to take action to manage their heart health



Support and Care

Improve the quality of life of people living with heart disease



Research

Continue to be Australia's largest non-government funder of high impact heart health research

Strategic enablers



Financial Sustainability & Growth

Increase our focus on financial sustainability and growth to further scale our community impact



Our people

Inspire and empower our staff and volunteers to deliver impactful community outcomes

Our values

We remain deeply committed to preventing heart disease, funding world leading heart research, as well as delivering initiatives that support and care for everyone in Australia. Closer to home, we continue to recognise the crucial importance of investing in our staff as key to our ongoing success.

- Stronger together
- Make a difference
- Change the future
- Build connections
- Act with integrity



Our achievements in 2023

Helping people manage their risk of heart disease



Heart Health Checks

600,142 (cumulative)
Heart Health Checks delivered.



Heart age calculator

More than 2.35 million (cumulative)
Heart Age Calculator completions.



New cardiovascular disease risk calculator & guideline

Over 470,000 calculations and 6,000
guideline downloads in first five
months after their launch.

Promoting healthy living for healthy hearts



Food and nutrition

16,840 recipe e-book downloads
via our online store.



National Walking Initiative

610 walking groups helping over
50,000 people to become more active.

62,000 people received a
Personal Walking Plan.



Advocating for heart health

Led the *Save the Medicare Heart Health Check* campaign backed by over 45,000
community supporters, which secured
Government support for the program to 2025.

Support and care for people living with heart disease



Patient engagement

Over 70,000 people (cumulative) recalled to their regular doctor for a Heart Health Check.



Patient support program

Connected 2,700 people living with a heart condition via an online peer support community.



Health professionals

Over 150,000 health professionals who accessed the online heart health check toolkit.

34,000 views of the clinical webinar series.



Equity in heart health

Established the First Nations Heart Health Team leading our work to advance equitable health outcomes for everyone living in Australia.



Financial sustainability and growth

Achieved \$56.5 million in revenue.



Funding heart research

Invested \$13.95 million in 84 cardiovascular research projects.

Strategic Pillar 1: Risk reduction

Encouraging more people to take action to manage their heart health.

We strive to prevent heart disease before it strikes through a range of programs designed to reduce individual risk.

In 2023, we continued to deliver on our strategy to reduce risk through:

Screening and risk management

Increasing awareness around heart disease risk and increasing uptake of the GP Heart Health Check and Heart Age Calculator.

Modifiable lifestyle factors

Increasing public awareness of heart-healthy eating patterns and the importance of regular physical activity.

Advocacy to government

Advocating for positive policy change and investment at federal government level.

Achieving our mission relies on working with key stakeholders and partners. We support and engage health professionals and professional organisations, influence policymakers to take action and empower and inform all Australians to prevent heart disease. Together, we can deliver equitable health outcomes by focusing on people and communities at increased risk of cardiovascular disease and help individuals, families and communities across Australia live longer, healthier lives

We have shared our key risk reduction achievements in 2023 in the following section.



Setting the standard for heart disease prevention

A new guideline to assess and manage cardiovascular disease risk

In 2023, funded by the Australian Government, we led the first major update in over a decade of Australia's Guideline for assessing and managing cardiovascular disease risk, as well as updating the Australian cardiovascular disease risk calculator.

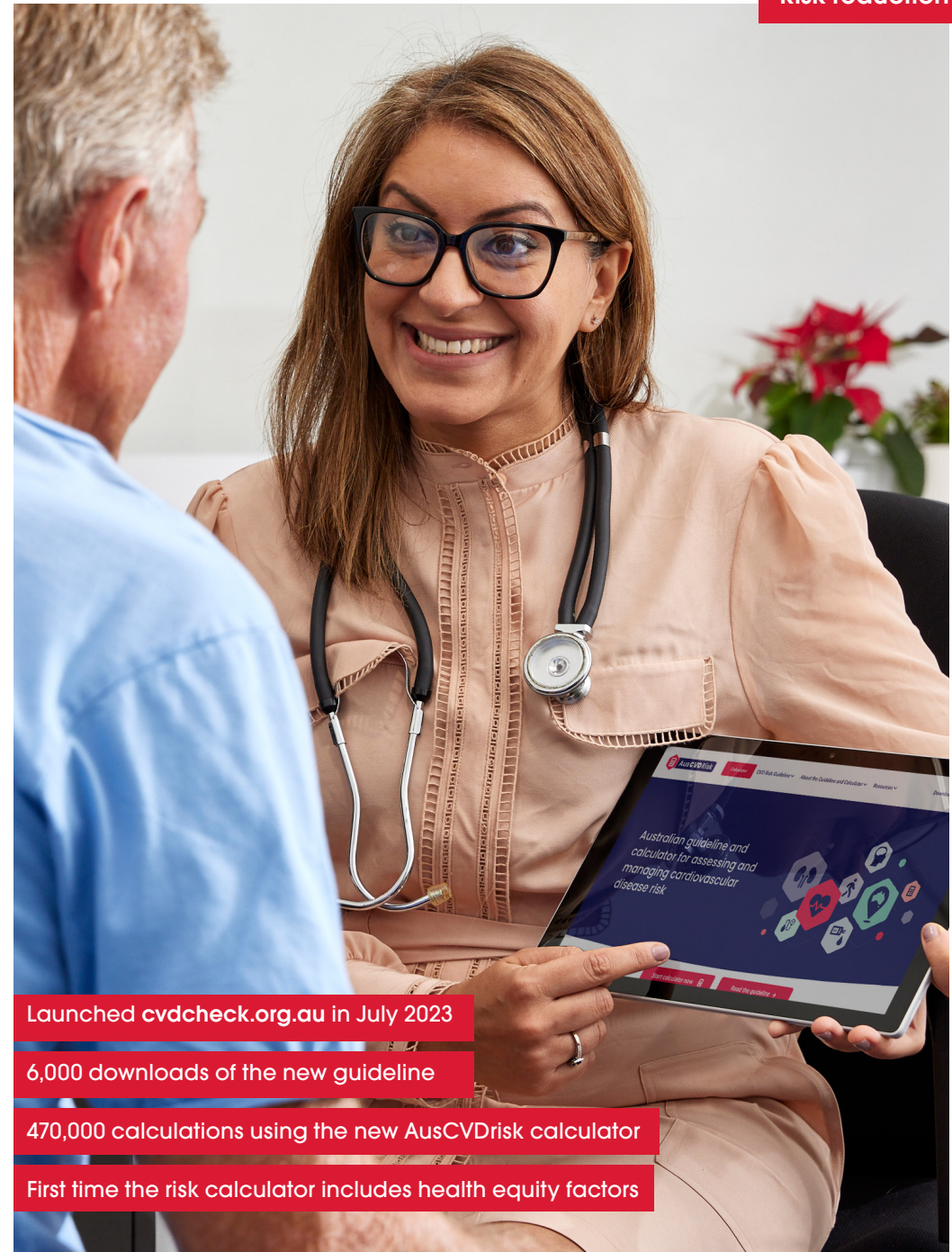
The updated Australian Guideline and risk calculator for assessing and managing cardiovascular disease risk has set the new standard for clinical cardiovascular disease prevention in Australia.

Healthcare providers will use the guideline and risk calculator to assess a person's risk of developing a heart attack or stroke in next five years, then work with them to help manage that risk.

The risk calculator, AusCVDrisk, provides a more accurate assessment of cardiovascular disease risk for Australians than previous calculators because it is:

- based on a contemporary dataset that better represents the Australian population.
- underpinned by an equation that has been uniquely modified and recalibrated for the Australian population.
- the first Australian cardiovascular disease risk calculator to account for socioeconomic disadvantage.

Through this project we brought together one of the largest health-sector collaboratives of four chronic disease peak bodies, nine expert advisory groups across ten clinical specialties, a dedicated First Nations advisory group and a consumer advisory panel. We extend our thanks to members of advisory panels who generously volunteered their time, and to our collaborators for their contributions to this critical prevention tool in the fight to end heart disease.



Launched cvdcheck.org.au in July 2023

6,000 downloads of the new guideline

470,000 calculations using the new AusCVDrisk calculator

First time the risk calculator includes health equity factors

Helping people understanding their risk of heart disease

Heart Health Checks: helping people reduce their risks

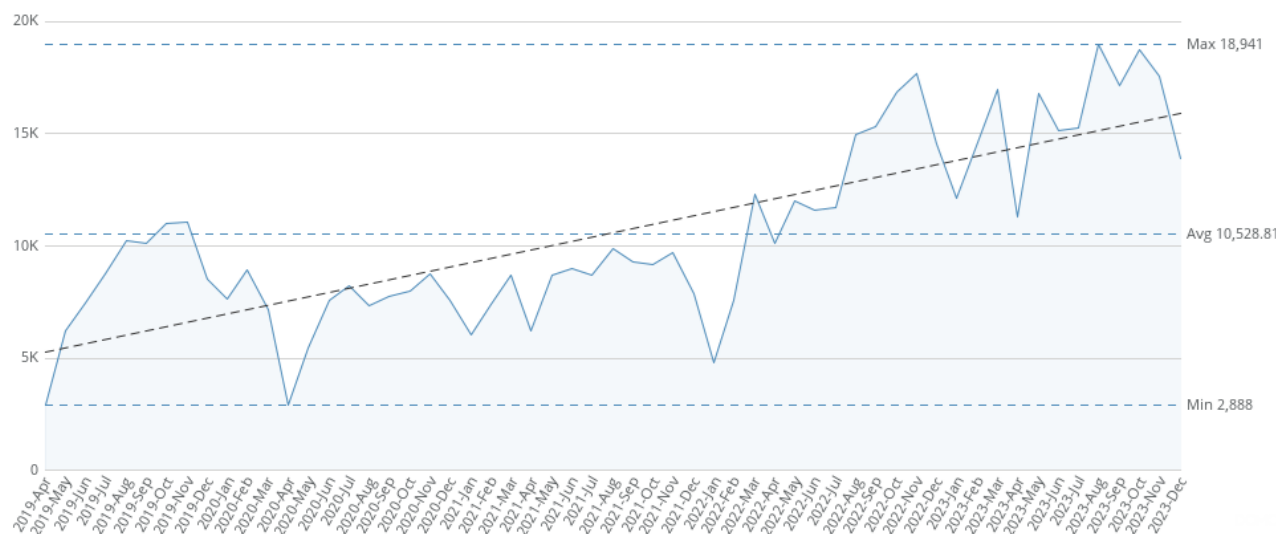
We are committed to increasing the number of Heart Health Checks accessed in general practice across Australia as a key strategy for risk reduction. In 2023, there were 39,264 more people getting a Heart Health Check than in 2022 – an increase of 26%.

A Heart Health Check is a Medicare subsidised 20-minute check up with your general practitioner to assess your risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years.

We seek to drive greater uptake of the Heart Health Check through four complementary approaches:

- **Teaching people how they can learn about their risk.** Increasing awareness of the Heart Health Check through national campaigns such as our annual Heart Week
- **Helping people understand their risk.** Encouraging Australians to understand their risk of developing heart disease and take action via our Heart Age Calculator
- **Supporting health professionals to deliver best practice prevention.** Supporting health professionals to deliver best practice care through new tools, clinical guidelines and education such as the Heart Health Toolkit
- **Identifying people at high risk.** Actively delivering targeted screening programs in partnership with general practices to recall people at risk of heart disease for a Heart Health Check

Number of heart health checks delivered



The Heart Health Check Toolkit: evidence-based tools for health professionals

Launched in 2021, our Heart Health Check Toolkit continues to be a popular one-stop digital resource for general practice teams to integrate Heart Health Checks into routine patient care with over 150,000 users to date.

In 2023, we added new resources to the toolkit to align with latest Australian guideline recommendations for the assessment and management of cardiovascular disease risk.

General practitioners can easily assess and manage heart disease risk in line with the latest evidence-based guidance using the templates, quality improvement tools, patient engagement resources and other resources provided in the toolkit.

- Over 150,000 unique users
- 390,000 unique page views
- Up to date with latest Australian clinical guidelines for risk management

National Heart Health Check Recall Program: helping people at risk

The National Heart Health Check Recall Program has been embraced by the primary care sector to ensure that people at risk of cardiovascular disease see their regular general practitioner for a Heart Health Check.

By 2023, over 70,000 Australians had been recalled for a Heart Health Check through the program.

The recall program provides general practices with innovative clinical software to identify people at risk and recall them for a Heart Health Check with their doctor via text message (by phone). Delivery of this program is supported by 11 Primary Health Networks, the Australian Primary healthcare Nurses Association and the Australian Association of Practice Managers.

The recall program was designed based on robust evidence and behavioural design theory, and has been implemented as a three-armed, real-world, randomised control trial. This approach ensures the outcomes of the program grow the evidence base for best practice in risk reduction for cardiovascular disease.

2021	2022 & 2023	Looking to 2024
Pilot phase: Successful delivery of the pilot program	Phase 2: Engaged 200 general practices to target at risk people across Australia, including individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in geographical locations with disproportionately higher rates of cardiovascular mortality • who have not recently been screened for heart disease risk factors. 	Finalising and publishing outcomes of the trial and its impact



“This is a great program. I would highly recommend it to any practice. We have identified patients who are at a high risk for a (cardiovascular disease) event. It is exciting to see that we can actively be involved in prevention activities and encourage our patients to embrace change before an event happens. This program worked!”

