

**SANE** We're people  
like you.



**2024  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**Digital support powered  
by the people of SANE.**

[sane.org](https://sane.org)

**SANE supports all Australians affected by complex mental health issues. We exist to break barriers, raise expectations, and champion the voices of lived experience and their families and communities.**

#### Acknowledgement of Country

SANE acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.

#### Lived Experience Recognition

At SANE we recognise that lived experience lives here. SANE respects and champions the individual and collective expertise of people with a lived experience of mental health issues and their families, communities, and people impacted by suicide. We recognise their vital contribution at all levels and value the courage of those who share this unique perspective for the purpose of learning and growing together to achieve better outcomes for all.

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# WELCOME

Our mission at SANE is to create a better future for people with complex mental health needs. As I reflect on this past financial year, I feel deeply appreciative and proud of the significant steps we've taken toward this aim and sincere gratitude for the passionate and dedicated SANE staff and community that have got us here.

SANE has established itself as a leader in digital mental health services. We are pioneering innovative programs that provide personalised support to people and families impacted by complex mental health needs and trauma. We're actively creating an integrated, affordable, and accessible system of care with lived experience firmly at the centre of it all.

This year marked the ten-year anniversary of our online Recovery Community Forums, one of the first Australian digital programs providing peer support and social connection. I'm delighted to say our Forum Community has flourished over time, with engagement continuing to grow and strengthen year on year. As an ever-adapting service, we're completing an extensive community evaluation and co-design project aimed at enhancing the Forum experience and exploring new collaborative spaces.

Thousands of Australians have accessed critical counselling and peer support through our Guided Recovery program. Ongoing evaluations show that the Guided Recovery program and RecoveryClub have a significant impact, highlighting their potential to help address the unmet need for psychosocial support across Australia.

Our expertise in digital mental health was recognised this year, with SANE being selected by the Commonwealth Government to lead a national consortium of sector partners to explore and develop new digital solutions. This aims to reduce fragmentation and improve how people navigate the mental health system and gain access to the right mental health support, when and where they need it.

This year, we explored ways we can meaningfully contribute our expertise to improve mental health outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and support national Closing the Gap targets. We worked with Reconciliation Action Australia to develop an 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which involved the embedding of social and emotional wellbeing frameworks across our services



and programs. We also undertook collaborative work with a range of community-controlled organisations to support the development of culturally safe and inclusive spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

SANE continued our fight against the stigma and discrimination that still frequently impacts our community. Our StigmaWatch team and community responded decisively to harmful narratives following the tragic event that occurred in Bondi Junction, providing evidence-based information and encouraging a respectful and informed approach to media coverage and public conversation.

On behalf of the entire SANE community, I would like to say a very special thanks to our outgoing Chair Lucy Myer, whose decade-long tenure has resulted in an incredible legacy of progress and laid the path for even more success in the future.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our staff, volunteers, donors, and partners. Your dedication enables us to continue innovating and delivering vital programs for our community.

Together, we will create a world where mental health inequity is a thing of the past, and everyone has the opportunity to live a fulfilling life free from stigma and discrimination.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission.

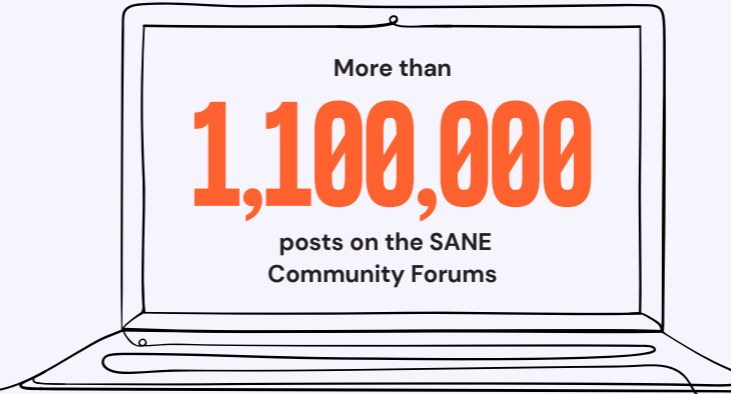


**RACHEL GREEN**  
**CEO. SANE**

# RAP

Delivery of SANE's 'Innovate' RAP. This included the recruitment of an independent Indigenous Chair and identified Indigenous positions

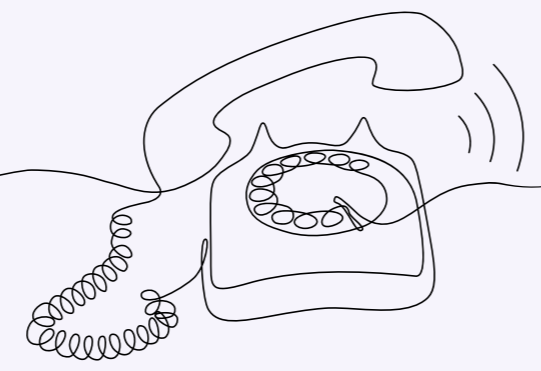
Over **85%** of staff identify as having lived experience of mental health issues, trauma, or neurodiversity



More than **1,100,000** posts on the SANE Community Forums

**502,000** users accessed the SANE website for the first time

There were **9,513** calls to the SANE Support Line



**24,410** SANE service appointments were completed



More than 300+ sector stakeholders engaged in the Digital Navigation project led by SANE and consortium

**50** unique partners syndicated our Recovery Community's driving a surge in new traffic

SANE Guided Recovery expanded to support more than **4,372** individuals and carers across 13 Primary Health Network (PHN) regions

There was remarkable growth of the StigmaWatcher community with **6,800** participants

RecoveryClub was developed as a pilot in late FY2024 and launched as trial in August 2024. As of November 1, RecoveryClub has had 371 participants accepted into the program

**22.7%** increase in website visitors highlights a substantial growth in engagement with SANE's online platform this year

**576** Number of journalists engaged by Stigmawatch resulting in **400** adaptations made to media content



Social media performance saw a 20 per cent increase in combined paid and organic results, fueled by strategic content planning and execution

The Dax Centre had **3,000** visitors and was re-accredited by the Museum Accreditation Program. Three exhibitions were delivered and 35 people participated in the Studio Dax program



The second *Bridging the Gaps* survey had over 500 respondents and results were presented to the Commonwealth Government to inform policy decisions

# HIGHLIGHTS.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR.

As I share my final message as Chair of SANE, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the incredible people and progress I've had the privilege of being involved with over the past ten years.

I first joined SANE in 2014 with a strong desire to make the world a better place for people living with complex mental health needs. I chose SANE because I knew I was joining an organisation with a powerful legacy of courage and action, unafraid to challenge the status quo.

Over the past decade, we have achieved remarkable milestones, often in the face of significant challenges. One of my proudest achievements is the establishment of a bold Ten-Year Vision that aims to create a world where people living with long-term or complex mental ill health don't just survive but thrive. This transformation has allowed us to better address the needs of our community and position ourselves as a leading voice in mental health advocacy. Our new identity reflects our renewed commitment to using innovation to make a meaningful difference.

A major highlight has been our embrace of digital technology to overcome hurdles experienced by the complex mental health community. Back in 2014, digital mental health services were limited. When we launched the SANE online Forums, we stepped into a brave new world, becoming pioneers in digital mental health. Today, while digital mental health is commonplace, SANE remains at the forefront with innovative guided services offering peer support, counselling, and community programs tailored for individuals with complex mental health needs.

SANE's accreditation to the National Safety and Quality in Digital Mental Health Standards is another achievement I am deeply proud of. Being the first organisation in Australia to achieve this accreditation underscores our commitment to providing high-quality, safe, and effective digital mental health services.

Lived experience has always been at the heart of SANE's mission. I am extraordinarily proud of how deeply we have embedded the voices of our community into every aspect of our operations. Additionally, our commitment to reconciliation has been demonstrated through SANE's 'Innovate' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our work in appointing an independent Indigenous Governance Group and recruiting for identified Indigenous positions are critical steps toward building a more inclusive and equitable organisation.

I am thrilled by the significant growth of our online community, which now boasts more than 1,100,000 posts. This vibrant community underscores the power of peer support and the importance of creating inclusive spaces for those affected by mental health issues.

Our commitment to research and advocacy has also been a driving force behind our work. The StigmaWatch program, celebrating its 25th anniversary, remains central to our efforts to change how the media talks about mental illness and suicide. This initiative has played a crucial role in reducing stigma and promoting compassionate, accurate portrayals of mental health issues.

A groundbreaking initiative during my tenure was the National Stigma Report Card, a world-leading study into how stigma and discrimination affect people living with complex mental health issues. Conducted in partnership with the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences and supported by the Paul Ramsay Foundation, this flagship project provided comprehensive insights into the pervasive stigma faced by our community.



The findings from the Our Turn to Speak survey, which involved nearly 2,000 participants, have been instrumental in shaping advocacy efforts and driving systemic change. I am excited to see SANE embark on the second iteration of this groundbreaking work.

There are many individuals who have guided and inspired me along this journey with special acknowledgement going to the incredible SANE staff and volunteers. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to them all for their commitment to ensuring our community had access to support, hope and connection, even during unprecedented times.

As I step down from my role as Chair, I am confident that SANE will continue to thrive and deliver positive outcomes for people with complex mental health challenges. The solid foundation we have built together will support future growth and innovation.

Thank you for your remarkable support and dedication over the past decade. It has been an honour to serve as Chair of SANE, and I look forward to seeing SANE continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of many.

**LUCY MYER  
CHAIR. SANE**

# SANE VISION AND STRATEGY.

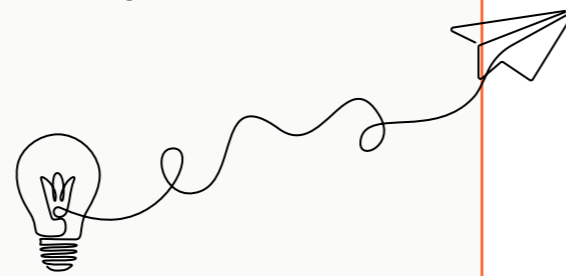
## A brighter future for people, families and communities facing complex mental health issues

At SANE, we're creating space for complex mental health. Throughout the 2023/24 financial year, we enhanced our digital approach and evolved our services to ensure we're meeting the growing needs of the community. We're driven by the voices and expertise of the people who power SANE: Our staff, Peer and Lived Experience Ambassadors, volunteers, supporters and partners.

