

# mieact

mental health & well-being  
education & training providers

# ANNUAL REPORT

2017 - 2018



Mental Illness Education ACT Inc

**Mental Illness Education ACT Inc**

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*Better learning comes from  
sharing **real life** stories*

# PRESIDENT MESSAGE



Ian McDermott

*PRESIDENT*

It is my pleasure to introduce the 2017-18 annual report on behalf of the MIEACT Board. As the report shows it has been a year of transformation for the organisation, our people and our programs.

Following an organisation restructure in May 2017, MIEACT adopted an enhanced workforce including a new management level under the Executive Officer. In December 2017, Sam Davidson Fuller stepped down from the Executive Officer position. Heidi Prowse joined as the new Executive Officer in January 2018.

In October 2017, Megan Mills commenced in the role of Program Director. Moving forward, program management will be overseen by Megan. Both Heidi and Megan have successfully led the organisation through a period of change, with growth and opportunity already present on our door step.

MIEACT launched its new Strategic Business Plan in late 2017, adapting the business model to ensure we could offer customers subject matter expertise from an increasing pool of skilled and qualified trainers and experienced Volunteer Educators with lived experience. This ensures we maintain service coverage across all programs and respond with agility to urgent requests for work from our customers.

MIEACT successfully completed, the Australian Service Excellence Standards (ASES) this year. This accreditation is based on the following organisational principles; customer and outcomes focused, clear direction with accountability, continuous learning and innovation, valuing people and diversity, collaborative work practices, evidence-based decision making and social, environmental and ethical responsibility. The accreditation is an example of MIEACT's commitment to continuous improvement and delivery of high level quality and consistent programs.

I want to thank all of the MIEACT team for their hard and dedicated work throughout the year and would like to pay special thanks to departing Executive Officer Sam Davidson Fuller, departing President Phillipa Blackwood and departing Board Member Mike Banham, for their leadership and direction during their time at MIEACT. I would also like to thank my fellow board members for their support of MIEACT. I feel confident that MIEACT is in safe hands as we look forward to an exciting year ahead.

*Ian*

# EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGE



Heidi Prowse

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I am delighted to join the team at MIEACT and be part of an organisation with a long history of empowering people to sustain their mental health and well-being.

In just my first few weeks I was able to see the impact of our programs and the power of the lived experience on all ages. We know that mental health awareness is on the rise, and with this comes more responsibility. MIEACT truly leads the way with a best practice approach, guided by our DoNOHarm framework.

The ongoing integrity and credibility of our work, driven from an evidence-base, is essential to our ability to change lives. This year we launched an evaluation framework developed in collaboration with Phoenix Australia, so as to better measure learning outcomes in influence, engagement and attitudes to mental health literacy. The early results are positive. Most notably 94 per cent of teachers who had previously engaged a program reported to have observed *Significant Change* in a positive attitude towards mental health in youth after a session. This is a testament to the team and our Volunteer Educators and I congratulate and acknowledge them for their ongoing contribution.

Canberra has been named among the top livable cities in the world, yet our mental health is comparable with other states, and our children are reported to be the most stressed in the country. As an organisation we recognise more can be done and we have set ambitious targets to lead the change in our community. An area of focus for me from day one is, to extend our reach, ensuring all secondary schools, workplaces and communities know about and have access to the great programs available to them.

In a changing environment, MIEACT looks to the future and sustainability is key. This year we began by diversifying our revenue streams. Support from The Funding Network, Commonwealth Bank and Hands Across Canberra gave us the ability to develop a bullying prevention program like no other. The pilot showed the need for a practical and problem-solving workshop with a primary focus on life skills, positive health and behaviour promotion. Further to this we have developed adult programs that will pay-it-forward, ensuring Canberra's youth will continue to access quality mental health education.

I look forward to the future and an organisation that is as strong as the stories we share.

*Heidi*

# OUR STORY

Mental Illness Education ACT Inc (MIEACT) continues to be the leading mental health and well-being education provider servicing the Canberra region. Everyday, our work addresses stigma and discrimination, increases knowledge and awareness, and builds inclusive practices for mentally healthy workplaces and educational institutions.

## MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

As a recovery driven organisation we embrace the lived experience to provide mental health education awareness programs in schools and the community to address stigma, increase knowledge and promote help seeking.