– General Practice Staff (Phase 2 participant)

Heart Age Calculator

The Heart Foundation's Heart Age Calculator has helped Australians between 35 and 75 years to better understand their long term risk of developing heart disease with 2.35 million calculations made to date. Using the tool aims to motivate at-risk Australians to see their general practitioner for a Heart Health Check. After completing the calculator people are provided with an option of a 10-week self-managed program to support heart healthy habits, delivered via email.

The Heart Age Calculator and follow up program has positively impacted people to seek a clinical assessment with their doctor and to make changes to their lifestyle¹.

2.35 million Heart Age calculations

Encourages people at risk to:

- get a Heart Health Check with their doctor.
- build healthy habits supported by a self-managed program

¹ Bonner C, Raffoul N, Battaglia T, Mitchell J, Batcup C, Stavreski B. Experiences of a National Web-Based Heart Age Calculator for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention: User Characteristics, Heart Age Results, and Behavior Change Survey J Med Internet Res. 2020. 22(8):e19028. doi: 10.2196/19028



Heart Week

Every year, the Heart Foundation's Heart Week campaign highlights critical issues impacting Australia's heart health.

Heart Week 2023 sought to encourage Australians to consider their personal risk of heart disease and increase the number of Heart Health Checks during a critical time of potential policy and practice change. Building on previous years, we developed an integrated, digital campaign underpinned by the Heart Foundation's strategies for risk reduction.

Heart Week reached 4.2 million people in 2023, including health professionals

During the 2023 campaign:

- we reached more than 4 million consumers and health professionals via social media, radio and earned media.
- over 28,000 Heart Health Checks were delivered in April and May 2023.

Promoting active lifestyles for healthy hearts

National Walking Initiative

People across the country have experienced the physical, mental and social benefits of regular exercise through the Heart Foundation's National Walking Initiative, which includes walking groups, Personal Walking Plans and community programs to encourage active lifestyles.

In 2023, the Heart Foundation secured ongoing funding from the Australian Government for the National Walking Initiative, which will help more people in Australia get active especially people who are at higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

With this support, we can grow and diversify the program's reach and impact to reduce risk of heart disease, building on the success of Heart Foundation Walking and Active Living programs.

In 2023:

- 600 walking groups supported 50,000 people to be active
- Groups were led by over 870 volunteer walk organisers
- 90% of people said they will continue walking after completing the Personal Walking Plan
- International recognition for the success of Heart Foundation Walking

Heart Foundation Walking

More than 600 walking groups supported 50,000 Australians from all walks of life to get and stay active in 2023. These grass-roots groups organised by over 870 driven and dedicated volunteers continue to inspire and bring together Australian communities.

Personal Walking Plans continued to grow in 2023 with 62,000 people signing up for a free, six-week plan. Since launch in 2021, over 214,000 people in total have signed up. In 2023, 90% of participants told us that they will continue walking after completing the plan, while 87% suggested that the walking plan likely improved their general mood and outlook. Two-way conversational SMS support has allowed people to better engage with their walking journey by asking questions, sending progress updates or completing feedback surveys, which help us to understand and respond to the needs of participants.

We also continued to promote Heart Foundation Walking in 2023:

- to health professionals through materials displayed in clinics and distributed at conferences.
- to the Australian public through awareness campaigns such as Walk Well Together, a bespoke campaign in collaboration with the Royal College of General Practice (RACGP) and Walking Wins, our digital media campaign for a broad public audience.
- Scale-up of the program won the award for Best Presentation on Policy and Practice at the Asia-Pacific Society for Physical Activity Conference in Wellington, New Zealand.

Active Living

Through our Active Living program, we support healthy, active lifestyles by providing evidence-based tools and insights to improve Australia's built environments. In 2023, we launched a new engagement strategy to increase the impact of our Healthy Active by Design platform, recognising the sustained interest it has received from the built environment sector. Healthy Active by Design equips built environment practitioners with tools and guidance to design and build healthy, accessible neighbourhoods. It also empowers communities to advocate for greater access to safer and more walkable environments where they live, work and play.

"For nearly 15 years (they have) led us EVERY Tuesday morning – rain, hail, cloudy, drizzly, windy or shine. (They have) been all-inclusive of new people who are always made to feel welcome."

- walking group participant, about a volunteer walk organiser in Western Australia



² Percentages indicate the proportion of survey respondents in a participant feedback survey.

Supporting heart-healthy eating

We continued to expand the Heart Foundation's culinary nutrition resources in 2023 to help consumers follow a heart-healthy eating pattern. The Heart Foundation website now provides 400 recipes, 67 stop-motion videos and 20 themed recipe e-books. Recipe e-book downloads via the website's online store reached 16,840 people, an increase of 30% compared to 2022.

Several key partnerships and collaborations boosted promotion of heart healthy eating:

- Four television segments on Weekender showcasing our culinary nutrition assets and heart-healthy eating messages to Australian viewers, in collaboration with Channel 7.
- Partnership with Sanitarium supporting Sanitarium's Cholesterol Lowering Weet-Bix product including the Heart Foundation logo on the packaging.
- Exclusive sponsor of Dietitians Australia's 40th Anniversary Conference Dinner & Awards Ceremony, serving a heart-healthy menu to 200 health professionals attending the conference.
- Collaboration with Cobram Estate, an Australian producer of extra virgin olive oil, to deliver a webinar on the science of the mediterranean diet to health professionals.

In 2023:

30%

increase in downloads of Heart Foundation's recipe e-books

4

television segments promoted our culinary nutrition resources and benefits of healthy eating for your heart.

3

commercial partnerships promoted healthy eating



Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Strategic Pillar 2: Support and care

Improving the quality of life for people living with heart disease.

Supporting people who live with heart disease and those who care for them is key to delivering on our mission. Our strategic approach aims to improve the quality of life and health outcomes of Australians living with heart disease.

By developing a multi-modal patient support program, we seek to help people better understand and manage their heart health, particularly groups who have a higher risk or incidence of cardiovascular disease such as women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In 2023, we continued to deliver on our support and care strategy through:

Patient support

Expanding our support for people living with heart disease to include tailored journey of support which can be scaled nationally

Health professionals

Developing best practice medical guidelines and supporting the clinical workforce to apply them

Advocacy to government

Advocating for positive policy change and investment at all levels of government for people living with heart disease.

We are grateful to the group of volunteers with lived experience of heart disease who provide their perspective to our programs and campaigns through their membership of the Healthcare Programs Consumer Advisory Group. We thank them for sharing their time and experiences to help us deliver on our mission.

We have shared some of our key Support and Care achievements in 2023 in the following section.



Supporting people after a heart event

Redesign of the My Heart, My Life patient support program

My Heart, My Life is the Heart Foundation's patient support program designed to help people manage their heart health following a heart event, when coming to terms with a heart disease diagnosis and learning to live with a chronic condition can be challenging.

In 2023, we have redesigned the My Heart My Life program by listening to the needs and perspectives of people living with heart disease, their carers and health professionals. Set to launch in 2024, the new 12-week program will deliver tailored information and support via engaging online content, text messages by phone, expert videos and emails. Through the Australian Government funded Heart of the Community project, we are working with stakeholders located in heart disease hotspots in Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory to customise the MyHeart, MyLife program for people living in rural and remote Australia.

Launch of the My Heart, My Life peer support online community

In 2023, we connected 2,700 people living with a heart condition from across Australia with in a safe, virtual space moderated by the Heart Foundation through the My Heart, My Life online community.

Members can connect, share experiences and encourage each other through peer support, which is known to improve quality of life by reducing loneliness and empowering people to make and maintain lifestyle changes for their heart health.



My Heart, My Life online community connected 2,700 people living with heart disease in 2023



Clinical education for health professionals

Our clinical education webinar series is a go-to resource for primary care health professionals, providing the latest evidence-based insights on cardiovascular disease prevention and management.

In 2023, our webinar series increased momentum. Leading international and Australian experts presented interactive clinical education sessions as part of accredited continued professional development that covered:

- understanding and managing residual risk
- introduction to the new cardiovascular disease risk guideline and AusCVDRisk Calculator
- case studies demonstrating use in clinical practice of the new risk guideline and calculator
- unravelling the link between mental health and cardiovascular disease.

“Excellent summary of new guidelines; timely and well-formatted; simultaneous Q&A was highly responsive and several panellists available to answer very specific questions. Thank you for all of your efforts”

— Doctor, New South Wales

- Average of 2,000 health professionals attended per webinar
- Over 34,000 live and recorded views of the webinar series



National Primary Care Cardiovascular Disease Roadshow

Nationally designed and locally implemented, the Heart Foundation's National Primary Care Cardiovascular Disease Roadshow was in seven regional and metro areas around Australia during 2023 in partnership with Primary Health Networks. The roadshow provides virtual clinical education on heart disease prevention directly to general practitioners, nurses and cardiologists through interactive workshops that provide the latest evidence on cardiovascular disease prevention relevant to the needs of their local area.

We are grateful for funding from Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care to deliver the roadshow, and support from the Victorian Government for its development. We also thank our Primary Health Network (PHN) partners – Gippsland PHN, Murray PHN, Brisbane South PHN, Western Sydney PHN (WentWest), Primary Health Tasmania, WA Primary Health Alliance, Northern Territory PHN and the Rural Workforce Agency.

“I really enjoyed it and feel it makes my clinical decision-making easier as I have great guidelines to show the patients”

— General Practitioner,
Tasmania



Advocating for heart health

Our advocacy work in 2023 reflects a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of various health and social issues that impact on cardiovascular health, driving forward our mission to improve heart health outcomes for everyone in Australia.

Through our policy and advocacy work with governments across Australia, our aim is to ensure that the policy decisions and investments made by governments will lead to better heart health outcomes.

Medicare-supported Heart Health Checks extended until 2026 after Heart Foundation-led campaign

Outstanding display of community support:

- 46,000 petition signatures
- 1,500 supporters advocating to Parliamentarians

Leading the campaign to Save the Medicare Heart Health Check

The Heart Foundation led a successful campaign to save Medicare support for the Heart Health Check program, backed by more than 46,000 community supporters.

Medicare support for the life-saving Heart Health Check was set to expire

in June 2023, which would have made it a lot harder and more expensive for people to receive a comprehensive assessment of their heart health by a general practitioner.

We responded by spearheading a robust campaign to secure the extension of this life-saving program. The campaign underscored the community's overwhelming support for the critical Heart Health Checks with over 46,000 people signing our petition and 1,500 dedicated supporters reaching out directly to their Members of Parliament.

This coordinated effort culminated in a significant victory for heart health advocacy with the Australian Government announcing in May 2023 the extension of the Medicare Heart Health Check item number for an additional two years until June 2025. This will ensure that the people of Australia can continue to access these life-saving heart health evaluations.

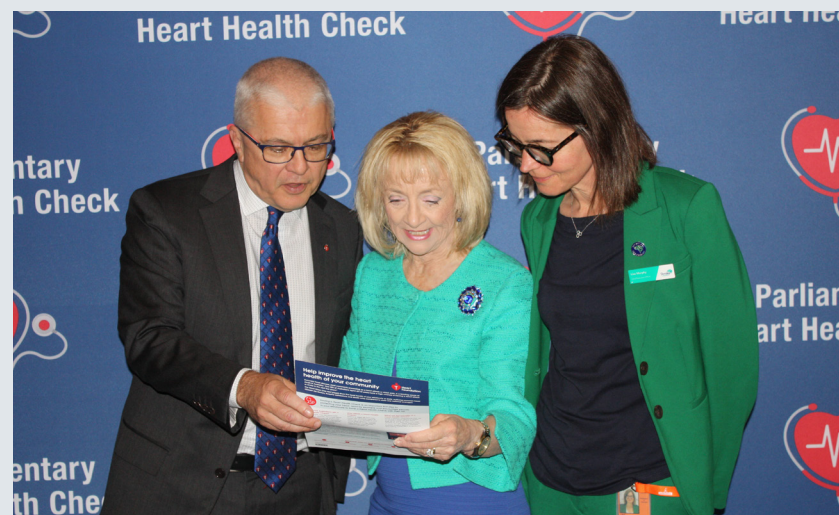
2023 Parliament Heart Health Day:

engaging our nation's leaders about how they can help to prevent heart disease

Over 100 politicians engaged in heart checks at the 2023 Heart Health Day at Parliament House in Canberra, demonstrating their dedication to understanding and mitigating the risk of heart disease.

In collaboration with our partners Amgen, Bayer, Sanofi, the Stroke Foundation, and the Parliamentary Friends of Heart Health, the Heart Foundation hosted the annual Heart Health Day at Parliament House in Canberra for the sixth time. Politicians received assessments of blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) levels, providing them with an understanding of their heart health.

We leveraged this opportunity to engage with all MPs about the importance of introducing policies aimed at improving heart health, such as tighter tobacco control, improving air quality, increasing exercise, and ensuring everybody has access to healthy food.



Advancements in tobacco control: a 2023 milestone

In 2023, the Heart Foundation, alongside other leading public health organisations, ensured Australia continued to remain a global leader in tobacco control.

40 years of advocacy to reduce smoking among Australians

Significant victory for heart health in 2023: new Australian laws passed which will further restrict tobacco advertising and introduce controls on e-cigarettes

Our collective efforts have significantly contributed to the reduction of smoking rates across the nation over the last 40 years, driven by established clinical evidence that smoking is one of the foremost risk factors for health complications, particularly cardiovascular disease.

Our continued advocacy has catalysed the Australian

Government's introduction of a new tobacco control strategy and legislation, designed to further restrict advertising, enhance plain packaging requirements and introduce new controls for e-cigarettes. We have made numerous submissions to government and parliamentary inquiries, which has shaped the pioneering new tobacco control laws passed in 2023 to effectively curtail tobacco's detrimental effects on cardiovascular health.