We're proud to share the achievements and progress we've made this financial year. We're living our SANE values and making significant progress, while advocating for and amplifying the voices of our community.

### Our Ten-Year Vision

1. End mental health inequity through systemic change.
2. Eliminate stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion.
3. Ensure equal employment and economic opportunity for people with complex mental health issues.



**"As someone with lived experience of complex mental health challenges (OCD, childhood trauma and suicidality), I'm incredibly proud to be working for an organisation that champions lived experience at all levels of the organisation. I feel privileged to be employed by an organisation that also takes a stance on key societal and political matters to ensure we flip the switch on stigma and discrimination that perpetuates in our community towards people like us. I'm committed to our vision and strategy in being Australia's leading digital mental health organisation."**



- Anubhav Dhingra, SANE Manager of Peer Led Programs

# STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ENABLERS.

## Goal 1: Bridging The Gaps Between Systems Of Support As Australia's Leading Digital Mental Health Organisation.

**Objective 1:** Deliver connection, community, continuity, creativity and contribution through a new Model of Care, leading digital mental health programs and lived experience programs.

**Objective 2:** Grow, diversify and support a strong, culturally safe and inclusive workplace for our peer, lived experience and mental health workforce.

**Objective 3:** Walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and partners to implement cultural governance and social and emotional wellbeing practices within our Model of Care in support of national Closing the Gap targets.

## Goal 2: Break Through The Barriers Of Stigma And Discrimination.

**Objective 1:** Improve and grow the diversity and representation of people with lived experience in the media through Stigmawatch and stand up against individual and structural discrimination, exclusion and racism.

**Objective 2:** Champion and amplify the collective intelligence of people, families and communities facing complex mental health issues to influence, advocate and educate for greater inclusion, and reach those most in need by growing awareness of SANE and becoming a household name.

**Objective 3:** Invest in strategic partnerships with the wider mental health sector, Aboriginal-led, lived experience, LGBTIQ+ and digital mental health organisations to amplify our impact.

## Enablers

Our success relies on six key enablers that align us with our strategic goals, help fuel innovation, and create a workplace that fosters engagement, wellbeing and success. These enablers have been driving tangible progress toward our Ten-Year Vision.

1. Lived Experience, reconciliation, diversity and inclusion
2. Workforce stability, capability, culture and workplace health and safety
3. Strengthened governance, safety, quality and financial sustainability
4. Digital design, data, analytics and collective intelligence
5. Co-design, collaborate, research and innovate the Anne Deveson Research Collaborative
6. Diversify Revenue Sources

“The happiness I get from working at SANE comes from supporting those who are struggling and knowing that our incredible frontline team provides direct, one-to-one support to those who need it most, whether it’s over the phone, in groups, on our Forums, or through webchat. And it’s all completely free. Amazing!” – Justin Appleby, Service Lead at SANE



# GOAL 1: BRIDGING THE GAPS BETWEEN SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT AS AUSTRALIA'S LEADING DIGITAL MENTAL HEALTH ORGANISATION.

## Objective 1: Deliver connection, community, continuity, creativity, and contribution through a new Model of Care, leading digital mental health programs and lived experience programs.

- ✓ SANE continued to develop and deliver innovative, digital psychosocial support programs in partnership with the lived experience community.
- ✓ SANE Guided Recovery program has supported 4,372 Australians since its launch across 13 Primary Health Networks.
- ✓ Ongoing evaluation of Guided Recovery shows statistically significant improvements in recovery, quality of life and psychological distress among participants.
- ✓ 97 per cent of Guided Recovery participants provided a positive feedback rating.
- ✓ SANE Recovery Community Forums celebrated 10 years of operation with a significant increase in engagement and over 700,000 unique visitors.
- ✓ An extensive community co-design project was launched to improve the Forum experience and explore opportunities for new collaborative spaces.
- ✓ RecoveryClub, an innovative, semi-guided digital service option was piloted nationally in FY2024 with positive feedback from participants.
- ✓ SANE was proud to lead a government-funded consortium of mental health sector organisations to review the digital mental health landscape and create innovative navigation solutions.

## Objective 2: Grow, diversify, and support a strong, culturally safe, and inclusive workplace for our peer, lived experience, and mental health workforce.

- ✓ SANE continued to be guided by the lived experience community, with 85 per cent of staff and volunteers identifying as having lived experience in themselves or in someone they care for.
- ✓ SANE recruited new Mental Health Workers, Service Leads, Recovery Planners, Accredited Counsellors, Peer Support Workers and Group Facilitators during the reporting period.
- ✓ As guided by the SANE Lived Experience Framework, the Lived Experience Advisory met on four occasions across the year.
- ✓ Recognising that child safety and wellbeing is everyone’s responsibility, SANE began planning for imminent alignment with the Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

## Objective 3: Walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and partners to implement cultural governance and social and emotional wellbeing practices within our Model of Care in support of national Closing the Gap targets.

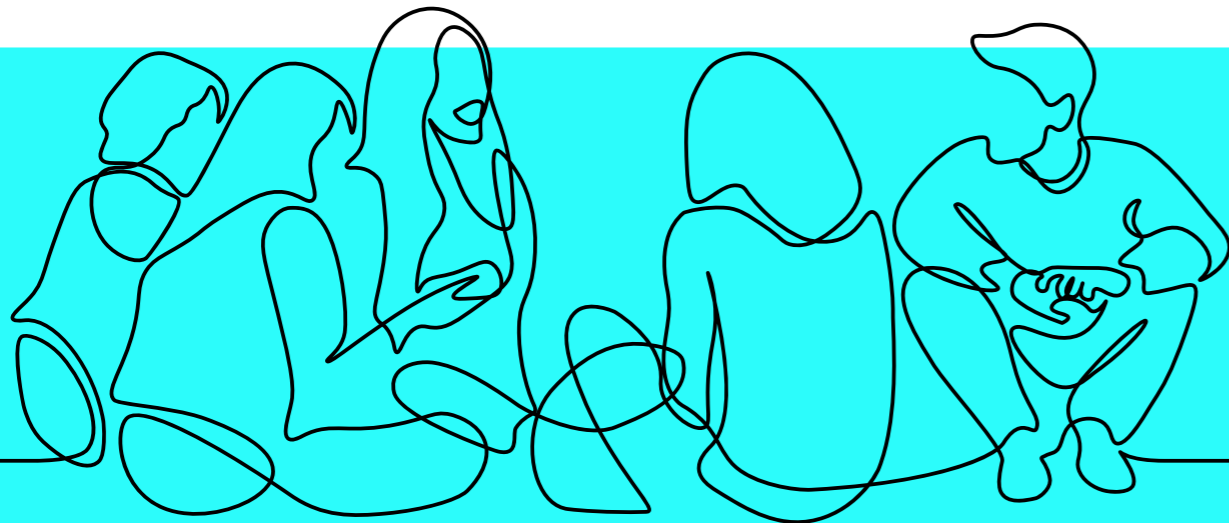
- ✓ In FY24, SANE worked with Reconciliation Action Australia to develop an ‘Innovate’ RAP which will enable us to better serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and actively support national Closing the Gap targets.
- ✓ We continued to embed social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) frameworks into all services and programs, supported by the recruitment of specialised SEWB staff and consultants, and the formation of partnerships with Aboriginal-led organisations.
- ✓ SANE undertook collaborative work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities to co-design Yarning Space, a dedicated social and emotional wellbeing Forum.

“Working at SANE gives me the incredible opportunity to connect people to help and support every day. It brings me so much joy knowing that everything I do at work contributes directly to providing accessible and free support to those who need it.”

- Jenanie Jude, Digital Coordinator at SANE



# THE COMMUNITY WE SUPPORT.



There are an estimated 5 million Australians living with complex mental health issues and trauma, and a further 1.5 million Australians who support them, many of who are already part of the SANE Community.



**24,410** service appointments were completed.

**4,372** have been welcomed into the Guided Recovery program to date.

**68%** identify as female.

**21%** report having only their GP as their source of mental health care.

**57%** of people using the service are in the 25-44 year age range.

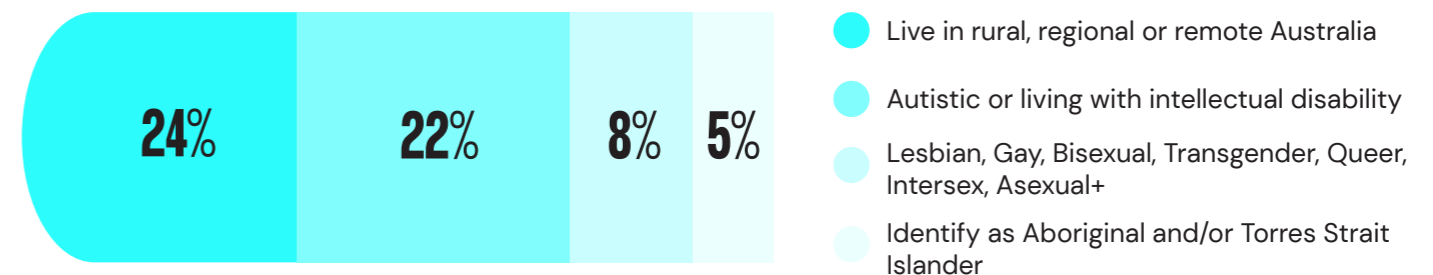
**24%** report no mental health or primary care support in place at time of referral to SANE.



The people we support often face multiple conditions, co-occurring issues and complex circumstances that result in barriers to accessing mainstream services:



We're reaching people who often face barriers accessing mainstream services.