We believe that by addressing stigma, people are empowered to sustain their mental health and well-being.

"What I liked most about the course was that people shared things they have gone through, in two different ways, this kept the course interesting and easy to understand."

YOUTH MIND PILOT, AGE 15

MIEACT is guided by the following values:

- Power of the lived experience
- Openness, innovation and creativity
- Potential for transformation and change
- Working from an evidence base
- Humour and goodwill
- Transparency and accountability
- Hope and recovery driven



# OUR PROGRAMS

The front line provider of mental health education in the ACT.

We know how powerful our programs are and our focus has been to expand our current and reach new audiences. This year we delivered 292 mental health education sessions in schools, workplaces and in the community reaching 6 new schools and 12 new organisations.

A program validation was completed on all programs. Session content and associated resources were evaluated by content developers, independent educators, school-age participants and our Volunteer Educators. The outcome provided clear syllabus connections for all youth based programs and reinvigorated content. There is still some work to come with new program collateral, to be launched during 2018-19.

Behind the scenes, four new programs were developed and piloted. This included a bullying prevention program, No Labels, Stages of Change, Stress Better for adults, and a complimentary 2.0 edition to the Community Awareness Program. These programs were identified gaps in mental health education in the community and are available now.

In the year to come, Any Body's Cool will be re-developed to reach all audiences with specialist content for girls and boys.



**Megan Mills**

*PROGRAM DIRECTOR*

**292**

SESSIONS DELIVERED

**7,300**

PARTICIPANTS REACHED

**80%**

ACT SCHOOLS REACHED

" Everyone was touched by the presentation. It helped us focus on issues from a different perspective."

CAROLYN HARRIS,  
BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION



# ADULT PROGRAMS

MIEACT delivers adult programs to workplaces and in the community, with two core programs on mental illness and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). These programs continue to move adult participants who identified the use of personal stories within the session to be have the most impact on self-reported changes in stigma and self-stigma.

A report on the *State of Mental Health in the workplace* identified a \$10.9b annual cost to the Australian economy from both absenteeism and presenteeism. Essential to every workplace is a robust mental health education plan and MIEACT proactively work with organisations to develop and build on mental health literacy and promote help seeking. This year service-agreements were delivered across multiple sectors including Aged Care, Legal, Health, Not-For-Profit, Government and other community services. Open workshops for the PTSD Awareness program were fully booked and we continue to see increasing demand in this session with a 93 per cent recommendation rate.

In addition, prior to the delivery of Any Body's Cool in schools, a Teacher workshop is held. This workshop prepares teachers for the program to be delivered to their students and support the long term objective of positive body image in schools. MIEACT delivered 5 sessions with schools during the year.

## SESSIONS DELIVERED

22

PTSD  
Awareness

80

Community Education  
Program

5

Teacher Education  
Any Body's Cool



"The workshop has given me a thorough understanding of triggers and events for PTSD and stress Disorders. The lived experience videos were excellent as it made it very real from real life scenarios."

SOCIAL WORKER

# OUR EDUCATORS

The lived experience is at the core of everything we do.

Our Volunteer Educators are a dynamic and diverse team who share stories of lived experience of mental illness. MIEACT runs extensive training over six weeks, allowing our volunteers to go on a journey through story crafting. Together they overcome personal experiences and build confidence, support and empowerment to share their story, in a safe way, to audiences across ACT. Involvement in training and delivery of MIEACT programs is proven to be a significant component in their own recovery.

Volunteer Educator Leanne was recognised for her contribution to MIEACT and received a Highly Commended in the ACT Volunteer of the Year Awards - Thought & Leadership category. Leanne is a fantastic role model connecting with audiences of all ages. For every presentation Leanne re-crafts her story to suit the audience she is sharing her experience with. The power of her words and ability to articulate captivates everyone in the room.

# 14

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

# 6

IN-TRAINING

# 500+

VOLUNTEER HOURS



“Your presentation was one of the best parts of our graduate program, and both eye opening and brave”

PETER MCDERMOTT  
NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH  
COMMISSION

# OUT AND ABOUT

Enhancing our media and communication capabilities.