This is a landmark victory in our ongoing battle against tobacco-induced health issues and underscores our commitment to safeguarding the heart health of Australians through persistent advocacy and strategic policy engagement.

Inquiry into Long COVID and Repeated COVID Infections

Our continued engagement with the Australian Parliament's inquiry into long COVID and repeated COVID infections led to a boost in Government funding for heart health research.

The inquiry marked a significant opportunity for us to highlight the serious impacts of COVID-19 on cardiovascular health and underscores our ongoing commitment to addressing the evolving challenges of cardiovascular disease in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our submission helped to shape the inquiry's outcomes, with the final report from the Committee prominently acknowledging the link between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease, mirroring our advocacy efforts closely. Furthermore, we called for a substantial increase in funding for medical research dedicated to understanding COVID-19's impacts on cardiovascular health.

The Committee's response was encouraging, endorsing our position by recommending to the Australian Government a boost in research funding. This advocacy win was further solidified when the Australian Government took action on this recommendation, promising enhanced support for vital research in this area.



Submissions to government consultations and parliamentary inquiries

Throughout 2023, we aimed to influence policy changes that support our vision of a world where people live free from heart disease. The Heart Foundation proactively engaged in parliamentary inquiries and government consultations, demonstrating our commitment to a holistic approach in combating heart disease and promoting public health.

In 2023, we made 25 submissions where we advocated for action in a range of areas including:

- **more informative food packaging and labelling to help consumers make heart-healthy choices.** We advocated for policies that support the reduction of salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats in the diet.
- **initiatives to prevent and manage diabetes.** Our submissions emphasised the importance of integrated care approaches and the need for diabetes-focussed public health initiatives, given the strong link with cardiovascular diseases.
- **increasing regular physical exercise among all age groups.** We advocated for a range of policies and initiatives including the development of public spaces conducive to exercise, programs that promote active lifestyles, and education on the benefits of physical activity for preventing and managing heart disease.
- **reducing the impact of poverty on health.** We urged for policies that address the social determinants of health and reduce health inequities, highlighting how socio-economic disparities contribute to the burden of cardiovascular disease.
- **increasing organ and tissue donation rates.** We advocated for policies that increase organ donation rates, which are vital for patients requiring life-saving transplants, including heart transplants.
- **stricter tobacco control measures.** We advocated for tighter restrictions on tobacco use as it is a leading cause of preventable heart disease.
- **regulations to manage use and marketing of e-cigarettes.** With their rising popularity, we stressed the need for e-cigarettes control, given the emerging evidence on their health impacts.



Strategy 1

Strategy 2

Strategy 3

Strategic Pillar 3: Research

Continue our work as Australia's largest non-government funder of high-impact cardiovascular research.

As Australia's largest non-government funder of cardiovascular research, we are committed to advancing knowledge to better prevent, treat and manage conditions like heart disease, stroke and blood vessel disease. The research pillar encompasses our research funding portfolio as well as strategic and collaborative partnerships with our research partners.

In 2023, we continued to deliver on our research program by:

- **Funding high impact research.** Awarding scholarships, fellowships and grants to support both high-calibre projects and talented researchers.
- **Facilitating research across the spectrum.** Supporting research opportunities from biomedical and clinical research to public health and health services research to improve the heart health of people in Australia.
- **Showcasing and leveraging research.** Building connections with researchers and strategic partners by sharing stories that shape and influence cardiovascular research.
- **Ensuring high impact research programs.** Evaluating the impact of our research programs to ensure their outputs contribute to the evidence base and that we deliver best practice health care programs.

Our research program would not be possible without our panel of independent peer and consumer reviewers. We extend them our thanks for volunteering their time and expertise, ensuring that applications to our highly competitive grants program undergo rigorous review. We also thank our volunteer members of the Research Strategy Committee, who provide advice and strategic direction for the Heart Foundation's research program.

We have shared 2023 highlights of our research program in the following section.



Funding research to better combat cardiovascular disease

In 2023, the Heart Foundation's flagship funding schemes awarded nearly \$14 million to 84 grants that will support cardiovascular researchers and research projects.

\$13.95 million to support:

12

Future Leader
Fellowships

14

Postdoctoral
Fellowships

4

Honorary
Fellowships

32

Vanguard
Grants

13

PhD Scholarships

1

Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander Award

8

Collaboration and
Exchange Awards

Enhancing impact and delivery of our research funding program

In 2023, we introduced several new initiatives to increase the impact of the research we fund and efficiency of the program we deliver.

New opportunity - Catalyst Partnership Grants

A new grant opportunity has been in development and will launch in 2024, providing funding in a strategic and innovative way towards the national fight against cardiovascular disease.

A new Grants Management Portal

The portal will provide a greatly enhanced user experience for researchers as applicants and streamline management by the Heart Foundation for all funding opportunities.

Impact & Evaluation Programs

The Heart Foundation is committed to measuring the impact and effectiveness of its research funding. This is to ensure that research funding is being directed to where is likely to make a difference and improve cardiovascular health.



2023 Research Awards

Shirley E Freeman Innovation Award

Named in honour of Shirley E Freeman AM (1924–2014), the first woman to receive research funding from the Heart Foundation, this award recognises the most innovative, successful and female-led applications to the Heart Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship and Future Leader Fellowship programs. In addition to a Heart Foundation Fellowship, the successful recipients receive \$20,000.

Postdoctoral Fellowship awardee: Dr Rosemary Wyber

Project: *Reconceptualising the staging of rheumatic heart disease to be meaningful for consumers, professionals and health service delivery.*

Future Leader Fellowship awardee: Dr Mirana Ramialison

Project: *Location, location, location: deciphering spatial gene regulatory networks in heart development and congenital heart disease.*

Paul Korner Innovation Award

Professor Paul Korner was a pioneer of cardiac physiology in Australia who passed away in 2012. This award, which was established to honour his remarkable achievements in the field, is given to the most innovative, successful and male-led applications to the Heart Foundation's Postdoctoral Fellowship and Future Leader Fellowship programs. In addition to the fellowship funding, successful recipients receive \$20,000 in project support.

Postdoctoral Fellowship awardee: Dr Mark Louis Vidallon

Project: *Innovative bioengineering of nanodelivery systems with mRNA-based therapeutics for inflammatory and cardiovascular diseases*

Future Leader Fellowship awardee: Dr Simon Foster

Project: *New therapeutic targets for fibrosis-related cardiac dysfunction*

Ross Hohnen Award for Research Excellence

Ross Hohnen AM OBE played an instrumental role in founding the Heart Foundation. This award, which recognises the most outstanding and innovative research project among awardees of the Heart Foundation Vanguard Grant, has been established in his memory. In addition to the grant funding, the successful recipient receives \$10,000 in project support.

Awardee: Dr Maria Jelinic

Project: *Spatial multiomic analysis of the human coronary artery plaque*



Dr Rosemary Wyber



Dr Mirana Ramialison



Dr Mark Louis Vidallon



Dr Simon Foster



Dr Maria Jelinic

Cardiovascular Research Networks: connecting the heart research community

The Heart Foundation continues to maintain strong ties with heart health researchers around Australia by supporting cardiovascular research networks across the nation.

In 2023, we increased support for three existing networks based in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia, re-instated the South Australian network, and established a fifth network in Victoria.

With support from the Heart Foundation, the five research networks work to improve the prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease for all people living in Australia by creating vibrant, world-class cardiovascular research communities.

We aim to achieve this by:

- **fostering multidisciplinary collaborations** in cardiovascular research
- **building research capacity** and supporting research workforce development
- **representing a diverse membership across the research and translation pathway**
- **providing a collective voice at the state level** to support cardiovascular research
- **advocating for increased investment** in cardiovascular research

We supported growth of these networks enabling new opportunities for researchers to work together, share knowledge, support and recognise outstanding early and mid-career researchers, and provide expert advice to governments and the community at the state level.



Encouraging cardiovascular research excellence across Australia

5 research networks

Over 1200 members nationwide

323 new members in 2023



WA Cardiovascular Research Alliance (WACRA)

Established: 2019

Membership:
Over 200 individuals.

Highlights in 2023:

the Heart Foundation became the major sponsor of the alliance.

111 members attended 2 key events

- An early-mid career researcher 'Heart-to-Vessel Research Showcase'
- The inaugural annual Awards Night celebrating research successes of Western Australia's best and brightest minds.

11 awards and prizes

- 5 EMCR showcase awards
- 7 publication, research, impact, and leadership awards.



QLD Cardiovascular Research Network

Established: 2015

Membership:
Over 300 individuals.

Highlights in 2023:

\$20,000 in awards and grants

- 3 PhD top-up scholarships.
- 5 grants to support development of major proposals.
- 7 grants to support professional graphics for publications and grants.

2023 Research Showcase and Networking Event 'Cardiovascular Game Changers: Showcasing Queensland's Cardiovascular Research' with guest speakers Professor Gemma Figtree and Heart Foundation CEO David Lloyd.



NSW Cardiovascular Research Network

Established: 2015

Membership:
Over 600 individuals, 6 universities and 8 medical research institutes.

Highlights in 2023:

Secured 3-year extension of funding from the NSW Government to foster and strengthen NSW cardiovascular research capacity

\$250,000 in awards and grants to NSW heart health researchers for professional development, career advancement, innovation grants and travel awards

450 EMCRs attended network events in 2023, including Rising Stars seminars and a consumer involvement masterclass.



SA Cardiovascular Research Network

Re-launched: 2023

Membership:
Over 100 individuals.

Highlights in 2023:

Research network reinstated by the Heart Foundation recruited over 100 new members

Facilitated \$67,500 in grants from South Australian research trusts EO Myers and Tom Simpson Trusts

3 research and networking events

- SA Cardiovascular Research Showcase "Connecting Hearts, Inspiring Minds"
- Emerging Leaders Symposium
- Mentor dinner



VIC Cardiovascular Research Network

Highlights in 2023:

New Cardiovascular research network established in 2023

Launched in December 2023 at 'Christmas with heart', an evening of networking and panel discussions with researchers and people with lived experience of heart disease.

- 75 attendees
- 16 speakers: 7 men and 9 women

Emerging pillar: Population health and wellbeing

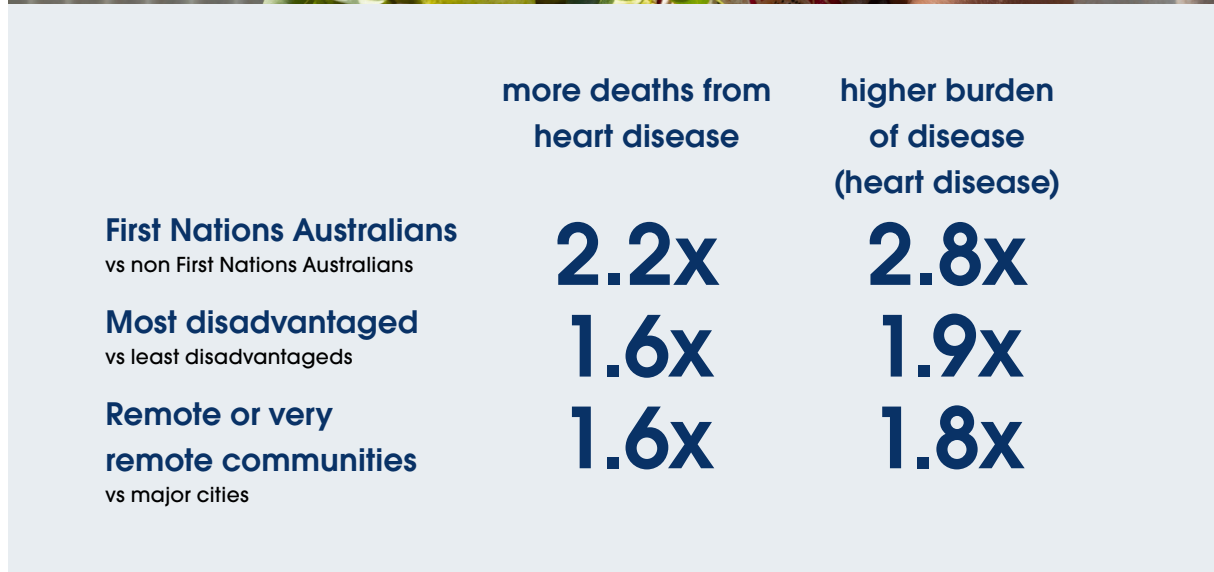
We are dedicated to reducing inequities in heart health and improving quality of life for everyone.

In 2023, the Heart Foundation took a significant step forward in our ongoing commitment to improving the heart health of all people in Australia. We established a new structural pillar of the organisation - Population Health and Wellbeing – encompassing equity, diversity and inclusion, and the health of First Nations Australians. With this sharper focus, we recognise the significant disparities in heart health that exist in our population and communities and seek to integrate a health equity lens across the breadth of the organisation’s work.

We have three immediate priorities:

- Improving heart health for First Nations people in Australia
- Contributing to national efforts to end acute rheumatic fever (ARF) and rheumatic heart disease (RHD)
- Developing the Heart Foundation’s Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Ensuring that our programs and resources are accessible, relevant, and valued by a diverse population is essential for promoting equitable health outcomes, reducing disparities, and maximising the impact of health interventions.