# SANE SERVICES AND THE PEOPLE WHO POWER THEM.

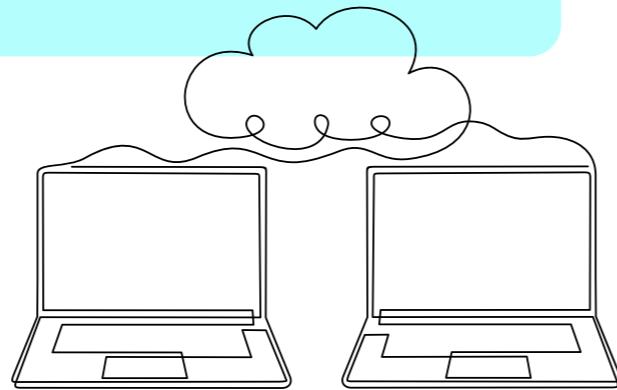
SANE is a leader in delivering trusted digital mental health services, adapting to challenges in a rapidly evolving digital landscape underpinned by robust governance and risk management.

Our services are grounded in evidence-informed psychosocial support, providing fast and adaptable assistance to individuals with complex mental health issues and trauma, as well as their families, carers, and kin.

SANE's service model is a participant-led and integrated approach to the delivery of support that aims to:

- Build connection and social inclusion
- Increase access to support for those impacted by mental health issues
- Improve confidence and hope
- Improve management of mental illness, complement clinical and other care.

Ultimately, we are bridging the gap between systems of support within the mental health care system, and enabling people to access the right level of support, when and where it's needed.



## Guided Recovery

SANE's Guided Recovery is a unique digital psychosocial support service providing accessible and personalised care and connection to Australians living with complex mental health needs. Co-designed with the lived experience community and built on cutting edge Health Cloud technology, Guided Recovery connects users with counselling, peer support, and provides critical connections with community and recovery services.

SANE's Guided Recovery acts as a critical bridge between primary care and specialised services, facilitating better engagement with available health and social services and significantly improving long-term health outcomes.

Independent evaluation has shown the clear benefit of Guided Recovery with participants experiencing significantly improved mental health recovery, quality of life and social connectedness.

Our Guided Recovery program is unique. It provides one-on-one support centred around a personalised mental health recovery plan, and coordinated with other mental health supports. The program provides pathways and transitions into a range of community supports and services. Because of our experience in peer-led digital mental health services, SANE is a much-needed bridge between people and primary care and psychosocial help.

SANE has prioritised streamlining internal processes and realigning support roles to enhance onboarding and enable more participants to progress through the service. Additionally, we conducted user surveys to further refine and tailor our offerings to meet the needs of our community.

SANE is seeing **positive outcomes** for participants including:

- Recovery
- Quality of life
- Psychological distress.

A 'dose-response' effect was observed in the Guided Recovery program, showing that individuals who participated in more sessions, whether one-to-one counselling or group sessions, experienced greater improvements in outcomes.

The link between the number of sessions and positive outcomes suggests that consistent engagement with SANE's services enhances recovery, reinforcing the value of a multi-session model compared to single session helpline intervention.

Importantly, participants consistently reported high levels of satisfaction, with 97 per cent of participants voluntarily providing positive feedback via post session feedback ratings, with comments expressing satisfaction with their sessions and highlighting the positive impact on their mental health.

The SANE Guided Recovery Program is an Australian Government initiative. We'd also like to thank The Ian Potter Foundation and the Paul Ramsay Foundation for their generous support of this program.

**"Being able to help people take steps toward a more fulfilling life is incredibly meaningful, and I am proud to be part of an organisation that provides this support. SANE has provided me with the platform to grow, learn, and make a tangible impact in the lives of those who need it most. It's an environment that encourages personal and professional development, and I'm grateful to be part of such a dedicated and compassionate team."** – Glen Armener, Mental Health Support Worker at SANE





## Support Line

The SANE Support Line was one of Australia's first national services to provide peer and family support for people impacted by complex mental health challenges. It serves as a vital entry point to SANE's services, offering one-off counselling sessions and guidance to navigate the often-confusing mental healthcare system.

Staffed by qualified counsellors and peer support workers, the Support Line delivers telehealth support, information, resources, and referrals. Using a strength-based approach, our telehealth counsellors empower participants on their journey toward mental wellbeing.

Our telehealth counsellors build connection and help participants build personal and social skills, confidence and self-knowledge. They will draw on widely accepted evidence-based counselling techniques, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, motivational interviewing, mindfulness, open dialogue, and acceptance and commitment therapy.

**"SANE is a support line for so many, including me six years ago. I was in such fear and distress, such rupture and agony. I'll hear the respectful stabilising voice of the SANE representative who took my call six years ago for the rest of my days. Over the phone, she reached into my psyche and gently planted a clear picture of what was possible with maternal love, patience, and hope."**

- Sandra, mother, carer and mental health advocate.

**"I love working with SANE and using my lived experience to meaningfully and purposefully support participants in their journeys of recovery. Our work is so impactful, and it's inspiring to be part of an organisation making mental health support accessible for people who need it the most."**

- Peta Antonette Rolfe, Senior Peer Support Worker at SANE



## RecoveryClub

A new offering from SANE in 2024, RecoveryClub is a self-driven program that provides free evidence-based resources, empowering information, as well as a supportive community. This helps participants manage their own mental health and work towards their recovery goals, at their own pace. An inclusive and scalable service, RecoveryClub is accessible wherever a person has access to the internet.

RecoveryClub provides topic based online support groups guided by the the CHIME mental health recovery framework. Offering users diverse opportunities to connect with other participants and program leaders, helping to stay on track with recovery goals.

Developed as a pilot in late FY2024 and launched a trial in August 2024, RecoveryClub has welcomed 371 participants into the program as of November 1, 2024.

# ANTHONY'S STORY.



**Anthony\* is a 55-year-old male living in South Australia, who works part-time and studies while raising a daughter. His story is one of resilience, hope and the life-changing impact of finding the right support when it's most needed.**

I had been working full-time, but I wasn't happy. Then, a relationship breakdown really hit me hard. It was more than just work or life stress—it was the emotional pain of losing someone I cared about that really spiralled me down.

I was looking for help, but I couldn't afford counselling. I tried different helplines, but it was triggering to talk to someone new each time. Sometimes they didn't understand, or they just gave textbook advice. I was lost and really needed consistent support.

Uniting Care put me in touch with SANE, and I was immediately struck by how personal and caring the team was. From that first phone call, I felt like someone really understood me, and I wasn't just another case to them.

My counsellor was amazing. She didn't rush me, and she didn't judge. She listened, understood my story, and gave me the space to process things at my own pace. It felt like she was one of the few people on my side, and that made all the difference. I wasn't sure at first, but the Online Community Forums have been a great way to stay connected. I use them a lot, especially when I'm feeling down or lonely.

Sometimes, it's not even about unpacking trauma. It's just nice to play a game or chat with people. The community is really friendly, and it's a place where I can relax and just be myself.

It's a huge part of my life. I'd recommend it to anyone who's struggling—SANE is different from other services. It's real, it's personal, and it's helped me get back on track.'

**'SANE has given me hope. I'm not where I want to be yet, but I'm on my way. And that's something I never thought I'd say.'**

\*Anthony's real name has been changed

## Recovery Community

Since SANE launched the first digital community Forums in 2014, we have continued to use co-design to improve service delivery and participant experience. Moderated by trained peer support workers known as 'Community Builders', the Forums are a safe and supportive environment for adults with complex mental health needs, as well as their family, friends and kin. The Recovery Community Forums connect participants with a supportive community, share experiences, and enable those who want to seek advice to do so from people who understand.

Each month, over 10,000 posts are shared across 1,600 different discussion threads reflecting the high engagement and community value members place on this platform. In FY2024 alone, the Forums attracted 702,420 unique visitors.

Over the past year, enhancements to the Recovery Community have resulted in a growth in monthly posts and a significant increase in new member sign-ups, with a large proportion of visitors returning regularly.

In FY24, SANE launched an extensive community co-design project to improve the experience of the Forums. This was made up of:

- An online survey: We asked 572 people about their mental health needs and experiences with online support. This group included both Forums users and non-users.
- Co-design discussion group: We held detailed discussions with 60 members in a collaborative space on SANE Forums.

### A wealth of information and feedback was captured including:

- The importance of social connection for people accessing the Forums. The top reasons for visiting the Forums in the past year were to talk to others, needing support, feeling lonely or isolated and to connect with others.
- The need for more education and skill building opportunities within the Forums that would support people with psychosocial disabilities to increase social connection.
- Most participants agreed the Forums positively affected their wellbeing, with those perceiving this benefit showing higher recovery scores after six weeks of Forum use, suggesting meaningful contributions to recovery regardless of initial status. In FY24, SANE also enhanced the Recovery Community by adding monthly mental health webinars and themed group chats, providing tailored support for recovery, social connection, as well as responding directly to community needs.

**"The team at SANE are some of the most talented people I have had the pleasure to work with. The professional work is outstanding, but my highlight since joining SANE has been observing the way the community care for each other. Peer-support is such an important part of having hope for your recovery and SANE provides that to everyone, free of charge."** – Brendan O'Connell, Manager of Digital Communities at SANE



## Ru-Bee | Community Builder

"After working in and personally accessing traditional mental health services, I felt like forums opened my eyes to the different possibilities in how to give and receive support. I'm particularly drawn to online mental health supports as it removes so many of barriers that exist in more traditional mental health supports, and forums specifically has opened my eyes to the power of peer support."

## - rav3n | Community Builder

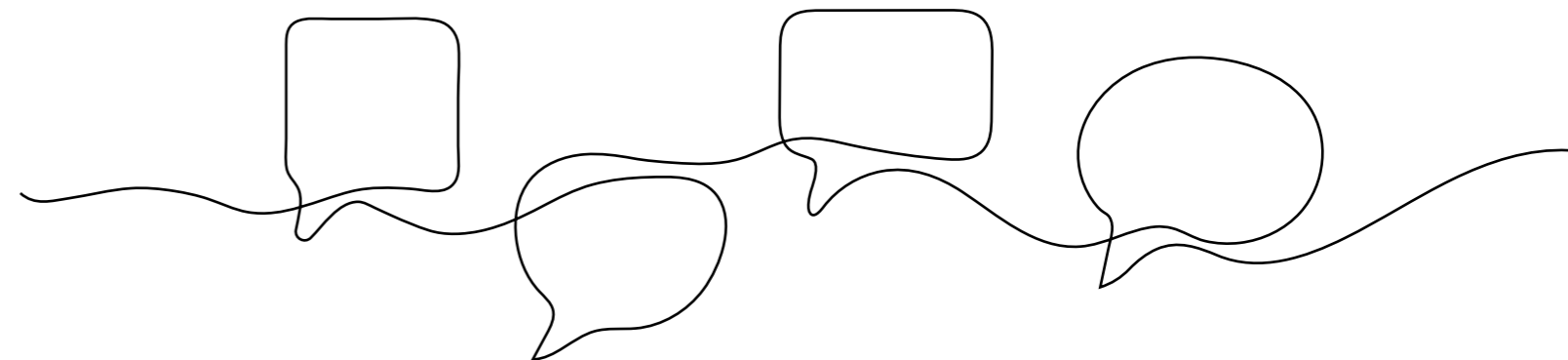
"My own lived experience with social anxiety and depression had opened my eyes to how isolating it is to feel like no one wants to hear and understand you. Being a daughter to immigrant parents has also opened my eyes to the cultural barriers to seeking support. Being able to give others room to be their authentic and vulnerable selves, sit with them so they are not alone, and connect and learn from such amazing souls is what makes me want to do peer work."