Over the past year a key focus has been on sharing and telling our stories and promoting our programs in new and exciting ways. This created opportunities to reach new audiences, engaging both new clients and new volunteer. Both Volunteer Educators and staff were interviewed on TV news, radio and print media. We also spent time hosting stalls at expos and university open days throughout the year.

We have been active with our digital presence this year – we increased our online followers to 1,321 across our social channels and are continuing to grow. We developed 5 new digital stories to support our Stress Better and No Labels programs and worked with ACT Health on promotional videos with Volunteer Educator Danny (top image) interviewed for World Bipolar Day and an announcement of the ACT Government Office for Mental Health.

Volunteer Educator Deahne and our Executive Officer Heidi (bottom left) were inducted into the 2018 ACT Women's Honour Roll in March which acknowledges and celebrates outstanding achievements of women in Canberra.



15

NEWS/RADIO/PRINT

12

ONLINE/DIGI-STORIES

1,321

SOCIAL AUDIENCE

11

EXPOS/EVENTS

# OUR REPORTING APPROACH

Improving and adapting our programs to meet changing needs of our stakeholders while remaining evidence based.

MIEACT initiated a new Evaluation Framework developed in collaboration with Phoenix Australia. The evaluation will fall under the umbrella of an impact evaluation. An impact evaluation aims to investigate (systematically and empirically) any changes that are brought about by an intervention and includes whether these changes are intended or unintended. The Evaluation Framework will build MIEACT's understanding of the value of innovative and effective programs (including pilot programs); and the worth of an 'intervention' using a practical application of impact evaluation - contribution analysis.

The Framework initiation included;

- Program Validation: All programs were reviewed for content, audience and engagement with participants.
- Mind Pilots: introduction of focus groups including young people, education professionals, general public and volunteer educators.
- Trial Surveying: collection of sample data with new evaluation questionnaire for host and participant immediately following the session and a 3 month follow up for the host.
- Data Monitoring: identified data that must be collected to form ongoing monitoring of programs, this has subsequently been built into the organisations data management system for live monitoring.

## Evaluation Plan



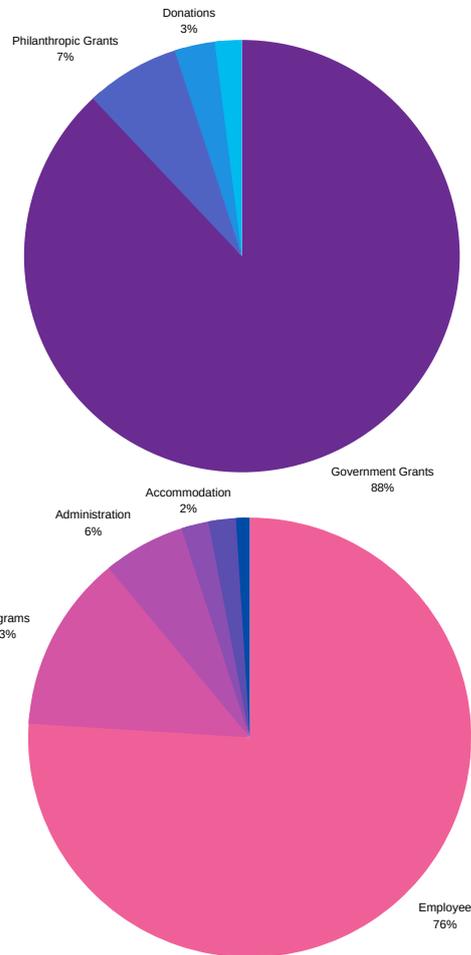
# FINANCIAL RESULTS

Enhancing our financial sustainability to be forward focused, accountable and efficient.

The Association achieved an overall operating surplus for the year totaling \$33,288 (2017: \$17,602).

Total income for the year of \$657,184 (2017: \$678,644) represented a 3% decrease as compared to the previous year which ended 30 June 2017. Total expenditure for the year of \$623,897 (2017: \$661,042) represented a 5% decrease as compared to the previous year which ended 30 June 2017.

The overall 2018 surplus represents a modest increase as compared to the 2017 year. The main reasons for the increase are due to increase in grant income and reversal of website & digital media expenses given the latter being capitalised and consequently recognised as fixed assets.



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