Infographic data: 'Deaths from heart disease' represents deaths from cardiovascular disease per 100,000 people; 'Burden of disease (heart disease)' has been calculated using burden of disease in daily adjusted life years (DALYs). Most and least disadvantaged groups were determined using the the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Australian Bureau of Statistics. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and Australian Bureau of Statistics analysis of the ABS Causes of Death: Table D1.23.18. 2020

Improving heart health for First Nations peoples in Australia

Cardiovascular disease is the main contributor to the gap in life expectancy between First Nations peoples and other Australians, predominantly due to the complex interplay between social, cultural, economic, environmental and political factors. Through our work, we seek to address this significant and unacceptable disparity by identifying people who are at high risk, delivering culturally sensitive programs, providing health education resources and strategic advocacy.

In 2023, we were proud to establish our first dedicated **First Nations Heart Health team** leading the Heart Foundation's work to advance equitable and sustainable health outcomes. The Heart Foundation also established a partnership with the Aboriginal Investment Group (AIG), working together on a number of initiatives with Aboriginal communities to address heart health inequities.

Our new First Nations Heart Health Team delivered:

- **Three heart and skin health promotion and education sessions** in remote Northern Territory communities of Angurugu on Groote Eylandt, Milyakburra on Bikerton Island and Barunga, southeast of Katherine. Workshop sessions focussed on environmental factors that contribute to acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease and how to prevent it.
- **Heart health events at the 2023 Barunga Festival** In partnership with AIG and on request from community members, the Heart Foundation attended Barunga Festival, providing Jump Rope For Heart sessions and opportunities to engage with health professionals to learn more about heart health.



Contributing to national efforts towards ending rheumatic heart disease and acute rheumatic fever

Australia's First Nations communities have some of the highest rates of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in the world, predominantly affecting women and younger people under 25 years. Addressing these unacceptable disparities is an immediate priority.

Both diseases are serious but are preventable and manageable. Rheumatic heart disease involves damage to one or more of the four small heart valves, while acute rheumatic fever occurs when valve damage remains after an illness.

First Nations people represent over 80% of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease cases in Australia

Mortality rates are 5.2-times higher for First Nations peoples than that for other Australians

60% of people dying from rheumatic heart disease and acute rheumatic fever are women

In 2023, we contributed to national efforts towards ending rheumatic heart disease and acute rheumatic fever by:

Risk reduction	Support & care	Research
<p>Supporting Remote Community Laundries in remote Northern Territory communities.</p> <p>Through our strong partnership with AIG, we increased access to washing facilities to prevent scabies, a key risk factor for infection and developing acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.</p> <p>Laundries have led to a 60% reduction in scabies in these communities.</p> <p>With AIG and Flinders University, we developed a social impact framework to measure the health, social and economic impacts of remote laundries.</p>	<p>Updating and maintaining the Australian Guidelines for Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease with the Menzies School of Health Research (Northern Territory).</p> <p>The guidelines provide clinically sound and culturally safe care to people living with acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.</p> <p>Downloads of the guideline reached 35,618 total downloads in 2023, an increase of 31% compared to 2022.</p>	<p>National and international knowledge sharing</p> <p>We joined with 500 people from 55 countries at the first World Congress on RHD in Abu Dhabi. The Heart Foundation supported two Champions4Change to attend and present at the congress. Prior to the World Congress, we delivered a National RHD Symposium in partnership with the Snow Foundation and Telethon Kids Institute, focussing on the Australian setting.</p>

Risk reduction, support, care and advocacy

Delivering Champions4Change, a culturally safe prevention and support program

This program has been entirely designed and led by First Nations people with lived experience. It aims to support communities at risk of acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease by:

- raising awareness through health promotion and prevention
- providing support to people with acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease
- advocating for health systems change.

We provide a range of support for such as remote laundries and professional development opportunities for Champions.

Developing our equity, diversity and inclusion strategy for heart health

We recognise our responsibility to do everything we can to ensure our work to end heart disease helps those who need it most.

In 2023, we undertook a major project to develop an organisational strategy for improving equity, diversity and inclusion in heart health, setting out our plan for the next five years. Consultations and focus groups were held in every state and territory with Heart Foundation staff, advisory board members and external stakeholders. Input received during the consultations shaped the strategy's key objective and helped us to develop three core goals.

2024 and beyond: equity, diversity and inclusion at the Heart Foundation

Our objective: Our work positively impacts the heart health of all people in Australia by meeting their diverse needs and experiences.

Through our work, we aim to:

- make a positive impact
- ensure that our programs and resources are accessible, relevant & valued
- foster a culture that champions equity, diversity and inclusion

The Strategy – Every Heart. The National Heart Foundation of Australia's strategy for improving equity, diversity and inclusion – 2024 to 2029 – was finalised in late 2023. We look forward to working collaboratively across the organisation in 2024 to embed Every Heart into all our activities.



Remote laundries

Strategic enabler 1: Financial sustainability and growth

Increase our focus on financial sustainability and growth to further scale our community impact

We recognise that delivering on our vision, mission and goals requires long-term financial sustainability. This key organisational enabler sets out how we will secure and grow our revenue to create new opportunities for innovation in our research, programs and partnerships.

We are committed to operating with a commercial mindset that leads to better economic and health outcomes, and to building a culture that strengthens the connections between our staff, our volunteers, and our valued donors.

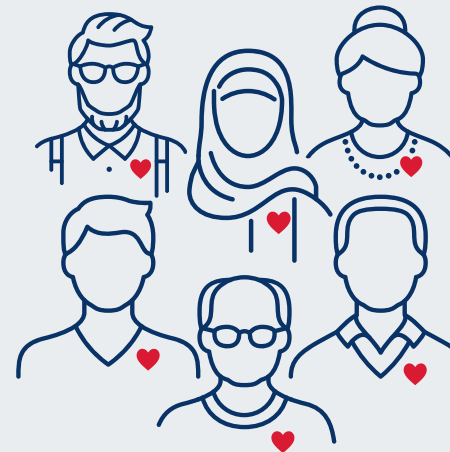
In 2023, our financial activities focussed on:

- **Growing existing revenue**, including major gifts, bequests, philanthropic trusts and foundations, individual giving and community fundraising.
- **Growing and diversifying new revenue**, including corporate partnerships and our commercialisation strategy and framework.
- **Achieving organisational sustainability**, through effective financial management and the responsible and ethical use of donor funds.

Appeals, regular giving and community fundraising

Every dollar received from our appeals, regular givers and community fundraisers enables us to help more people and achieve our mission. Without their generosity, we would be unable to fund the research, education and programs that make a lasting difference to Australia's heart health.

In 2023, we were grateful for the generosity of nearly 100,000 supporters, who collectively raised more than \$13.4 million to help us fight heart disease.



~100,000 supporters

\$13.M
Raised

- **21,712 donors** who gave \$3,843,753 to the Heart Foundation's seasonal campaigns such as our holiday and tax appeals.
- **15,935 donors** who gave \$3,834,196 as part of our regular giving program through weekly, fortnightly or monthly donations.
- **59,959 donors** gave \$5,362,459 through our community fundraising events including My Marathon, Coastrek and others.
- **1,522 donors** gave \$183,158 in memory of their loved ones.
- **91 corporations** who established workplace giving programs to support the work of the Heart Foundation this year.

Philanthropy

Through our philanthropy program, Heart Foundation supporters can have a direct impact on priority heart health and research projects. In 2023, we were delighted to engage with over 100 supporters whose major contributions funded heart health and research programs that will benefit communities across Australia.



Major gifts from trusts and foundations supported 22 research projects addressing critical knowledge gaps.

The funded research will examine how and why heart disease develops, advance a number of groundbreaking new treatments, and discover novel strategies for better management of life-threatening cardiovascular conditions.

7 major grants funded programs to empower First Nations people to take control of their heart health.

These programs raise awareness about how to prevent rheumatic heart disease including understanding risk factors and making healthy lifestyle choices. Thanks to this vital project funding, our team and Champions4Change were able to work with remote communities to build knowledge and skills.

Major grants and donations funded programs like Kids Save Lives, training school students in basic life support.

Major philanthropic support funded a pilot of the Kids Save Lives program, which we conducted in partnership with Ambulance Victoria. This initiative aims to increase survival rates for out-of-hospital cardiac arrests by teaching secondary school students Basic Life Support techniques and the crucial role bystanders can play in saving lives. Grants received from the Danks Trust and through the Perpetual Impact Philanthropy Application Program will help us expand this initiative.

Community fundraising for heart health

Our community fundraising programs provide opportunities for everyday people to make a lifechanging contribution to Australia's heart health.

Jump Rope for Heart

For more than 40 years, Jump Rope for Heart has been the Heart Foundation's flagship fundraising program. In 2023, more than 190,000 students from over 1000 schools skipped for the 2023 campaign, raising an outstanding \$2.3 million to support our research and programs.

All our skippers and schools produced remarkable results, with a few exceptional fundraisers:

Top school

OneSchool Global Sydney was our top school and raised \$38,765 in just 5 weeks of running the program.

Top student

Mia Yendall from Holy Trinity Lutheran School in Victoria was our top student fundraiser and raised \$6,415 during her program.

Top teacher

Emma Treasure from Cowra Public School in New South Wales was voted teacher of the year by the Jump Rope for Heart team.



Pymble Public School



Good News Lutheran Primary
School students with Happy Heart

Money Can't Buy Experience

Registration incentive competition run for schools.

Warialda Public School in regional NSW won the Jump Rope for Heart early bird registration competition, Money Can't Buy Experience. As this year's winner, the school hosted a visit from Dr Stephanie Schoeppe, a Heart Foundation researcher, who gave an engaging presentation to the school community about healthy hearts. The Jump Rope for Heart team held an exciting skipping workshop for the school, featuring a circuit-style skipping course with individual, partner, and group skipping. It was an unforgettable day for the students, who not only had a blast learning about the heart but also honed their skipping skills.

"Our whole community got behind the Jump rope for Heart program, as it was a meaningful fundraiser that many students had a connection with. We loved having the researcher and team come and visit us! They brought enthusiasm, passion and it was so obvious that they loved being around hordes of skipping, energetic students! They generously donated resources – ropes, sports shirts, key rings, stickers and more! Because of the professionalism, great communication and good cause, we will be making Jump Rope for Heart a priority at our school."

- Tracey Digby, Teacher at Warialda Public School.



Warialda Public School

MyMarathon

Through MyMarathon, participants run or walk 42.2 km – the equivalent of a marathon – over one month while raising funds that will support heart health research and programs.

In 2023, there were 2,097 individual, team and workplace participants, including a record 91 workplace teams, who raised \$352,714 for the Heart Foundation.

We would like to extend a special thanks to those who shared their heart story with the MyMarathon community to inspire others. These include Nola Marschall, Bec Mills, Jacqueline De Pietro, Jessica Leard, Rebecca Judd and James Grego.

Do it for Heart

The Do it for Heart community continued their strong support during the 2023 campaign with 152 heart heroes hosting events, celebrating milestones, taking on challenges or daring to quit commitments to raise money for the Heart Foundation.

In 2023 we celebrated 30 years of Rocky Wrap, a volunteer-led initiative doing it for heart health. The Rocky Wrap team has raised more than \$300,000 over three decades of wrapping Christmas presents for busy shoppers, including \$24,500 at their 2023 Christmas event.



Jason Pupkovski and Angus Whyman

Spotlight on:

Rocky Wrap: celebrating 30 years of community fundraising for heart health

Each year in the lead up to Christmas, Margaret Whitchurch, Karen Baker and the Rocky Wrap team are hard at work at Rockhampton's Stockland Shopping Centre wrapping gifts. They have raised \$316,000 over the past 30 years by wrapping thousands of gifts from engagement rings and televisions to laundry baskets and dirt bikes.

Rocky Wrap, an annual community fundraiser, started 30 years ago when Margaret volunteered for a heart research fundraising event in Rockhampton. She has since been joined a team of more than fifty dedicated volunteers who give their time to wrap gifts and raise funds. They have had fun, forged friendships and have no plans to stop.

The success and longevity of Rocky Wrap would not be possible without the support of local retailers and the Rockhampton community. Many of their customers donate more than required, while others bring the team coffee or stop by to tell their stories about how heart disease has touched their lives. Margaret and Karen are motivated by the countless stories they hear from people in the community about their experiences with life-changing heart research.

"It's incredibly important to us to continue. By volunteering our time for five weeks we can help make people aware of the need for funds for the Heart Foundation. We're inspired to keep going as any money we raise goes to a vital organisation to help fund life-saving research." - Karen Baker

We thank Margaret, Karen and all the Rocky Wrap volunteers for their enduring commitment to help improve the lives of people living with heart disease.



Karen Baker (left) and Margaret Whitchurch (right) from the Rock Wrap team

Coastrek 2023

<p>5 events around Australia</p>	<p>\$4,136,136 raised ~ 50,000 donors</p>	<p>2,047 teams of ~8,000 trekkers</p>	<p>260,000 combined kilometres trekked</p>	<p>227 volunteers 50 Heart Foundation staff supporting events</p>
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In 2023 the Heart Foundation partnered with Coastrek to deliver five life changing walking events at picturesque coastal locations around Australia - Sydney (New South Wales), Mornington Peninsula (Victoria), the Sunshine Coast (Queensland), Fleurieu Peninsula (South Australia) and Margaret River (Western Australia).

Together the five Coastrek events raised an impressive \$4 million from 50,000 donors and over 8000 participants who trekked distances between 20km and 60km. Each of the 2000 or more teams participating met or exceeded their commitment to raise at least \$2,000.