## - tyme | Community Lead

"Throughout my recovery, I was filled with gratitude for the support I received from those in the public mental health system. I did not have the support of friends or family around me during my recovery, so the isolation I experienced was very real. During my recovery, I discovered SANE forums. It was here where I found my 'forums family'. It was a safe space where I could connect with real people, and real experiences. Being a peer worker at SANE is not just a 'job'. It's a privilege, an honour and a celebration of the many members who have been supported through SANE's state-of-the-art digital mental health services."

## - Jynx | Community Builder

"I remember reading a quote once, "Be the person you needed when you were younger." I think this is one of the main things that drives me, especially after spending so many years trying to cope alone, and feeling ashamed of how much I was struggling. Now, I feel like I can give back to the community, to share the lessons and tips I have picked up along my recovery journey, in the hopes that no one else will have to struggle through these confusing and stressful endeavours by themselves."



# DIGITAL NAVIGATION PROJECT.



SANE was proud to lead a consortium of sector partners working to develop sector owned, operated and governed digital solutions that make it easier for all help seekers to find and access the care that is right for them.

Commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, the project aims to provide the Australian Government with options for digital solutions that:

- Are sector owned, governed and managed
- Include integrated service directories and warm referral mechanisms
- Cater to the needs of all help seekers
- Are culturally safe
- Reduce fragmentation across the several systems that deliver mental health services.

The project responds to challenges identified in the Productivity Commission Inquiry and 'Better Access' review, which found that the mental health system in Australia is currently unsustainable, difficult to navigate and not meeting the needs of all help seekers.

Launched in June 2024, the project aims to engage broadly with help seekers, carers, front-line workers, subject matter experts, government and the mental health sector to build recommendations and test the feasibility of proposed solutions.

The recommendations developed through this comprehensive consultation and review process will be delivered to the Australian Government in late 2024 and facilitate key shifts in the sector and transition mental health digital navigation to a feasible target state.

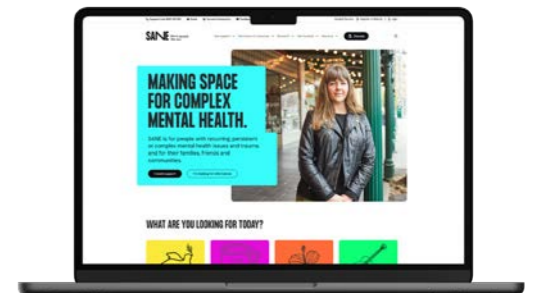
The Digital Navigation Project is led by SANE in collaboration with Nous Group and a consortium of sector organisations, including Butterfly Foundation, Community Mental Health Australia, Flourish Australia, Kids Helpline, LGBTIQ+ Health Australia, Lived Experience Australia, Mind, Nous Group, One Door, Outcome Health, Phoenix Australia, Thirrii, University of Melbourne and the Victorian Collaborative Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing.



# SAFETY, QUALITY, AND ONGOING DIGITAL INNOVATION.

## Increased Investment In Digital Innovation

SANE has increased investment into our technology development, product management and analytics workforce. We completed a cyber security assurance project to kick off the roadmap for aligning SANE's cyber security framework to NIST CSF 2.0 to ensure we're proactively protecting our community data. Our technology team completed system integration projects and set up enterprise tools to bring automation and continuous delivery to software projects and services for the partnerships, finance and technology team.



To best support SANE users we invested into the website revitalisation project, incorporating content audit, analytics and qualitative user interviews to define an information architecture. We also invested in internal Health Cloud resources to reduce dependence on external suppliers, and facilitate more agile practices and IP retention.

SANE made timely updates to our Health Cloud capabilities with the objective of building a robust, adaptable and scalable system. Implementations include Program Management, the Discovery Framework and Integrated Care Management. The Health Cloud improvements support the relaunch of the Guided Recovery program, including the introduction of group sessions and operational dashboards to better track participant journeys.

## Child Safety And Wellbeing

SANE is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, including First Nations children, children with disabilities, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children who are gender diverse.

To bring this to life, SANE started the development of the Principles for Child Safe Organisations in the 23/24 year. We believe child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility, including SANE's Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, contractors and partners. The Principles for Child Safe Organisations will be implemented formally in the next year.

## Ongoing Commitment To Safety And Quality

SANE continues to strengthen our implementation of the National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Standards (NSQDMHS) in preparation for our next assessment. SANE was the first organisation in Australia to have its digital mental health services formally accredited for safety, efficacy and security by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.



# GOAL 2: BREAKING THROUGH THE BARRIERS OF STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION.

**“In my role as Partnerships and Engagement Manager, I witness the transformative power of collaboration across the mental health sector. Seeing the direct results, when the people who need help can easily access the right support because we’ve worked together, reinforces why these partnerships are so important. Every effort we make is a step toward a more connected, inclusive system where no one has to navigate challenges alone, and where the right support is within reach.”**

– Suzy Canadi, Manager of Partnerships and Engagement at SANE



## Objective 1: Improve and grow the diversity and representation of people with lived experience in the media through StigmaWatch and stand up against individual and structural discrimination, exclusion, and racism.

- ✓ The StigmaWatch program identified over 800 instances of harmful or stigmatising media coverage and successfully worked with media outlets to reduce stigmatising content in more than half of these.
- ✓ The StigmaWatcher community grew to more than 6,800 members across Australia.
- ✓ SANE and StigmaWatch were instrumental in improving public communications following the tragic incident at Bondi Junction, while ensuring the SANE community was adequately supported.
- ✓ 26 media stories were placed featuring SANE Peer Ambassadors.
- ✓ Eight episodes of SANE’s podcast ‘People like you’ were released and accessed by over 2,000 listeners, with the launch episode featured on the front cover of The Age newspaper.
- ✓ SANE Dax Centre attracted over 3,000 visitors and launched three exhibitions, including the current called ‘She who persists’, featuring a range of artworks created by women with lived experience of mental ill health.

## Objective 2: Champion and amplify the collective intelligence of people, families and communities facing complex mental health issues to influence, advocate, and educate for greater inclusion, grow awareness of SANE, and become a household name.

- ✓ A national Bridging the Gaps survey of the SANE community was completed by almost 500 people in October 2023 and provided critical information about psychosocial disability that was shared with policy makers.
- ✓ Almost 1,000 media articles covering SANE and issues impacting the SANE community were generated in FY24.
- ✓ SANE social media channels saw a 20 per cent increase in engagement and a tripling of our social media audience across the financial year.
- ✓ A substantial rise in website engagement was also achieved with a 22 per cent increase in unique visitors.
- ✓ A pro bono partnership with the Australian Traffic Network saw distribution of SANE Support Community Service Announcements across major metro radio stations nationally.

## Objective 3: Invest in strategic partnerships with the wider mental health sector, Aboriginal-led, lived experience, LGBTIQ+, and digital mental health organisations to amplify our impact.

- ✓ SANE was proud to continue strong relationships with the 13 PHN regions across Australia supporting delivery of the SANE Guided Recovery service, as well as the 50 local and national organisations syndicating the SANE Recovery Community Forums.
- ✓ SANE proactively engaged or partnered with a range of local and national mental health organisations.
- ✓ Connections were also made with key health-based peak and research bodies including RACGP, Australian Counselling Association, Climate Council, Connecting Climate Minds Community and The University of Melbourne.
- ✓ A strategic partnership was formed with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention organisation Thirrili, and ongoing discussions were had with a number of other local and national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health organisations.

## StigmaWatch

SANE's StigmaWatch program was established in 1997 to promote responsible reporting of mental ill health and suicide in the Australian media. Today, StigmaWatch works in close partnership with Mindframe, an Everymind program, to actively monitor and respond to inaccurate or stigmatising public portrayal of mental ill health and suicide.


In FY24, StigmaWatch intervened and successfully advocated for changes to over 400 media articles that did not align with the evidence-based Mindframe Guidelines, resulting in positive changes to more than half.

Community engagement with the StigmaWatch program was strong across this reporting period, with more than 6,800 StigmaWatchers participating in the program across Australia.

Stigmawatch contacted hundreds of media and communication professionals, often receiving positive feedback on the process and the importance of the activity.

StigmaWatch engaged with a number of organisations regarding stigma reduction and education activities including discussions with the University of NSW Centre for Social Research in Health to explore universal stigma reduction activities, and engagement with the Mental Illness Stigma Research Association (MISRA), Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League and First People's Disability Network.

The SANE StigmaWatch partnership with the University of Melbourne resulted in the submission of a new publication concerning media experiences of reporting on mental health and suicide to the journal 'Journalism'. Research was also conducted into the translation of media news articles into social media content, with these findings also expected for the next reporting period.



**"Working at SANE, I see how important it is to break down stigma, especially in how things are presented in the media. Often we don't realise how certain words or phrases can discriminate against individuals or groups. By challenging these narratives, we can help educate the broader community and make a real difference."**

- Joel Narayan, Financial Accountant at SANE

## StigmaWatch Response To The Bondi Junction Tragedy


In April 2024, a terrible incident in the Sydney suburb of Bondi Junction garnered widespread media attention and generated public discussions about the relationship between mental illness and violence.

Immediately following the incident, the SANE StigmaWatch team swung into action, consulting with the SANE community and sharing communications across social and traditional media that aimed to:

- Recognise the significant impact on victims and responders.
- Provide evidence-based information about mental ill health and violence.
- Encourage a respectful and informed approach to media coverage and public conversations.
- Provide much needed support to those impacted by complex mental health, especially schizophrenia.

Results from this campaign highlighted the positive impact that community-based stigma reduction programs such as StigmaWatch can have.

- More than 150 pieces of lived experience-led media coverage were obtained, including features in The Project, Sydney Morning Herald, News.com.au and ABC Radio National.
- Media monitoring and engagement with media outlets resulted in positive adaptations made to more than half of the articles identified as containing harmful or stigmatising content.
- A record number of community StigmaWatch reports were received by SANE in the days following the incident.
- SANE evidence-based fact sheets and guides on schizophrenia were shared by a large number of health and government organisations.
- Importantly, members of the SANE recovery community were able to support each other via special threads established in the online Forums.



As part of SANE's StigmaWatch response to the Bondi Junction tragedy, SANE Patron Cameron Solnordal shared a heartfelt and highly relevant post on social media. The message garnered record levels of engagement, reflecting the community's strong interest in hearing from the Lived Experience members of the community.

**"I have schizophrenia and I watched the incident in Bondi unfold in complete shock.**

**I have schizophrenia and I'm devastated for those people who have been impacted by this terrible situation.**

**I have schizophrenia and I'm horrified that my family and friends could've been caught up in this.**

**I have schizophrenia and don't understand what this person was thinking that made them attack all these people.**

**I have schizophrenia and I'm angry that this person didn't get the help they needed to prevent this from happening.**

**I have schizophrenia and I'm terrified that people automatically think I'm just like him."**

## Changing Attitudes Through Storytelling

The SANE Peer Ambassador Program continues to be thoughtfully nurtured, with Peer Ambassadors invited to present or contribute to a range of organisations, including La Trobe University, the Victorian Police Academy, The University of Melbourne, Lundbeck, and SMEC.

StigmaWatch collaborated with 16 lived experience speakers to share their stories through media channels. These stories reached a broad audience, fostering empathy and understanding, and contributing to the reduction of stigma.

**“I’ve been a SANE Peer Ambassador for more than 10 years now, bringing my role as a Volunteer with the Victorian Police Academy’s Community Encounters Program with me. I’m proud to be the recipient of two awards recently, one for 13 years at the Police Academy, and the other from the Sikh Community for being a Community Volunteer in 2024.”**

– Shazi Sheppard, SANE Peer Ambassador



## Reducing Stigma Through Art

The Dax Centre uses art to raise awareness and reduce stigma towards mental health issues. Through exhibitions and educational programs, The DAX Centre seeks to engage, inform and encourage community connections and conversations about mental health.

We work with emerging artists with lived experience of mental health issues, providing a safe and supportive environment for the artists to exhibit their work and raise the public’s awareness of these artist’s important cultural contributions.

In this reporting period, The Dax Centre had over 3,000 visitors, hosted a major Cunningham Dax Collection exhibition and contemporary artist exhibitions.

The Dax Centre delivered Education Programs to 965 secondary students and 362 tertiary students and is planning to further integrate The Dax Centre into university courses and develop a digital version of the education program.



One exhibit of note was the ‘Creative Sanctuary’. This showcased eight artists from the Cunningham Dax Collection who demonstrated solace and inspiration from their own creative sanctuaries, the major annual collection exhibition.

The current collection is ‘She Who Persists’. These artworks share stories of women’s mental health experiences and the innovative, creative and resourceful ways they have engaged with craft and textiles to manage and persevere through adversity and challenges. This also included two exhibitions in collaboration with Arts Access Victoria.

## Research Driving Change For People With Complex Mental Health Issues

The Anne Deveson Research Collaborative (ADRC) is an initiative of SANE that undertakes practical research to drive policy change, improving social outcomes for Australians affected by complex mental health issues. The Collaborative prioritises research conducted in partnership with people who have lived experience of complex mental health challenges. It focuses on multidisciplinary studies that explore the social impacts of these conditions and address stigma and discrimination.

The ADRC underwent comprehensive external and internal evaluations of SANE’s Guided Recovery. These evaluations enabled the development of rigorous data sets and evaluation protocols, ensuring a strong foundation for future research and policy work.

### Supporting Emerging Researchers

SANE supported two postgraduate students during their final years of study. These students aimed to apply their research and evaluation skills in mental health settings, contributing to the development of evidence-based approaches to complex mental health challenges.

### Collaborative Research

During FY24, SANE’s Guided Recovery program underwent an independent evaluation by the Institute for Social Science in collaboration with:

- The University of Queensland Centre for Mental Health Research
- Monash University Health Economics Group
- Queensland Centre for Intellectual and Developmental Disability.

The ADRC also engaged in collaborative research with institutions, The University of Melbourne and Everymind.

These collaborations exemplify the ADRC’s commitment to advancing research that informs practical outcomes for individuals and communities.



**“It’s a basic need that all of us have, we want to feel valued, we want to enjoy ourselves. We never allowed people with a mental illness to have their own humanity and that is what is changing”**

– Anne Deveson, AO

Anne Deveson was one of SANE’s Founders who died in 2016. The Anne Deveson Research Collaborative honours Anne’s legacy by conducting research to improve the lives of those affected by complex mental health issues, working with people with lived experience and their families, friends and colleagues.

# SANE STORIES AND RESOURCES.

## 'People like you' Podcast

SANE introduced a podcast series in 2024 interviewing people with personal experiences of complex mental illnesses to talk about their lives, their challenges and what they'd like people to know when it comes to shifting discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.

We produced and shared eight episodes, reaching over 2,300 downloads across drawing in a diverse audience. Community feedback was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the podcast's effectiveness in raising awareness and reducing stigma.

Guests on the podcast included:

- Comedian, Sam Kissajukian
- Writer, Elfy Scott
- Author, Jill Stark
- Poet, Sandy Jeffs
- SANE Peer Ambassadors, Sarah and Alice Martin
- SANE Board Member and 2021 NAIDOC Person of the Year, Dean Duncan
- SANE Peer Ambassador, Shazi Sheppard
- SANE Manager of Peer Led Programs, Anubhav Dhingra



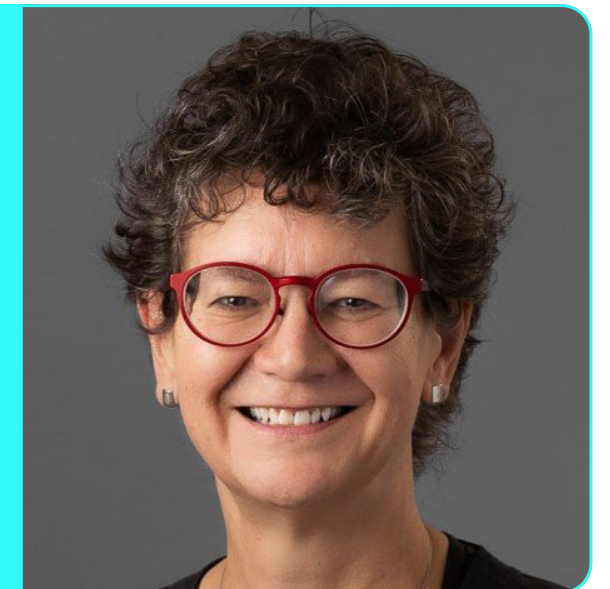
## Mental Health Recovery Webinars

SANE's Mental Health Recovery Webinars have quickly become a valued part of our community. Each thoughtfully planned webinar aims to address the unique needs and suggestions of those who engage with SANE's services. Our goal is to empower our community with insights and tools they can use in their lives, providing support on each unique recovery journey.

Evidence shows the community has connected most deeply with webinars that are conversational and centred around our guest's lived experiences. These candid discussions have had a profound impact, helping people feel less alone and chipping away at the stigma that exists around mental health.

**"Being invited to speak at the SANE webinar was a real honour. It was so wonderful to connect with people who were keen to understand how to work successfully with their GP for good mental and physical health outcomes."**

- A/Prof Caroline Johnson



## Digital Engagement

SANE's Meta channels, Facebook and Instagram, saw a 20 per cent increase in FY23/24. Alongside this growth, our commitment to community building led to a significant rise in followers across both platforms, more than tripling our audience over the past financial year.

## Information and Resources

SANE provides factsheets and guides for people seeking information including those diagnosed, carers, family and the health care sector. SANE also provides evidence-based support and resources for specific populations. SANE is focused on eliminating stigma through its Stigmawatch program and developing positive stories through its media activity.

# MAKING STRIDES TOWARDS RECONCILIATION.

SANE acknowledges the significant intergenerational impact that colonisation has had, and continues to have, on the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Statistics and stories of lived experience tell us that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately affected by the discrimination and inequality that frequently accompanies mental ill health and suicide.

In the past year, SANE has undergone work with Aboriginal-led organisations, corporations and communities to support the co-design and delivery of a dedicated social and emotional wellbeing online community Forum, Yarning Space.

This free digital service is now in the prototype and consultation phase, will be accessible 24/7 and governed and developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families, kin and communities.

SANE supports the achievement of the highest attainable standard of social and emotional wellbeing, mental health and suicide prevention outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by:

- Embedding social and emotional wellbeing frameworks into all SANE services and programs.
- Delivering mental health programs and services that are culturally governed by and developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, their families, kin and communities.
- Providing employment and training opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

**“Having a culturally safe place to have those talks and get real. For me, talking with people in my family and connecting with family narratives has helped me understand the struggles of my ancestors.”**

**“A culturally safe space is a place you feel welcome and without judgement, your culture is important here, not a stereotype or something people judge you for and you don’t have to explain yourself. People understand and have more knowledge about what First Nations people have experienced, what can help and welcome them into space with open arms. Most importantly it is safe and welcoming.”**

*Heal the People, 2023, artwork by Kelly Marie Taylor (Yankunytjatjara/Kokatha Descendant)*

## Reconciliation Action Planning Committee

The RAP is being led by SANE’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee, which includes representation from service delivery and workforce teams within the organisation and volunteer Peer Ambassadors. There are two people on the RAP Committee who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

During the financial year, SANE worked with Reconciliation Action Australia to develop an ‘Innovate’ RAP which will enable us to better serve to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

A key part of the RAP was to ensure we embedded the feedback of the RAP Committee to continue to partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations to implement cultural governance and Social and Emotional Wellbeing practice within our Model of Care in support of Closing the Gap targets.