The Coastreks were supported on event days by over 200 volunteers and 50 Heart Foundation staff to create truly memorable moments for everyone involved from trekkers to volunteers, staff, other support crews and the contributing donors.

The funds raised in 2023 will help fund life-saving heart research into women-specific factors and support the elimination of rheumatic heart disease (RHD) in Australian communities.



Top Left – Trekkers at Margaret River, Top Right - Sheree Hughes, Kristin Watt, Simon Playford, David Lloyd – Kicking off - Sunshine Coast, Bottom Left - Dr Jocelyne Mulangala, Anita Cromb, Cherie Barker – Crossing the finish line - Sunshine Coast, Bottom Right – Trekkers at Fleurieu Peninsula

Gifts in Wills

We would like to extend a sincere thanks to all our extraordinary supporters who have left such generous gifts in support of our work to end heart disease. Gifts in Wills continues to be the largest source of revenue for the Heart Foundation.

By deciding to leave a gift to the Heart Foundation in your Will, no matter how small or large, you can make a lasting impact for future generations and help us ensure our ongoing efforts such as vital heart research will continue well into the future.

We are grateful for the 3,827 individuals who have committed to leaving a gift to the Heart Foundation in their Will.



To find out more about gifts in Wills, scan here:

<https://hrt.how/giw-info>

A gift for future generations

The late John Kennedy (1924-2020)

John Kennedy, the son of a shipwright, grew up in Merrylands, NSW. John enlisted in the Royal Australian Airforce at the age of 18 in 1942 and served overseas in New Guinea. On his return to Australia at war's end, he commenced a law degree at the University of Sydney and later established a very successful legal practice in Liverpool. He was involved in several community activities and was passionate about supporting business people relocating to Australia from overseas.



Later in life, John had a heart attack, which he had initially thought was indigestion. He was hospitalised and underwent open heart surgery and later became a proud member of the 'Zipper Club' based out of the Royal North Shore Hospital, where he received post cardiac care advice including health, diet, and exercise. After his recovery, John joined a walking club, and walked every week for the rest of his life, continued his exercise with the Zipper Club and was very careful with his diet.

John's first interaction with the Heart Foundation was through a direct mail appeal in 1997 where he made his first donation. In 2008, he told us that he had left a gift in his Will to the Heart Foundation.

In 2017 following a fall, John went into care where he spent the last three years of his life. He died in 2020 while NSW was just coming out of lockdown. John left the Heart Foundation a quarter of his estate.

John's generous gift will support the Heart Foundation in delivering its ambitious plan to ensure that those turning 50 in 2050 will be the healthiest ever generation of Australians.

The Heart Foundation is grateful for gifts in Wills supporters like John who made the important and kind decision many years ago to leave a legacy that would impact future generations.

John left a remarkably generous gift of \$9.5 million to the Heart Foundation which will be used to fund research and our long-term ambitious plan to improve heart health.

Growth

Our People

Financials

Our people

We strive to be a great employer, fostering a culture where people feel supported, valued, and inspired to achieve extraordinary outcomes together. Continued investment in our people is key to the Heart Foundation's ongoing success.

Through our Connecting Hearts Strategy, we are committed to this support, which motivates and empowers our people to deliver positive, impactful outcomes within communities nationwide.

We achieve this through:

- **Supporting our people** We prioritise investment in our high-performing people from the point of recruitment through every stage of their employment or volunteer journey. This approach nurtures their growth, development, and fulfilment within our organisation.
- **Living our values** By promoting and embodying our core values, we strengthen connections to our organisational purpose, enhance performance and foster positive culture and networks among our people. Equity, diversity and inclusion underpins everything we do. We strive to create a safe and inclusive work environment for everyone, to represent the communities we serve and recognise diversity is essential for our success.
- **Connecting our volunteers** We actively engage with and value the volunteers who we are fortunate to work with each year. We are committed to increasing and broadening opportunities for volunteers, whose generous contributions of time and effort are invaluable and integral to fulfilling our mission. We are dedicated to nurturing and building these vital relationships in our programs and activities across Australia.



In 2023

Our people have a diverse range of skills, working across a range of organisational activities to deliver on our mission.



There were 187 people working at Heart Foundation



We had 8 office locations nationwide



Over 1300 volunteers supported our work

12 staff supporting our heart research program who administer our research grants and awards, and connect heart research communities

11 Evidence & Data insights colleagues, who support evidence-based program design and decision-making

39 colleagues who engage with our supporters & donors through community fundraising programs like Jump Rope for Heart and Coastrek, corporate and philanthropic donors, gifts in Wills and regular giving

33 Public Communications & Advocacy colleagues who engage with governments and the public on cardiovascular health policy and issues

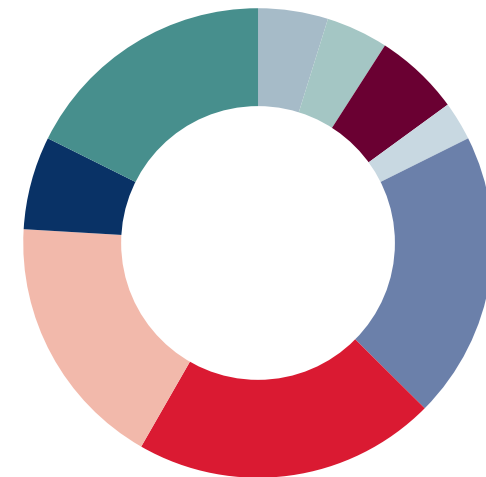
5 Equity in health colleagues who ensure our programs strive for equitable outcomes for all

Three quarters of the workforce and half the Board of Directors were women

9 Leadership colleagues, including our CEO, Chief Medical Advisory and pillar leads who are supported by Executive Support & administration colleagues

37 colleagues delivering our heart health programs including walking and nutrition programs, clinical education programs and increasing Heart Health Checks

33 Operations & Business Services colleagues who deliver services to support effective operations and finance for all our activities



187 staff in 2023

Heart health programs	37%
Supporters & donors	39%
Public communications & advocacy	33%
Heart research programs	6%
Operations & business services	18%
Leadership	5%
Executive support	4%
Evidence & data insights	6%
Equity in health	3%

Supporting our people

In 2023, we focussed on supporting our people through engagement, communication and wellbeing. We were committed to recognising achievements and continuing to offer options for flexible work practices.

Understanding what our people need

Through our annual engagement survey, we heard about what our people love about working at the Heart Foundation and how we can continue to support everyone in their work to improve heart health.

Our people told us that they:

- believe in the purpose and values of the Heart Foundation
- feel supported by their colleagues
- feel engaged with their work

Improving how we collaborate and communicate

We greatly improved how information is shared by providing a range of channels to communicate and collaborate.

Launching Heart Hub

Our new intranet platform launched in 2023, Heart Hub, has become the key communication and collaboration tool for knowledge sharing and working together across the organisation.

- 103,444 visits to Heart Hub
- 285 news and team pages created on Heart Hub

Ensuring our people were connected and informed

Regular communication through newsletters, messages from leadership and whole-of-organisation meetings complemented Heart Hub to keep our people informed and connected.

- 26 Pulse Newsletters with an open rate of 76%
- 96 Leadership emails
- 95% our people attend “More than a Meeting” every 6 weeks

Setting our people up for success

The Heart Foundation’s success depends on its people, now and into the future. In 2023:

- **We better enabled new employees to succeed by enhancing our onboarding processes.** The new, more efficient approach aims to help new employees become more emersed in our culture and to provide clarity about priorities, expectations, and support.
- **We supported individual professional development and organisational development needs through a range of training sessions.** These sessions covered wellbeing, financial wellbeing, mental health, managing difficult conversations, project management and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. We also held Lunch and Learn sessions, specific to the Heart Foundation environment.
- **We established a learning survey to assess and respond to the needs of our people using an evidence-based approach.** The survey was developed to gain a deeper understanding of the learning requirements and competencies of our workforce. Survey data will shape our annual learning programs, better supporting our people to develop key skills to meet their goals and responsibilities.



Valuing our people

Supporting wellbeing

We ensure that we hear concerns raised by our people that are addressed proactively.

Our People and Culture Team support and manage feedback from our staff through the Wellbeing, Health and Safety Committee, comprised of employees from across the organisation. The committee supports the development of Heart Foundation policies and practices that promote physical and psychosocial health and safety in the workplace.

We are committed to fostering a supportive work environment where every individual can thrive both personally and professionally.

A key part of this commitment is ensuring that our Employee Assistance Program aligns with the evolving needs of our workforce. We provide access to comprehensive services tailored to the holistic wellbeing of our people, promoting their overall health and resilience.

Enabling flexible work practices

We remain deeply committed to enabling our people to better balance work and life by maintaining support for flexible work practices. We have continued to benefit from the productivity and wellbeing benefits of flexible working that developed during the pandemic. We will continue to invest in our people and adapt our working strategies to reflect the changed professional landscape and enable better work-life balance.

Recognising achievements

We believe in highlighting and acknowledging the achievements of our staff and volunteers. This includes through our Love Your Work and Recognition of Service initiatives and a public recognition of our volunteers.

- **Love Your Work** is our peer-to-peer recognition program. Our employees and office-based volunteers can celebrate the success and achievements of their teammates by nominating a colleague or volunteer who has demonstrated exceptional behaviour based on our organisational goals and values.
- **Recognition of Service** is our initiative to recognise, acknowledge long-term employees and volunteers, celebrating the outstanding achievements made possible through their longevity and tenure. We greatly appreciate the dedication and commitment of our long-standing employees and volunteers who have contributed to the success of our organisation and become an integral part of our community. We gratefully recognise and celebrate their invaluable loyalty and expertise.
- **We publicly recognise and celebrate our volunteers** during National Volunteer Week in May and International Volunteer Day in December. We share our appreciation of the unpaid workforce of volunteers and raise awareness about the importance of their contributions. Throughout the year we also recognise our volunteers through personal and direct communications.

Champions for equity, diversity and inclusion

We believe that fostering a workplace culture that values and celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusion is not only the right thing to do but is also essential to our success.

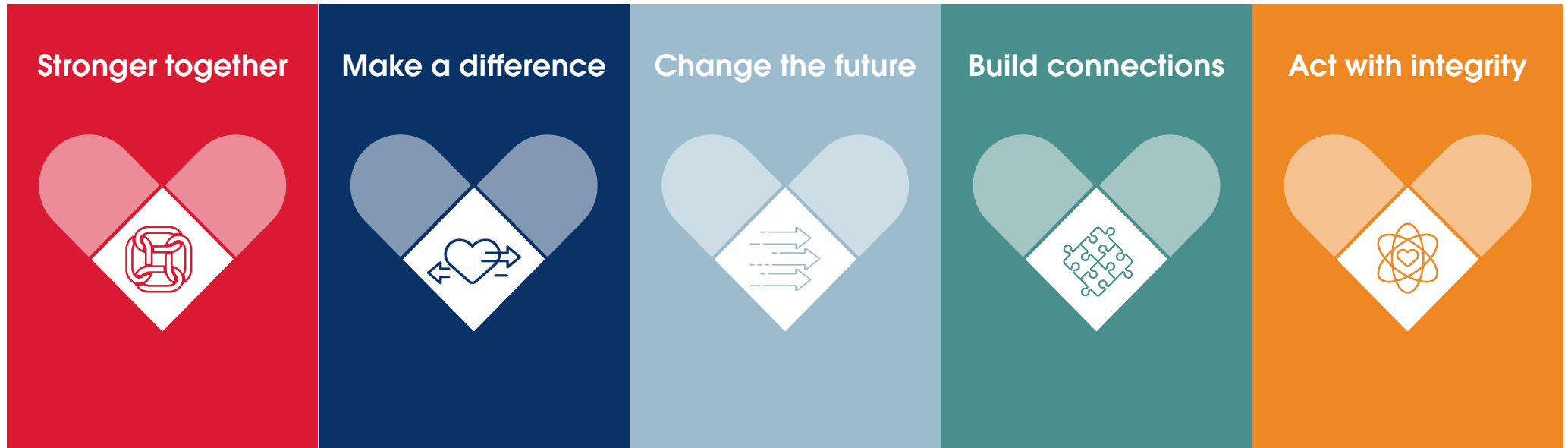
We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive work environment for everyone where we strive to represent the communities we serve and recognise the skills, knowledge and experience a diverse team brings to our organisation. Embracing diversity ensures we can continue to be innovative, creative and grow.

In 2023, we developed the Heart Foundation's five year strategy for improving equity, diversity and inclusion in heart health – Every Heart. We will proudly commence the implementation of our strategy in 2024.



Our values

Our organisational values represent what is important to our people and to the Heart Foundation. These values underpin the way we work together to deliver our Connecting Hearts Strategy.