We further embedded and fostered a culturally safe workplace for First Nations employees including enforcing a First Nations online cultural training program for delivery to all staff and an immersive training experience for management and people leaders.

Collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Islander Community Controlled organisations, WellMob and Thirrili, and other partners we developed a Social and Emotional Wellbeing workforce approach to supporting First Nations participants.

First Nations community was also an important part of our reconciliation initiatives.

### SANE’s RAP Committee:

**Chair:** Tom Brideson

**Other members:** Andrew Simpson; Brendan O’Connell; Shazi Sheppard; Vanessa Kredler; Anu Dhingra; Carla Burnside; Nathan Deaves.



**“The work we are doing in this space is so meaningful, the members of the Yarning Space have told us what they want, we listened, and we designed the Yarning Space and we will continue to listen to their voices to further develop this forum.**

**I’ve been lucky enough to be able to travel to different communities and connect and understand the local context and how digital health solutions may work in these different regions. I’m proud of the work we are doing, and the partnerships we have established to ensure this space has the appropriate mechanisms to support Forums design, content development and cultural governance.”**

- Nathan Deaves, Manager of Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Programs



# POWERED BY PEOPLE.



SANE workforce stability, culture and safety have been a priority over FY 23/24. This was in response to the urgent need for the rapid increase in workforce size and diversity due to program and service expansion, but also to recognise the requirement for our people to experience job satisfaction and career progression.

Growth and diversification of the Guided Recovery workforce served to increase the minimum skill level, prioritise recruitment of a highly experienced workforce, continuing to increase training, qualification and credentialing requirements.

This enabled us to continue the improvement of the onboarding and offboarding programs to support staff at scale and continue to improve attachment and retention.

We also further embedded the Learning Management System, Sentrient, to support learning requirements, credentialing, core policy understanding, onboarding processes and core compliance.

Workforce metrics showed that 85 per cent of SANE staff identify as having lived experience of mental ill health with 46 per cent personal lived experience, 13 per cent carer experience and 26 per cent both personal and carer experience. Eighty-five per cent of the SANE Board identify as having lived experience.

A growth in the SANE service workforce means there are now nine MHSW, six Service Leads, seven Recovery Planner, 26 Counsellors, seven Peer Support Workers and three Groups Facilitators.

SANE continued improvement to onboarding and offboarding programs to support staff at scale and continued to improve engagement and retention.

## Lived Experience Advisory Committee:

**Interim Chair:** Luke Marshall

**Other members:** Anubhav Dhingra; Alisha Aitken-Radburn; Christine Middleton; Andrea Whitmore; Craig Locke; Jennifer Freer; Lachlan Squire; Margaret Leggatt.

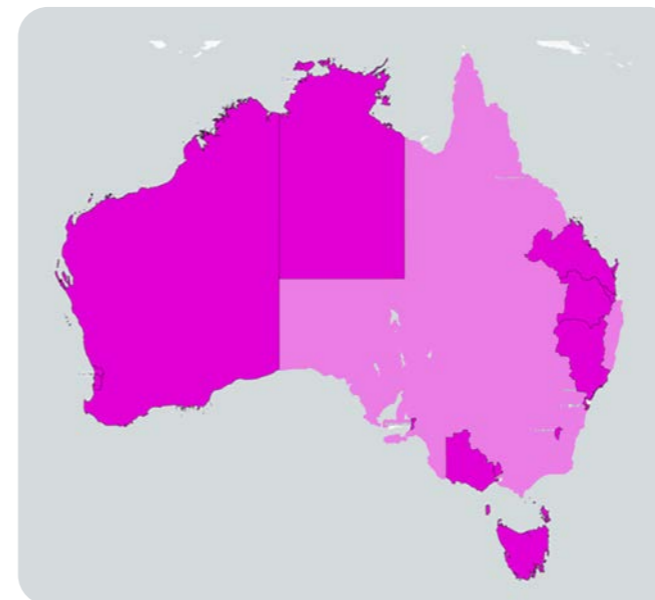
**“Joining LEAC has felt deeply rewarding. I’ve always been curious about mental health support and how organisations like SANE help people. Through committee meetings I get exposure to how SANE thinks about this support, and just as importantly, they listen to our group and how it can support people living with complex mental health better. Discussion in our group is rich and colourful and I love that we’re able to share openly and feel heard.”**

– Luke Marshall, Interim LEAC Chair



## Partnering With The Sector

SANE places great focus on working collaboratively with the mental health sector and the broader health and social services system. SANE’s Guided Recovery Program expanded to reach over 4,372 individuals and carers across 13 Primary Health Network (PHN) regions, thanks to the support of the participating PHNs:



**“I had my first counselling session today and I have come away from that phone call feeling listened to, understood and positive to give some new strategies a go”.**

– Guided Recovery Participant

### ● SANE provides digital support to all of Australia

#### ● Victoria

North-Western Melbourne PHN  
Western Victoria PHN

#### ● Queensland

Central Queensland, Wide Bay, Sunshine Coast PHN  
Brisbane North PHN  
Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

#### ● Australia Capital Territory

Capital Health Network

#### ● New South Wales

Western Sydney PHN  
The Hunter, New England and Central Coast PHN  
Central and Eastern Sydney PHN

#### ● South Australia

Adelaide PHN

#### ● Northern Territory

Northern Territory PHN

#### ● Tasmania

Tasmania PHN

#### ● Western Australia

WA Primary Health Alliance (comprising Perth North, Perth South and Country WA)

We’d also like to acknowledge our valued Forum partners and note their important contribution to the growth and development of our Recovery community. Funded by the Australian Government, SANE Online Community Forums have been providing 24/7, moderated peer support and connection for 10 years. Over 50 local and national organisations syndicate the SANE Forums to their communities and we thank them for their support.

SANE engaged or partnered with a range of local and national mental health organisations including: Mental Health Australia; National Mental Health Commission; Mental Health Victoria, VMIAC; Suicide Prevention Australia; Black Dog Institute, ReachOut; Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia and Mind Australia.

Connections were also made with key health-based peak and research bodies including: RACGP, Australian Counselling Association, Climate Council, Connecting Climate Minds Community, and The University of Melbourne.

SANE would also like to recognise Mindframe, an Everymind program, for their support of the StigmaWatch program.

# FUNDRAISING AND PHILANTHROPY.

SANE could not do what we do without the support of our donors and funders. Many generous individuals, families, foundations, bequestors, and businesses help us continue to bridge the gaps and ensure critical mental health support is available when and where it's needed.

## SANE Impact Collective

SANE Impact Collective members provide strategic funding to support us to deliver on our ambitious strategic plan and goals. The critical, multi-year funding provided by this group enables us to build internal capacity and skills, explore new avenues and rapidly respond to increasing demand for service and support in the community.

We would like to thank and acknowledge our 2024 Impact Collective members:

- Louise and Martyn Myer Foundation
- Handbury Foundation
- Channel Foundation
- Tony and Janine Burgess
- Knox Foundation.

If you would like to learn more about supporting SANE or joining the Impact Collective, please email [philanthropy@sane.org](mailto:philanthropy@sane.org).

## Fundraising Partners and Supporters

Thank you to all our partners and funders over the past financial year, we are so appreciative of your help. SANE would like to acknowledge the following individuals, families and organisations who have contributed to our services during this reporting period.

### SANE Supporters

- The Ian Potter Foundation
- The Neilson Foundation
- The Myer Foundation
- Blue Sky Foundation
- Perpetual
- Harry Secomb Foundation
- Collendina 5 Foundation
- Cooper Investors
- PNI Foundation / Five V Capital
- The Access Foundation
- Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia Quality Assurance Programs (RCPAQAP)
- Australian Gas Infrastructure Group (AGIG)

### Pro Bono and In-kind Support

- King & Wood Mallesons
- OOh! Media
- Optimise Media
- Lander & Rogers
- Nous Group
- Australian Traffic Network

### Government

- Department of Health and Aged Care
- Department of Social Services
- Hunter New England Local Health District
- The Mental Health Commission of NSW

## Corporate Support

We would like to extend special recognition and acknowledgement to staff and management at King & Wood Mallesons (KWM) for their ongoing commitment and support of SANE's work. In addition to the invaluable pro-bono work they provide, the team at KWM supported SANE through workplace giving, matched giving, and hosted a Wellbeing Walk and Talk across five cities to prioritise mental health, connection and wellbeing.

**"KWM is proud of its 19-year partnership with leading national mental health organisation SANE Australia. It is one example of the community partnerships KWM supports during Mental Health Month and beyond. As part of KWM's all year-round workplace giving program, DigDeep®, and via our pro bono practice, our people can support SANE's work with people experiencing recurring, persistent, or complex mental health issues and trauma. We feel honoured to support SANE in building healthier communities."** – King & Wood Mallesons team



## Supporter Event

A warm thank you to our SANE outgoing Chair Lucy Myer, Martyn and Louise Myer, for allowing us to host this special event at the Myer historic family home, Cranlana. This beautiful event was a chance for us to recognise our supporters' invaluable contributions, share our lived experience stories, and provide insights into the innovative digital psychosocial counselling and support that SANE offers to all Australians. The Myer family's dedication and generosity make it possible for us to continue delivering impactful mental health services to those who need it most.

## HELP US TO HELP OTHERS.

There are many ways you can help us deliver on our ambitious vision:

- One-off or regular giving
- Hold a community fundraising event
- Leave a gift in your Will
- Support a particular program through your Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives, or join workplace giving
- Make a gift through your Trust, Foundation or Privacy Ancillary Fund
- Donation of in-kind services or expertise

Please contact us to have a chat about how you'd like to support the work of SANE on [teamsane@sane.org](mailto:teamsane@sane.org) or (03) 9190 0610.

To make a tax-deductible donation please visit [sane.org/donate](https://sane.org/donate)



## SANE Support Line Appeal

A big thank you to all who donated to our national Support Line Appeal in May and June 2024. The SANE Support Line is a vital service providing free counselling sessions and information to people living with complex mental health and their families. The funds raised during that appeal will help keep our Support Line open and free and able to meet the growing demand across Australia.

### Community Fundraising

James and Hugo raised \$4,900 by taking part in 4X4X48Googins Challenge.

James and Hugo went to high school together and wanted to support a mental health organisation by participating in the 4X4X48Googins, a demanding running challenge. SANE supporting people with complex mental health and their carers resonated with them. They both want to do the challenge again next year and get more people involved in fundraising. James' message to any new fundraiser is:

**"It's not too hard to set up. Don't be afraid to ask. No need to feel awkward about asking as it's for a good cause."**



Charlotte raised \$12,055 by walking from SANE Australia's head office in Victoria, via the Great Ocean Road, all the way to Kingston SE Australia.

**"I'm raising money and sharing my experience with those around me to show them it's okay to talk, even when it's hard it's okay to share your experience because someone, even if they don't show it, will always be listening. Having a mental illness isn't the end of the line, it can make the line harder to follow and bumpier; but there's still more to go. I hope to provide an understanding of what people who do can go through every day and how we experience life differently. Awareness is the most important and the first step in removing the stigma around mental health."** – Charlotte

## Thanking the Estate of Margaret Jane Grummet

SANE was honoured to receive a Bequest donation from the late Margaret Grummet's estate and would like to celebrate the incredible contribution Margaret has made to SANE in the past and the legacy she has left through this Bequest gift.

As someone with close family connections to complex mental illness, Margaret Grummet had personal experience of how hard it can be to access critical mental health support. Margaret initially joined Schizophrenia Fellowship of Victoria as one of the early Support Line volunteers, sharing information and hope with individuals and families navigating life with severe mental health conditions. The fellowship helped to establish the Schizophrenia Australia Foundation in 1986, which then became SANE.

This was a time when mental health was still greatly misunderstood and those experiencing mental illness were often hidden away. Margaret wanted to make sure her decades of work in improving understanding and reducing stigma could continue to enable a better life for those living with mental ill health.



Margaret's son, Chris, told us how much she valued the cause and saw first-hand the impact of this vital work.

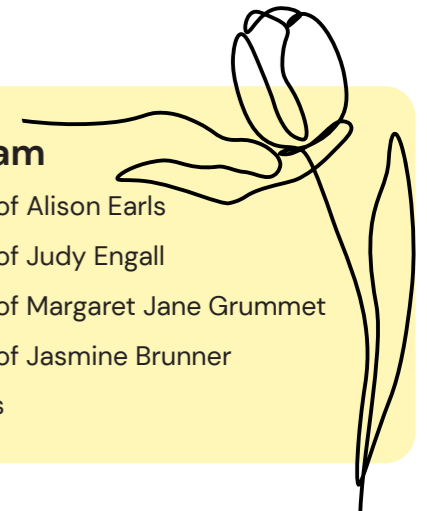
**"We still see it today; mental health is underfunded, and people still don't want to talk about it. My mum understood that there was still a lot more work to do. She believed in SANE because they're standing up for people with lived experience and actively talking about mental health. Sometimes, you've got to listen to and hear someone out. That's something my mum did really well. One of her greatest strengths was her kindness and compassion for others, even people she didn't know.**

**I think people would have felt safe to share with my mum. When it comes to legacy gifts, people can feel hesitant about them. I celebrate the idea of thinking big picture long-term. Even if someone can't contribute now, they can still make a lasting impact through a bequest. For me, continuing my mum's legacy of supporting SANE is something I'm proud to do, knowing how much good it will bring."** – Chris Grummet

Our heartfelt thanks to Margaret and the Grummet family for leaving a lasting legacy through this Bequest. For more information on how to support SANE with a Bequest, please contact [philanthropy@sane.org](mailto:philanthropy@sane.org) or **03 9190 0610**.

### In Memoriam

- The Estate of Alison Earls
- The Estate of Judy Engall
- The Estate of Margaret Jane Grummet
- The Estate of Jasmine Brunner
- Anonymous





**Lucy Myer, GAICD, Chair**

Lucy Myer was appointed as Chair of SANE and The Dax Centre in 2020 following seven years of being a member of the Board. Lucy is passionate about increasing awareness of complex mental health issues, and she brings her professional expertise to SANE from her background in commerce, marketing, and management. Currently Strategy Manager at SEEK, Australia's leading employment platform, Lucy has also held roles on the Education and Youth Mental Health Committees of The Myer Foundation. Lucy is a passionate advocate for mental health and physical wellbeing and is driven by a desire to make an impact into the community.

**Dr Caroline Aebersold, MAICD Chair – Clinical Governance Committee**

Dr Caroline Aebersold has held clinical, senior executive, CEO and board director positions for over 20 years across diverse sectors including mental health, education and justice. Caroline is a former psychologist who holds a doctorate in human rights law and was the CEO of a national not-for-profit organisation for over a decade. A member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Caroline has served on several not-for-profit Boards, including the Diplomacy Training Program, Sharing Stories Foundation, Suicide Prevention Australia, the National Committee for Standardised Reporting on Suicide and the Australian Psychological Society, developing deep expertise in not-for-profit governance and strategy. Caroline has played a substantial leadership role in progressing the mental health and wellbeing reform agenda in Australia, including as a Director at the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

**Rachel Green, GAICD, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director – SANE and The Dax Centre**

Rachel Green commenced as SANE's CEO in 2021, bringing extensive leadership experience in mental health, public policy, and business development. As Director of Policy, Rachel led the establishment of the National Mental Health Commission in 2011 where she joined with SANE Patron, Janet Meagher AM to develop the Contributing Life Framework and produce Australia's first National Report Card on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. She has held senior roles in mental health, business development and public health policy with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Health and Care Connect. Rachel has held non-executive director roles with Being, the Institute of Analytics Professionals Australia, the NSW Cycling Women's Commission, Sands Australia and Red Nose.

**Rob Gerrand, FAMI, FAICD, Chair – Governance, Nomination, and Remuneration Committee**

Rob Gerrand is the head of Gerrand & Associates, a marketing and communication consultancy. A former General Manager of Group Public Affairs at ANZ Bank, Rob has received international accolades such as the Golden World and Golden Quill Awards. Rob was appointed Adjunct Professor by Deakin University, is a director of North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network and chairs Director Next. Previously Rob has chaired Parks Victoria, Healthy Parks Healthy People Global and Theatreworks. Former directorships include Alfred Health, the Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health, MHRI, the Financial Planning Association of Australia and the Koorie Heritage Trust. With deep expertise in public relations and governance, Rob has contributed significantly to both the corporate and non-profit sectors.

**Nicola Farray, MAICD**

Nicola Farray is an experienced public service executive who has worked in policy, program, corporate, operational and oversight roles in a wide range of portfolios. She has previously been a Board Director of YWCA Victoria and Y Housing. With a background in social work, Nicola has specialised in health and community care for children and families, people experiencing mental health challenges and people interacting with the justice system. She is currently an Executive Director in the Victorian Department of Health and was most recently the Chief Executive Officer of the Board of Inquiry into historical child sexual abuse in Beaumaris Primary School and certain other government schools. Prior executive roles include health workforce strategy, mental health reform and as Director of Policy and Research at the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.

**Genevieve Collins, GAICD, Deputy Chair**

Genevieve Collins is the Chief Executive Partner of Lander & Rogers, a position she has held since 2018. In 2021, she was named Australasian Lawyer's Most Influential Lawyer in 'Changemakers' and Law Firm Leader of the Year in the Australasian Law Awards. Genevieve led Lander & Rogers to become the first Australian law firm to achieve 'Gold' Mental Health First Aid workplace accreditation. A graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, she also serves on the Advisory Board of the Centre for Legal Innovation (Australia, New Zealand & Asia) and has contributed significantly to legal practice leadership and mental health advocacy.

# THE BOARD.



**Luke Marshall, LEAC Representative**

Luke Marshall is a marketing and technology leader who has been working with clients and digital strategies since 2006. He's a curious and driven communicator who weaves deep experience into his consulting, coaching, and training programs. Working for big tech companies, Luke helped launch YouTube across South-East Asia within Google's creative team and spearheaded some of the first Instagram advertising campaigns in Australia. Luke has lived experience with complex mental health issues and sits on the Lived Experience Advisory Committee (LEAC).

**Dean Duncan**

Dean Duncan is a proud Aboriginal man of the Kamilaroi people of north western NSW (Moree) and was awarded the 2019 National NAIDOC Person of the Year. An experienced leader with strong business acumen, Dean has extensive experience in both private and public sectors across Australia. Dean has worked within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the nation, as well as assisting young people in out-of-home care.

**Tania Brown**

Tania Brown brings over 30 years of experience in Aboriginal Affairs, including two decades dedicated to the ACCHO sector. She has been instrumental in driving systemic changes and advancing the social and cultural determinants of health. Tania's contributions include serving on the First Nations Health Transition Advisory Group. Her work with the Royal Australasian College of Physicians' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Committee and her contributions to World Health Organisation initiatives further underscore her commitment to improving outcomes for Indigenous communities. Through her leadership, Tania has championed innovative service delivery models to better meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**Dr Anita Moss, FRACGP**

Dr Anita Moss has been a Peer Ambassador for SANE since 2016 and brings over 20 years of experience as a GP Obstetrician. Anita is passionate about empowering clients, particularly young people, to make informed healthcare decisions. She continues to provide healthcare services at an Indigenous Health Service in rural Victoria and also works in a metropolitan practice. Anita completed the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' Future Leaders Program, further cementing her commitment to high-quality healthcare and mental health advocacy.

**Mr Ewan Barron CA, RCA Treasurer Chair – Risk, Audit and Management Committee**

Mr Ewan Barron BA (Hons), CA, RCA is the Honorary Treasurer and has been the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee for six years. A Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for over 19 years, Ewan is a Registered Company Auditor with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission (ASIC). He is a member of both Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, and The Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland. Ewan has held key roles at PwC and is currently a member of the firm's Governance Board.

**Kirstie Allen, GAICD**

Kirstie Allen has an extensive 30-year career in policy and strategy working across economic, social, and environmental portfolios with an emphasis towards structural reforms and long-term planning for cities, regions, and industries. Kirstie has held Deputy Secretary and CEO positions in the NSW Government including at Infrastructure NSW, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Greater Sydney Commission. She has also held professional services executive roles working across Australian jurisdictions. Kirstie is now focused on her PhD at the University of Sydney which is considering new ways of responding earlier to housing and infrastructure demand with a climate first lens.