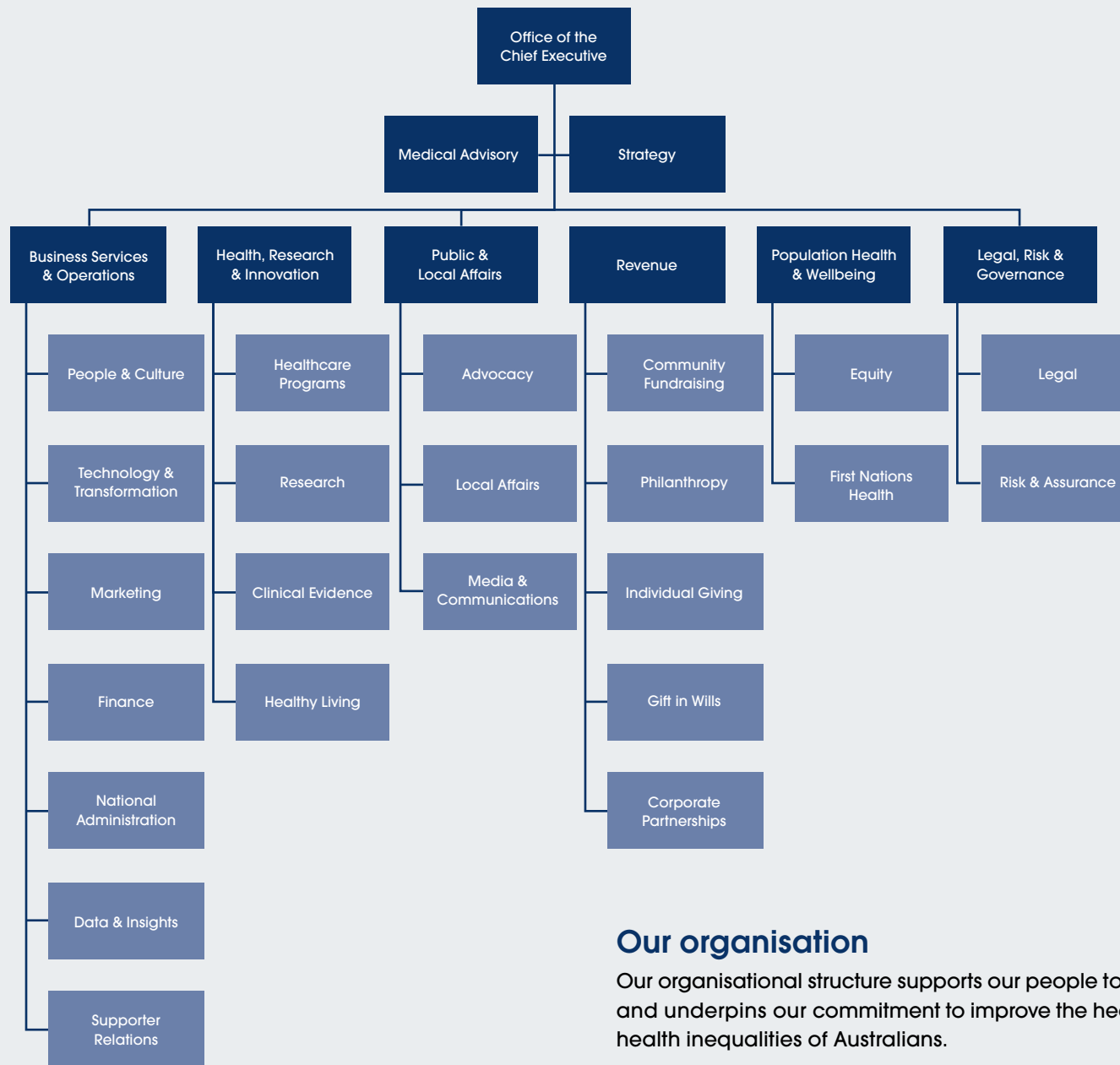
Stronger together: we believe in the power of unity, as we are stronger when we work together. We support each other by showing respect and leveraging diverse backgrounds, talents, perspectives and resources.

Make a difference: we are proud of our history and our achievements; we use our past success to guide the future. We work with evidence to be a trusted voice on heart health – when the evidence changes, we change with it.

Change the future: we are courageous and think big, but we don't ignore the details. We promote creativity and innovation in our thinking and actions to continually increase our reach and impact.

Build connections: we build connections with our community, stakeholders, partners and customers. We strongly believe that what we do every day is for the benefit of others.

Act with integrity: we are honest and take responsibility for our actions. We value the opinions of others and always assume positive intent. We enhance our trusted reputation through the responsible and transparent use of donor funds.



Our organisation

Our organisational structure supports our people to deliver on our mission and underpins our commitment to improve the heart outcomes and health inequalities of Australians.

Volunteering to support healthy hearts

- Over 1300 volunteers generously gave their time for Heart Foundation activities
- Celebrating 30 years of volunteer driven fundraising at Rocky Wrap
- 64% all volunteers in 2023 supported the Heart Foundation Walking
- 227 volunteers joined new Coastrek2023 events across Australia
- Volunteers were of all ages from 18 to 93 years old

The Heart Foundation works alongside a passionate and generous community of over one thousand volunteers who donate their time, skills, experience and energy towards ending heart disease. In 2023, 1330 volunteers generously gave their time to a range of Heart Foundation community events, fundraising, consumer groups, expert advice and health programs.



Our people



Heart Foundation volunteers in 2023

22 Consumer Advisory group members who shared their unique lived experiences and their personal connection to heart disease. Contributed their perspectives for health programs and cardiovascular clinical guidelines

44 Rocky Wrap volunteers, who wrapped Christmas presents and raised over \$24K

117 peer and consumer grant reviewers ensuring we fund high calibre and relevant research through our \$14 million research program

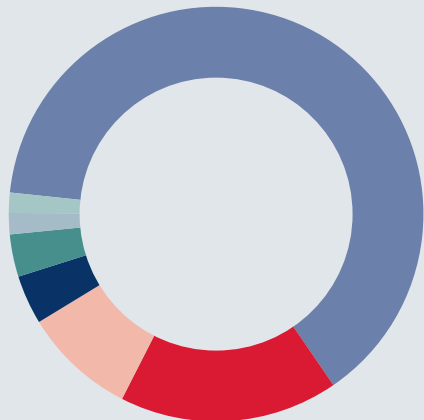
21 volunteers based in our offices nationwide supporting heart health programs like Heart Matters and producing web and social media content to promote cardiovascular health.

51 Advisory Board members who helped us connect with communities in each Australian state and territory, ensuring we delivered national priorities at a local level.

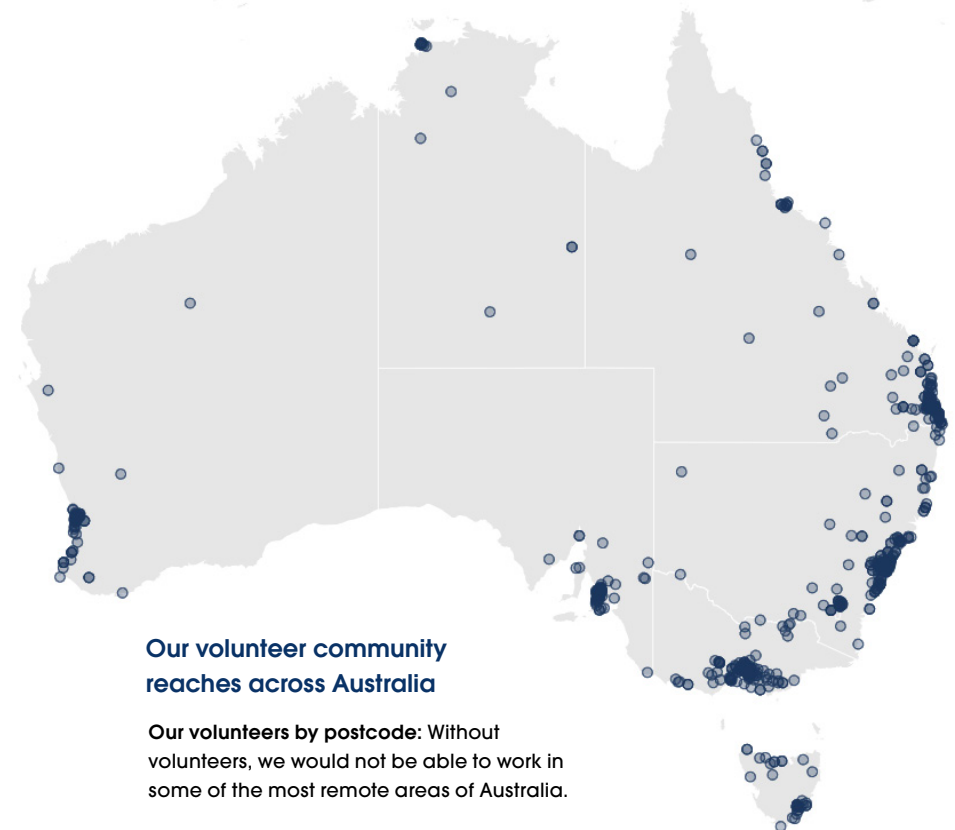
848 volunteers organised walking groups as part of the Heart Foundation Walking program

227 Coastrek volunteers supporting teams trekking and fundraising at five spectacular coastal locations across Australia.

1330 volunteers



Walking	64%
Coastrek	17%
Peer & consumer reviewers	9%
Advisory board members	4%
Rocky Wrap volunteers	3%
Other	2%
Consumer advisory	1%



Board of Directors



Chair

Mario D'Orazio

Chair of the Board & Chair, Revenue Committee

Mario D'Orazio has more than 40 years' experience in media as a journalist, including print as a reporter and columnist; radio as a producer and talkback presenter; and TV as a reporter, presenter and executive producer of news, current affairs programs and lifestyle programs. He was managing director of Channel 7 Perth for more than seven years and has wide experience in commercial and not-for-profit boards, including in government, education and the arts. His current directorships include the ABC National Board and the Australia Council for the Arts. He is chair of the Australian Institute of Management WA and the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts.



Board Directors

Isabelle Demir

Director & Chair, Investment Committee

Isabelle Demir has more than 20 years' experience in funds management and banking and advisory across Australasia, Europe and the Middle East. Isabelle is currently a Managing Director at Intermediate Capital Group (ICG), a global alternative asset manager. Isabelle is the Chair of the Heart Foundation's Investment Committee.



Peter Matruglio

Director & Chair, Risk Audit and Governance Committee (committee chair from 30 May 2023)

Peter Matruglio is an experienced professional with a proven track record of working with boards, executives and their teams to leverage finance, risk and business intelligence for competitive advantage. He has over 35 years' experience, including approximately 20 years as a partner with both Ernst & Young and Deloitte. Peter is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, an Australian CPA and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In addition, he is an Adjunct Professor with the University of Canberra Faculty of Business, Government and Law and a member of the NSW Chartered Accountants Advisory Group. Peter has also been a Member of the Heart Foundation Investment Committee since July 2023.



Rebecca Davies AO

Director & Chair, Research Strategy Committee

Rebecca Davies is a former lawyer and now holds a range of director and committee positions, mostly in health and related areas. She has been a consumer advocate for medical research for many years and has been a consumer representative both in Australia and overseas, including for the National Health and Medical Research, Medical Research Future Fund and British Heart Foundation.

Board of Directors *(continued)*



Professor Gemma Figtree
Director & Chair, Heart Health Committee

Gemma is a Professor in Medicine at the University of Sydney and an Interventional Cardiologist at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney. She is the Chair of the University of Sydney's multi-disciplinary Cardiovascular Initiative. Discoveries in her laboratory have appeared in more than 215 leading journals, including the *Lancet*, *Circulation*, *JACC* and *European Heart Journal*. Gemma was awarded an NHMRC Excellence Award for Top Ranked Practitioner Fellow (Australia, 2018) and the NSW Ministerial Award for Cardiovascular Research Excellence (2019). Gemma serves on the editorial boards of leading international journals including *Circulation* and *Cardiovascular Research* and an Associate Editor for *Heart*, *Lung* and *Circulation*. She is a strong advocate for cardiovascular research – as President of the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance, she worked with a national team to secure \$220 million in federal funding for the Mission for Cardiovascular Health. She chairs the Medical Research Future Fund Cardiovascular Mission Expert Advisory Panel.



Associate Professor David Colquhoun
Director

Associate Professor David Colquhoun is a cardiologist in private practice. He is also actively involved in research and preventative cardiology; these activities are reflected in his role on the Heart Foundation's Heart Health and Research Committees. His specific interests include preventative cardiology, nutrition and psychosocial factors for heart disease. David has been a member of the Scientific Committee of the National Institute of Complementary Medicine (NICM), a member of the Scientific Committee of the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation, and the Co- President of the Clinical and Preventive Cardiology Council of the Cardiac Society of Australian and New Zealand (CSANZ). He holds an MBBS from the University of New South Wales.



Associate Professor Nicholas Cox
Director

Associate Professor Nicholas Cox is an interventional cardiologist with an interest in infarct angioplasty and cardiogenic shock. Nicholas was an early advocate for the use of radial access for coronary intervention and has published in this field. He has performed a very high number of coronary interventions in over 15 years of practice as an interventional cardiologist. Nicholas consults in all aspects of general cardiology, including the diagnosis and management of patients presenting with coronary disease, heart attack and chest pain. He trained at Melbourne University, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Sydney, and The Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School.



Alice Tay
Director & Chair, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (Chair to 30 May 2023)

Alice Tay was a corporate and commercial lawyer for over 30 years. Since leaving legal practice, Alice has concentrated on her board and committee positions. She is the Chair of the Heart Foundation's Risk Audit and Governance Committee and a member of the Investment Committee. Alice is a Director of Molonglo Financial Services Ltd, which operates four branches of the Bendigo Community Bank in the Canberra Region, as well as a Director of Community Housing Canberra Limited. In 2020, she was appointed by the ACT Chief Minister to the University of Canberra Council where she also chairs the Audit and Risk Management Committee and is a member of the Finance Committee. Alice is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.



Jennifer Tucker
Director

Jennifer Tucker has more than 20 years of experience across a range of senior marketing, sales and business leadership roles in the consumer products sector. Jennifer has degrees in Commerce and Law. She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School AMP and Australian Institute of Company Directors course and a member of the Mission for Cardiovascular Research Expert Advisory Panel and Chief Executive Women. Jennifer's career spans development of consumer centric marketing, innovation and organisational change programs. She is the Executive Merchandise Director at Bunnings Group Limited.



Ian Humphreys
Director

Ian Humphreys is a partner in Ashurst's Brisbane office. He specialises in employment, energy and resources, occupational health and safety, workplace relations and workplace training. He provides a full range of industrial relations and employment law services to clients, including many of Australia's largest corporations, employer associations and government entities. His services include the provision of high-level strategic advice and the conduct of major litigation. Ian is a specialist in the mining, energy and resources sector. He is a primary adviser on complex industrial disputes, workplace change initiatives and other workplace incidents.



Professor Ray Mahoney
Director (from 8 August 2023)

Ray Mahoney is a Bidjara man with family ties to Central West Queensland who has codesigned a range of cardiovascular disease, health service evaluation and eHealth research projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled organisation partners and health services. He is the Discipline Lead of Population Health and Professor of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in the College of Medicine and Public Health at Flinders University & Principal Research Scientist in the Australian eHealth Research Centre, Health & Biosecurity at CSIRO.



Stephen Halliday
Director (from 25 July 2023)

Stephen Halliday has more than thirty years' experience in a successful career across media, politics, government and government relations. As a government relations specialist he has worked for fourteen years as a Director with Hawker Britton. He has worked with clients across the widest range of industry sectors including Lockheed Martin, ASC, AGL, Statoil/ Equinor, Macquarie Bank, Telstra, Oracle, HPE, Optus, QBE, Lion, Adelaide Brighton, The Salvation Army, Mission Australia, DP World, Bunnings, Heathgate Resources and Serco.

Stephen was Chief of Staff for Mike Rann when he served as Premier and Opposition Leader in South Australia (1994-2004). This followed a career where he held roles as Media Adviser to both Governments and Oppositions in South Australia and as a journalist in television and radio at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Stephen has a BA (Journalism) and is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).



Board patrons

National

**His Excellency General the Honourable
David Hurley AC DSC (retd)**

The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

New South Wales

Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC
Governor of New South Wales

Northern Territory

His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM
Administrator of the Northern Territory

Queensland

Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young PSM
Governor of Queensland

South Australia

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC
Governor of South Australia

Victoria

Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC
Governor of Victoria (to 30 June 2023)

Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC
Governor of Victoria (from August 2023)

Western Australia (co-patrons)

His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson APM
Governor of Western Australia

Mrs Darrilyn Dawson

State and Territory Advisory Boards

The Heart Foundation's Advisory Boards provide expert strategic advice on our activities at the state and territory level. We thank the Advisory Board members for volunteering their time to help us deliver on our Mission.



New South Wales

Jim L'Estrange
Chair

Throughout 2023, the New South Wales Advisory Board assisted in the design and delivery of numerous Heart Foundation activities and events. At the beginning of the year, the Board provided valuable insights into the publication of our State election priorities and helped to promote the first Coastrek event.

We successfully advocated for the creation of the Parliamentary Friends of Heart Health, with 17 members of the NSW parliament joining the group. The first event was held in October where numerous MPs and parliamentary staffers joined the Heart Foundation to learn how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation and how to use an automated external defibrillator.

The Advisory Board enjoyed the opportunity to provide strategic advice across a range of the Heart Foundation's activities include marketing, food and nutrition,

fundraising events, and the equity, diversity and inclusion strategy and the partnership with NSW Ambulance and their rollout of GoodSAM.

At the end of 2023, valued Advisory Board member Joanne Smith stepped down from her role. Jo's contribution since joining the Advisory Board in 2021 has been invaluable, particularly with our state-based advocacy work. On behalf of the Advisory Board, I would like to thank Jo for her time and commitment over the past few years and wish her well in her future endeavours.

The Advisory Board is looking forward to their ongoing work with Heart Foundation staff throughout 2024, and continuing to reduce the toll that cardiovascular disease places on our society.



Australian Capital Territory

Mark North
Chair

The Australian Capital Territory Advisory Board had a productive year in 2023, meeting regularly to provide strategic advice on how to best support national programs at a local level, and provide guidance on local priorities. A focus for 2023 was to develop further opportunities for community engagement, and the Advisory Board was pleased to welcome Lauren Ford to the Heart Foundation as the ACT Program Manager. The 'Skipping for Healthy Hearts' program was launched, promoting heart health and physical activity for children in the ACT. This is a 3-year program funded by the ACT Government, led by the Heart Foundation and supported by Skipping Australia.

Marketing for the inaugural Canberra Coastrek was launched and the Advisory Board supported the Heart Foundation's ACT team to develop key relationships with stakeholders to promote participation and fundraising. Advisory Board members are looking forward to Canberra Coastrek, which will be held in March 2024, with a number of members set to participate in the event.



Victoria

Dr Angela Jackson
Chair

Throughout 2023, the Victorian Advisory Board has enjoyed the opportunity to provide strategic advice, specific to the needs of Victorians. With a wide range of expertise and skills within the current membership, the Advisory Board has contributed to shaping the direction of the Heart Foundation's advocacy work through advice and guidance on policy and stakeholder engagement.

Midway through the year, we welcomed Chris Enright as the Heart Foundation's new Victorian General Manager. Her recruitment to the position has helped integrate the expertise of the Advisory Board into the work of the Heart Foundation at a state level.

We have been actively contributing to various fundraising and stakeholder events, including participation in MyMarathon and Coastrek, as well as hosting and attending a successful corporate event held by Morgan Stanley that highlighted the work of

the Heart Foundation to this important group of corporate supporters.

Towards the latter part of 2023, the Advisory Board was excited to be invited by the Heart Foundation Board Chair and CEO to consider community engagement initiatives with a local focus that could be undertaken to address a need identified by the Advisory Board. While development of the process occurred at a national level, the Advisory Board discussed and considered various options for projects they would see having an impact on the heart health of Victorians. This work will continue into 2024.

2023 also brought to an end my tenure as Chair, and while I remain on the Advisory Board, I am proud to hand over to Professor Dion Stub as the new Chair of the Victorian Advisory Board.



Northern Territory

Dr Marita Hefler
Chair

In 2023, the Northern Territory Advisory Board continued to support, promote and provide strategic advice to improve heart health of people in the NT. Key priority areas included addressing health equity, First Nations heart health, rural and remote health, tobacco control, rheumatic heart disease and chronic conditions prevention and management.

The Advisory Board welcomed Dr Bryce Brickley as a new member. As an experienced researcher, dietician and program evaluator, Bryce brings his knowledge and capability for preventive health to the collective skills of the Board. A key event in 2023 was the relocation and opening of a new Darwin office. The new office provides a central, strategic, accessible and more visible presence for the Heart Foundation. We were grateful to Traditional Owners from Larrakia Nation for the smoking ceremony to officially open the new NT office and to NT Patron His Honour Professor the Honourable Hugh Heggie AO PSM Administrator of the Northern Territory for the formal address to our attending stakeholders and partners.

Among 2023 activities in the NT, highlights included the delivery of a successful event at the Barunga Festival in partnership with Aboriginal Investment Group Remote Community Laundries, a visit by the CEO of the World Heart Federation Jean Luc Eisele to the Northern Territory to see first-hand the impact of remote community laundries in addressing acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease in the community of Barunga, participation in the Deadly Heart Trek through Central Australia and the APY Lands, and support for the annual MyMarathon fundraising event.

The Heart Foundation were an active member of the Good Health Alliance NT (GHANT), a collective of chronic conditions organisations working to collectively advocate for chronic condition prevention and management and were a contributor to a range of local strategic advisory groups including the NT Tobacco Control Action Committee and NT Chronic Conditions Prevention Strategy. The NT Advisory Board look forward to continuing strategic contributions to improve heart health outcomes in the NT and across the nation.



Queensland

David Fagan
Chair

In 2023, we bid farewell to Ian Humphreys as Chair of the Queensland Advisory Board, extending our gratitude for his significant local contributions over the years. I had the privilege of being appointed as the new chair, steering the Advisory Board through a series of activities aimed at mitigating the prevalence and effects of heart disease across Queensland.

A highlight of the year was the successful International Women's Day event held at Ashurst, featuring a distinguished panel of speakers, including Professor Gita Mishra, a Queensland Advisory Board member and an expert in women's health. The event emphasised the importance of heart health checks for women, resonating with our commitment to raise awareness and promoting preventive measures.

Mid-year, we were delighted to welcome Rick Wilson to the Queensland Advisory Board. His extensive experience and insightful guidance have been invaluable, and we eagerly anticipate his ongoing contributions. Along with Ian Humphreys, Dr David Colquhoun

and Ben Woodbridge consolidated their roles to now serve only on the national Heart Foundation Board and Committees. We also thanked Laurence Lancini and Noel Hayman, who departed from the Queensland Advisory Board after many years of service. Their collective contributions have been deeply appreciated.

Among our 2023 activities, the advisory board backed the recruitment of the Queensland Cardiovascular Research Network Manager and the development of the organisation's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy. Collectively, we were involved in numerous government submissions at the local level and supported the relocation of the Queensland office into the Brisbane CBD.

The collaborative efforts of the Queensland Advisory Board in 2023 have established a robust foundation for future endeavours. We look forward to welcoming some new Advisory Board members into 2024, setting the stage for ongoing progress and impact in the fight against heart disease.



Western Australia

Mike McKenna
Chair

Throughout 2023 the Western Australian Advisory Board continued to promote the cause of heart health and support engagement specific to the needs of key stakeholders throughout the state. This included supporting the delivery of Coastrek Margaret River, HBF Run for a Reason and the 2023 WA Women's Hearts Breakfast, to raise awareness of women's heart health among leaders in industry, business, healthcare, government, and the broader community.

As of 2023, the Heart Foundation became the major sponsor of the Western Australian Cardiovascular Research Alliance (WACRA). WACRA is the peak leadership body in Western Australia supporting career development and national competitiveness of Western Australian cardiovascular researchers; and advocating for investment into the sector to accelerate translation and improve heart health outcomes for all Western Australians.

In 2023 we also welcomed Mrs Darrilyn Dawson as co-patron of the Heart Foundation of Australia WA division, to formally support our awareness

and advocacy efforts alongside the 34th Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Christopher John Dawson AC APM.

Drawing on the diverse expertise and skillset of members of the Western Australian Advisory Board membership and support from our West Australian Heart Foundation co-patrons, we look forward to continuing to support local activities in 2024 to improve the heart health outcomes of all people living in Western Australia and across the nation, with an even sharper focus on where we can make the greatest impact.



Tasmania

Ms Jane Bennett
Chair

Jane Bennett commenced her term as Chair of the Tasmania Advisory Board in mid-2023. Joining her on Advisory Board were two new members, Professor Tracey Dickson and Paul Lupo who both offer a wealth of experience in the research and health sectors respectively.

The Heart Foundation continued its partnership with the Tasmanian Government to undertake a project to develop better support for Tasmanians at high risk of cardiovascular disease. This work has seen the Heart Foundation review the range of cardiac rehabilitation services on offer throughout the state and make recommendations on how services could be improved to better serve local populations. The Heart Foundation acknowledges to commitment of the Tasmanian Government to improve heart health through both this project, and its financial support for the Heart Foundation's walking program as well as our Holiday Appeal.

Throughout the year the Heart Foundation continued its engagement with the Tasmanian Parliament which included hosting a morning tea for MPs where members heard from researchers on the latest developments in cardiovascular research, as well as patients with lived experience.

The Heart Foundation contributed towards health policy development in Tasmania by making submissions to government consultations on the future of health services in Tasmania, and through participation in state health forums and tobacco control groups.



South Australia

Arabella Branson
Chair

In 2023, we farewelled Stephen Halliday as Chair of the South Australian Advisory Board after eight years of service and congratulate him on his appointment as a Director on the national Heart Foundation Board. After serving as a member of the Advisory Board for six years, I was delighted to take on the role of Chair working with committed and engaged colleagues who bring such a range of skills and expertise across legal and governance, philanthropy, research, clinical care, community care, education and lived experience.

Through the year we continued to support engagement with community, government and researchers in South Australia to promote heart health and support national priorities. A key highlight in 2023 was reinstating the South Australian Cardiovascular Research Network, bringing together the cardiovascular research community at an Annual Showcase and Mentor Dinner and promoting local funding opportunities such as those from the Tom Simpson and EO Myers Trusts.

We co-hosted a Heart Week morning tea at Parliament House in Adelaide

with the Hon Chris Picton, South Australian Minister for Health and Wellbeing. At the event, Professor Richard Hillis, consumer Advisory Board member, shared his lived experience of heart disease to an audience of South Australian parliamentarians, highlighting the importance of Heart Health Checks and automatic external defibrillators.

The Advisory Board continued support for Heart Foundation community events by joining event teams and providing fundraising support for MyMarathon and the first South Australian Coastrek at the beautiful Fleurieu Peninsula. At the first CEO luncheon with South Australian stakeholders and donors, David Lloyd spoke on the Vision 2050 strategy and Professor Peter Psaltis shared a cardiovascular research update.

We look forward to more great work in 2024, building the Cardiovascular Research Network and working with community and government in South Australia to improve heart health outcomes for all.

Board committees



Heart Health Committee

Chair: Prof Gemma Figtree

The Heart Health Committee advises the Board on health, clinical and scientific matters. The focus in 2023 was finalising a new Cardiovascular Risk Guideline – the first update of its kind in a decade, creating a new risk calculator modified for an Australian population and supporting the implementation of both into primary care practice. We have been working towards an update of the Acute Coronary Syndrome Guideline, which continues into 2024.