# GENERAL MANAGEMENT TEAM AT SANE.



Rachel Green, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director – SANE and The Dax Centre



Anna Gelling, Chief Digital Officer



Louise Rudzki, General Manager, Communications & Fundraising



Priya Subrahmanyam, General Manager, People Culture and Safety



Andrew Simpson, General Manager, Finance, Risk and Operations



Karen Hall, General Manager, Programs and Services & Clinical Governance

# FINANCIALS.

SANE has achieved remarkable financial progress in FY23/24, with a solid surplus driven by significant growth in income streams, strategic use of government funding, and the generosity of donors, ensuring a strong foundation to reinvest in our impactful digital programs and services for FY2025.

The consolidated surplus for the year ended 30 June 2024 was \$1,642,535, a significant improvement from the \$392,046 deficit in 2023. Bequests played a major role, contributing over \$1.4 million compared to \$270,000 last year. Overall income increased by \$2.5 million, reflecting a 23 percent growth.

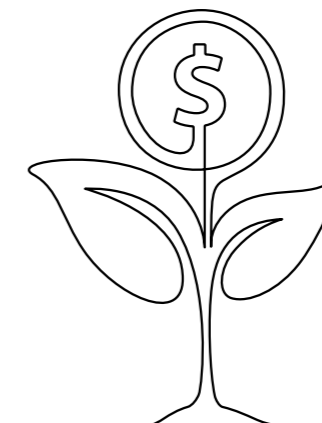
Government funding continued to be our primary income source, representing over 70 percent of total income and growing by 13 percent compared to 2023. Key funded programs, Guided Services and Community Forums, completed the second year of a three-year funding agreement.

Corporate and individual donations grew by more than 40 percent, rising from \$1.0 million to \$1.4 million. This included an additional \$303,000 from fundraising efforts, supported by a \$200,000 major donation in June and a successful year-end campaign.

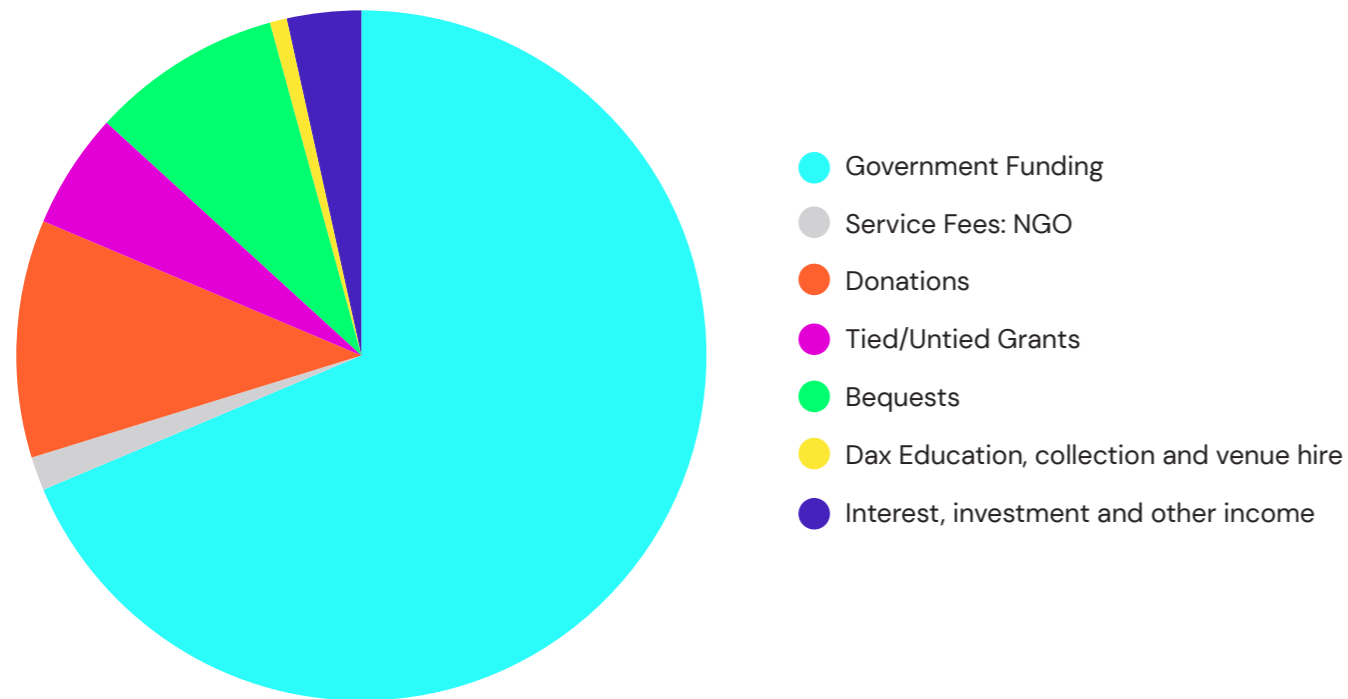
Investment income increased due to improved market conditions and higher interest rates. However, income from Trusts and Foundations fell significantly by \$500,000 (39 percent), and revenue from The DAX Centre and other sources declined by over \$100,000.

Total expenditure rose by \$600,000, driven by higher personnel costs, which account for nearly 70 percent of total expenses as the majority of our staff work directly in service delivery. Other expenses remained consistent with 2023.

Our balance sheet remains strong, with substantial growth in net cash and liquidity due to the surplus. We plan to reinvest in our digital programs and services in FY2025 to continue meeting community needs.



# SANE GROUP FY24 INCOME



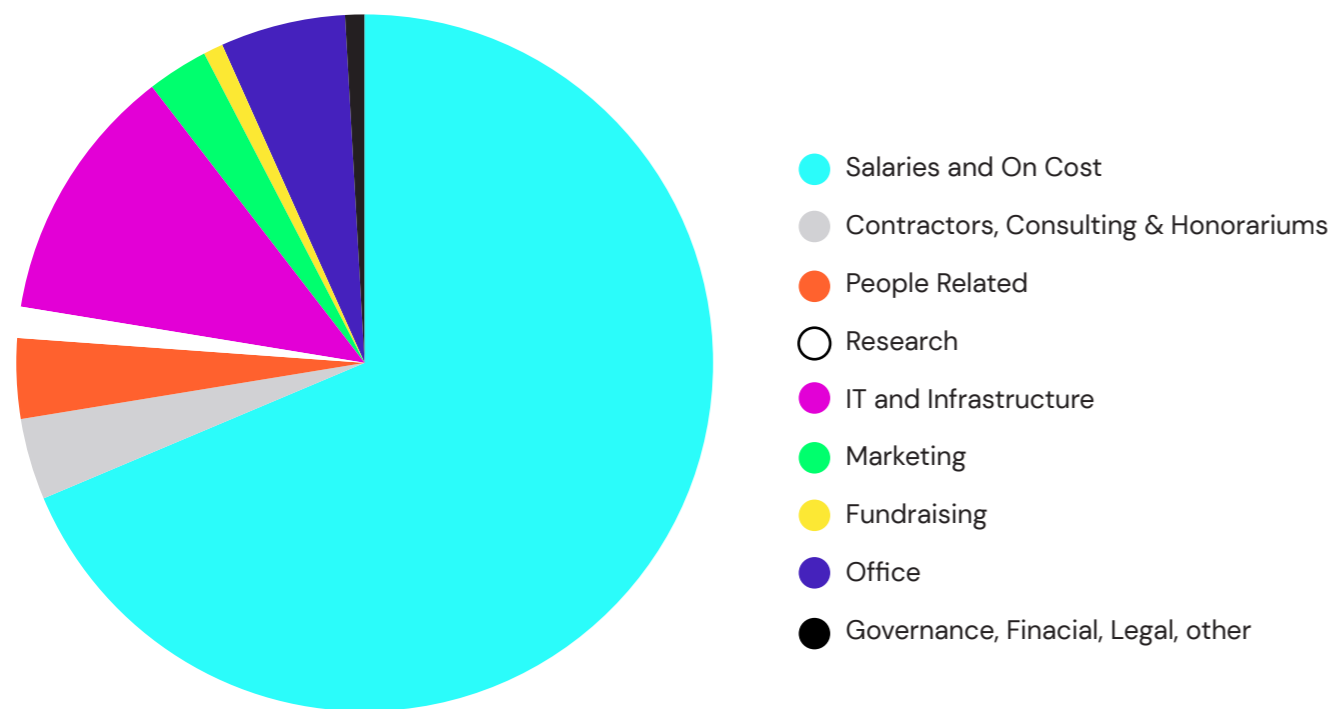
## Revenue and other income

Revenue	\$ 2024	\$ 2023
Corporate donations	678,191	597,792
Trusts and foundations	767,960	1,267,431
Education	39,161	37,755
Bequests	1,654,437	270,300
Individual donations	777,497	427,354
Government grants	10,050,789	8,869,881
Professional advice	228,403	135,076
Sundry income	60,563	153,361
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>14,257,001</b>	<b>11,758,950</b>

## Investment Income

Interest and dividends	323,718	189,372
<b>Total investment income</b>	<b>323,718</b>	<b>189,372</b>
<b>Total revenue and investment income</b>	<b>14,580,719</b>	<b>11,948,322</b>

# SANE GROUP FY24 EXPENDITURE



## Consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2024

Revenue	\$ 2024	\$ 2023
Revenue	14,257,001	11,758,950
Investment income	323,718	189,372
Expenses		
Personnel costs	(8,893,042)	(8,290,914)
Community awareness and program expenses	(2,361,831)	(2,249,457)
Fundraising	(99,694)	(135,750)
Depreciation and amortisation	(577,310)	(587,473)
Office operational	(1,006,307)	(1,076,774)
<b>Surplus / (deficit) for the year</b>	<b>1,642,535</b>	<b>(392,046)</b>




# CONTACT US

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 +61 3 9682 5933

## SANE's free support services

 [www.sane.org/get-support](http://www.sane.org/get-support)  
 1800 187 263

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SANE Australia ABN 9200 653 3606 (DGR-1 Status).  
All donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

**SANE** We're people  
like you.