Throughout 2023, the Committee continued to consider the Heart Foundation's position statements for both internal and external stakeholders and worked closely with cardiologists, general practitioners and other health experts to develop clinical messaging and scientific consensus statements.



Research Strategy Committee

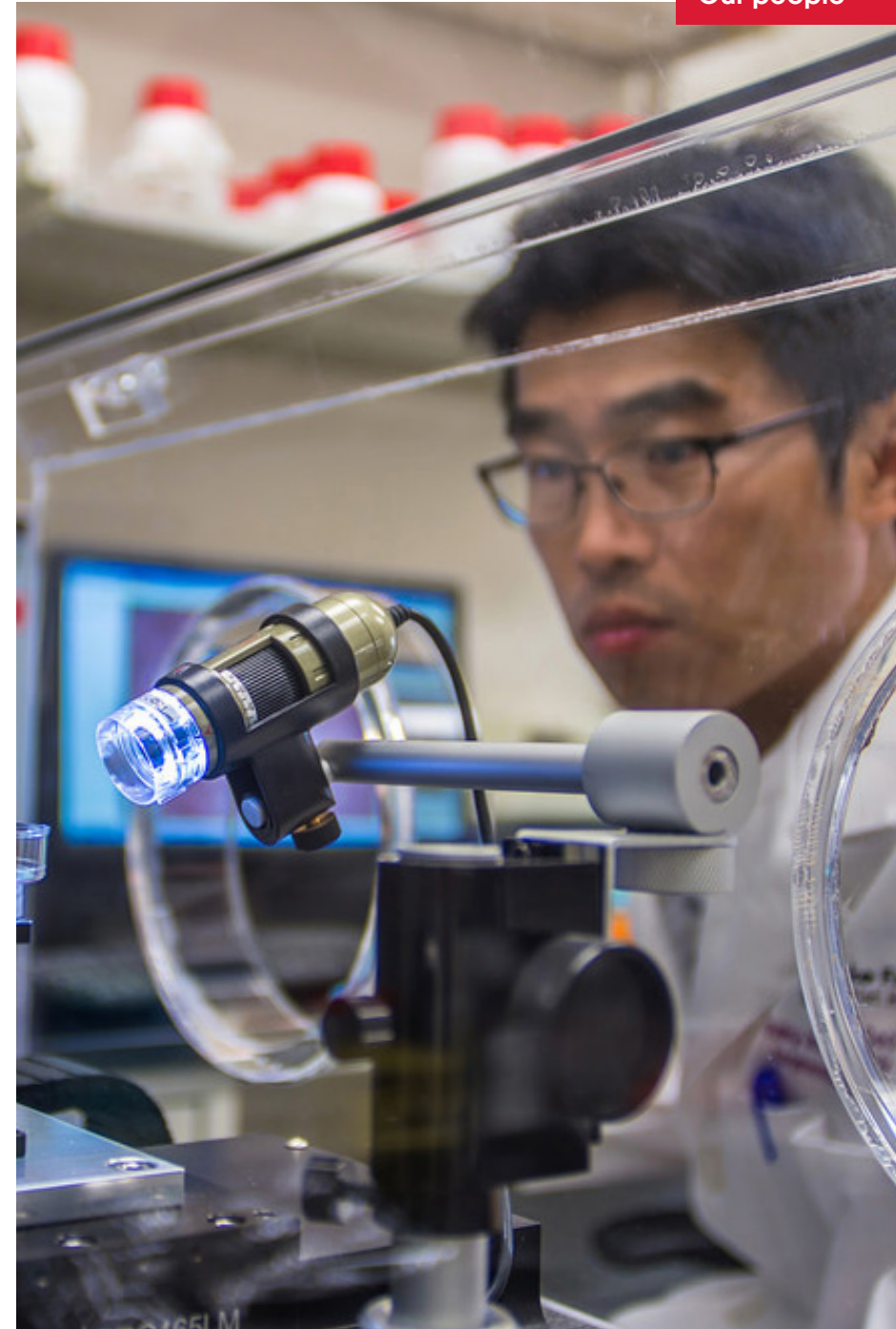
Chair: Rebecca Davies AO

The Research Strategy Committee is committed to advancing the strategic direction of the Heart Foundation's research funding portfolio. In 2023, the Committee supported several key initiatives to increase the Heart Foundation's impact at the state, national and international levels.

At the state level, we supported national coordination of state-based cardiovascular research networks, encouraging sharing local knowledge, experiences and common challenges to identify opportunities that could be facilitated at a national level.

Nationally, we supported several approaches to enhance the Heart Foundation's research funding portfolio including development of the Catalyst Partnership Grants, overseeing implementation of the new Grants Management Portal, and supporting recruitment of a dedicated Impact & Evaluation Officer. We continued to enhance our global presence through active participation in the Global Cardiovascular Research Funders Forum, spearheading the development a 2024 funding initiative designed to close critical knowledge gaps in women's cardiovascular health.

From 2024, expert advice and strategic guidance for the Heart Foundation's cardiovascular research approaches and research funding program will be guided by the newly-formed Research Advisory Committee. At the conclusion of 2023, the Research Strategy Committee combined with the Research Committee to form the new committee.





Investment Committee

Chair: Isabelle Demir

The Investment Committee worked with Morgan Stanley to structure the investment portfolio with the agreed investment strategy. This investment strategy provides guidance for a long-term view of the Heart Foundation's corpus and is designed to enable the corpus to benefit from returns under a diversified portfolio, comprising growth assets and defensive assets within pre-determined ranges. The Investment Committee also reviewed the Heart Foundation's ethical investment statement, and continue to monitor the portfolio's environmental, social and governance stance.



Revenue Committee

Chair: Mario D'Orazio

The Revenue Committee advises on the strategy and implementation of revenue programs at the Heart Foundation. These may relate to brand, marketing, fundraising, commercial or social impact investment and other revenue growth initiatives.



Risk Audit and Governance Committee

Chair: Peter Matruglio

The Risk, Audit and Governance Committee advises the Board on a range of risk management, governance and compliance matters, including meeting with external auditors to analyse, review and recommend to the Board the Heart Foundation group financial statements and the Internal Auditors in relation to the effectiveness of the Heart Foundation's internal control framework. The Committee thanks Alice Tay as former Chair of the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee.



Thank you to all our supporters

We are grateful to all our supporters over the last 12 months who have shown an incredible commitment to our fight to save Australian hearts. The Heart Foundation's vision of an Australia free of heart disease continues to move forward through the vital heart research, education and healthcare programs. Thank you for your generosity, it will make a difference to individuals, families and communities across the country.

Donors and Fundraisers

Whether it be through fundraising on our behalf, regular giving on a monthly basis to us or one-off donations across the year, every dollar donated is helping the Heart Foundation to deliver programs and research to keep families together. Thank you for your generosity.

Workplace Giving

Over the last 12 months many employers across the country made the decision to support the Heart Foundation through giving programs in their workplace. The generosity of your people is inspiring and is enhanced by the organisations who then matched their contributions.

Gifts in Wills

Leaving a gift in your will acts as a legacy to help hearts long into the future. We thank all those who gave this lasting gift to the Heart Foundation this year and thank those who have made the commitment to do this in the future.

Philanthropy

Thank you to the philanthropists and trustees whose significant and thoughtful investments towards achieving our mission are helping to reduce heart disease and improve heart health throughout Australia.

Government and Corporate Partners

Our trusted partners provide both financial and strategic support and help us spread the message of the importance of our work. We thank our corporate partners for walking the path towards better heart health with us.

Health Care Workers

Our incredible health care community – surgeons, medical specialists, general practitioners, nurses, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care workers, allied health practitioners and others – must be acknowledged for their continued support of people living with heart disease. Your commitment and passion is to be admired. Thank you.

Volunteers

In 2023, we were fortunate to have the support of over 1300 volunteers who contributed across all areas of our organisation. The generosity of these volunteers enable us to achieve our goals all over Australia, which we never take for granted. We cannot thank you all enough.

Gifts in Wills

In 2023, the Heart Foundation was privileged to receive over 319 gifts from the estates of generous individuals in our community. We extend our deepest gratitude and sympathies to the loved ones and friends of these supporters.

We thank those extraordinary people who left gifts of over \$10,000 from their estate or trust to transform the heart health of many generations to come.

Judith Alexander	Margaret Clark	John Goldsbrough	Audrey Lawson	Elizabeth Noble
Brian Anderson	Winifred Elizabeth Cobbold	John Gradwell	John Kennedy	Martha Novak
William Angus	Roger Cook	Doris Gradwell	Harold Leamon	Anne Olney
Mervyn Atkinson	Elizabeth Collard	Patricia Grant	Mary LePage	Stanley Pendall
Barbara Bali	Margaret Cook	Len Grasso	Gertrude Kopatkow	Gerrit Peters
Vilma Barrett	Raymond Cook	Faye Groom	Yvonne Laverick	Stanley & Eunice Nicholson Trust
Leslie Basford	Leslie Cooper	Beth Guy	Patricia Lawless	Kenneth Pride
Kerry Bauer	Joan Cox	Elizabeth Hardie	Ian Lindsay	Janet Elaine Reid
Barbara Beattie	Valma Cox	Beryl Haile	Joseph Marcoleone	Harry Robertson
Allan Bell	Thelma Criddle	Dawn Hall	Alberta Lederman	Olive Robinson
Marjorie Bentley	William Crowson	Neil Haysom	Thomas Marks	Tanya Roddan
Maria Borg	Thelma Davidson	James Hills	Irene Martin	Hilda Rose
Lesley Bourke	Jennifer De Vroome	Theresa Hobkirk	Margaret Manhart	Heather Rusell
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We would also like to acknowledge the supporters who wish to remain anonymous.

Major philanthropic donors

The Heart Foundation's achievements in 2023 are a testament to the generosity and commitment of the following major supporters who invested \$10,000 or more in our work, in addition to those who wish to remain anonymous. Their contributions will continue to play a crucial role in advancing heart health research, supporting communities, and improving the lives of those affected by heart disease.

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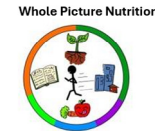
Corporate supporters

Corporate Partners

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Heart Matters



RACGP Healthy Habits

Government



Financial report

The Heart Foundation reported an operating surplus of \$1,533,000 in 2023. This result represents an improvement on the prior year where a deficit of \$2,889,000 was recorded. This improved result was achieved through careful management of our key revenue streams, and diligent cost control. The net result including the impact of investment returns and investment market movements was a surplus of \$11,178,000 in 2023 compared to a deficit of \$9,006,000 in 2022. The net results in 2023 and 2022 were impacted by the recent volatility in investment markets, with a strong market recovery in 2023, following the general market downturn in 2022.

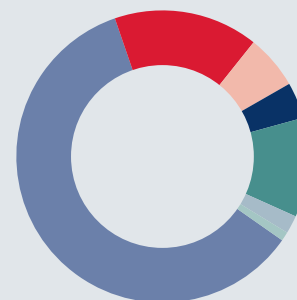
The Heart Foundation is primarily supported by generous donations from the Australian public. We recognise we have a responsibility to our supporters and to the Australian community to ensure we can deliver improved heart health outcomes both now and for future generations. To achieve this the organisation needs to be financially sustainable with expenditure managed to fit within our revenue.

Our cost-reduction exercise which commenced in 2021 has been consolidated in 2022 and 2023 while still allowing us to deliver on our mission.

While there has been a strong focus on cost control, making the best use of our donor funds, our commitment to deliver continues, and in 2023 we:

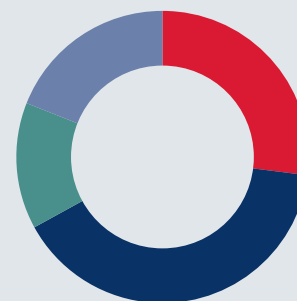
- increased our revenue in a challenging fundraising environment
- maintained our committed level of expenditure on research over the 2021–2023 strategy period
- managed our operational expenditure with only a 4% increase, while still delivering the activities and programs necessary to deliver our core mission.

Overall, the operating result was in line with the Board’s expectations as we consolidate our reserves in preparation for future strategic developments. With a dedicated management team, our commitment to research expenditure and the delivery of high impact health programs has been maintained, and the financial outlook for the organisation has been significantly improved. The Heart Foundation now has a solid platform to support an increased commitment to health programs and research into the future.



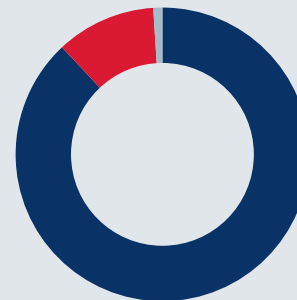
How you've helped us in 2023

Bequests & Memorial Giving	60%
Regular Givers & Appeals	16%
Major Gifts	6%
Jump Rope for Heart	4%
Community Fundraising Events	11%
Grants	2%
Corporate Partnerships	1%



What your donations supported in 2023

Health Programs	27%
Research	40%
Communications, Health Campaigns & Administration	14%
Fundraising	19%



Sources of income

Public Support	88%
Grants for Health Programs & Research	11%
Other Income	1%

Heart Foundation 13 11 12

heartfoundation.org.au



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ABC Centre
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The National Heart Foundation of Australia is a registered charity and accredited to carry the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission) Tick.

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ISBN - 978-1-74345-134-2; ISSN - 2206-1908



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