

# Our impact in 2018



## Our Values

Our values underpin the work that we do and guide us in the way we interact with those we care and support.

**Respect** – in all that we do to achieve our mission.

**Wellbeing** – we strengthen people and communities through counselling support and confidence-building.

**Integrity** – ethical and honest whilst maintaining the highest of standards.

**Sensitive** – demonstrate understanding, empathy and kindness when engaging with people in a culturally diverse community.

**Innovative** – continuously improve what we do and how we do things to empower the individual and encourage positive change.

## Our Mission

To listen, care and support those experiencing loss and grief at any stage in life.

## Our Vision

To deliver exemplary counselling and support to the community as the eminent national organisation for loss and grief services.

## Thank you

GriefLine wishes to thank its many partners and donors who supported our work throughout the year. They include:

### Individuals

Barbara Cooper  
Estate of the Late Dalia Millingen  
Estate of the late Pat Williamson  
Gail and Kevin Donovan  
Jo Miller  
Paul Munday

### Business

Bendigo Bank  
City of Glen Eira  
City of Kingston  
MediaWise

### Philanthropy

ANZ Staff Foundation  
Commonwealth Bank Community Grants  
Datt Family Foundation  
Federal Government Stronger Communities Programme  
Kingston Charitable Foundation  
Leith Foundation  
Lions Club of Beaumaris  
Lions Club of Mordialloc/Mentone  
Magistrates Court of Victoria  
Sisters of the Little Company of Mary  
The Chamberlain Foundation  
The Tucker Foundation



**People who want to access support:**

**12 noon – 3am.** 7 days a week, 365 day a year.

**National:**

**(03) 9935 7400**

**National:**

**1300 845 745**

(landlines)

## From the CEO

The past year has seen GriefLine receive more calls on the national helpline than previous years as people across Australia struggle with increasingly intense emotions of loss and grief. An increasing number of calls have come from Queensland and New South Wales. These calls have covered over 40,000 different issues from mental health to death, from patient, carer and family issues, through to unemployment.



Our national helpline is vital as a frontline early intervention service. By listening to the callers, we provide effective, high-quality support to reduce the incidence of preventable disease, such as depression, anxiety and suicide.

It is this early intervention expertise that Lifeline, beyondblue, Victoria Police and hospitals across the country value, referring callers to GriefLine for our experience in dealing with loss and grief.

Central to this highly valued service are our 200 professional allied health volunteers. The past year has seen GriefLine grow the number of volunteers to handle the increasing calls.

Last year we marked two important weeks: Volunteers Week and Cultural Diversity in social and traditional media. Volunteers Week's theme *Give a Little Change a Lot* is exemplified by GriefLine volunteers who contribute over 48,000 hours of their time each year, an estimated social return on investment of up to \$286,000 a year.

Cultural Diversity Week embraced the theme *Proud to Belong*, and again we were proud to showcase our many volunteers who come from different culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The year has also seen us expand the multi-lingual services we offer to the community to Mandarin and Japanese. This expansion has been made possible through the generous support of local government and philanthropy.

We are always amazed by the extraordinary generosity that we receive from our supporters. This year the Chamberlain Foundation organised its second Razor Ride to raise around \$100,000 towards our suicide prevention and mental health programs, as well as supporting children experiencing trauma from family violence. Our trivia night was attended by over 150 guests raising over \$10,000 for our children's program.

We thank the staff and volunteers for their passion, commitment and resilience which enables them to undertake the difficult, complex work with our callers and the many others who use our face-to-face services. We also thank the Board who volunteer their time to ensure that GriefLine is not only governed properly but also lives its mission.

None of this would be possible without Federal and Victorian government and philanthropic funding, community and corporate donations and partnerships. We thank you for this support.

Above all we acknowledge and thank the many people who we have supported throughout the year. Your courage and determination is inspiring. It's the reason we do the work we do.

**Catherine Cini**  
CEO

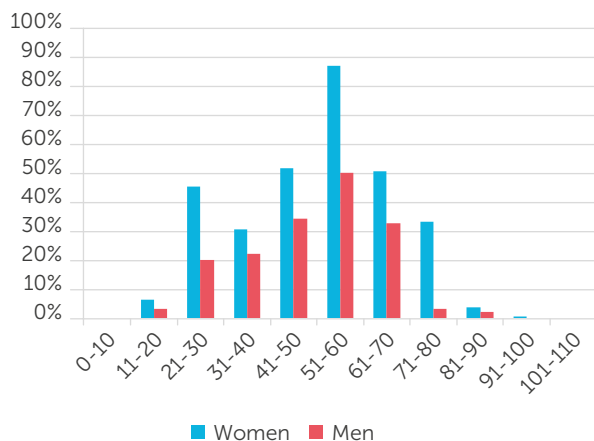
# Our listening helpline



**Total caller issues**  
**45,819**



**Gender and age of callers**



Calls to GriefLine’s national, free helpline provide a reality check into the ever-increasing list of worries relating to loss and grief that face many people in Australia.

Over the last year, the top five listed grief issues were mental health, isolation and loneliness; family and relationships; bereavement and pet deaths; and health, social and financial issues.

On the rise are the number of calls in from people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds. Thanks to funding from Kingston City Council and the ANZ, as well as in-kind support from volunteers who speak different languages, GriefLine has established telephone and skype counselling in Mandarin and Japanese.

More men than ever are also contacting GriefLine – this year around 40% of calls have been from men - and are predominantly concerned with mental health related to unemployment, change in a relationship, and health issues.

# Our online counselling service

GriefLine delivers an online counselling service to complement its telephone helpline. This alternative counselling approach demonstrates our understanding that talking is not for everyone. Younger people are more likely to use the online service than call the helpline.



**Online requests by region**



- ACT ———— 15%
- Queensland ——— 10%
- New South Wales — 16%
- South Australia — 12%
- Victoria ———— 8%
- Tasmania ———— 32%
- Northern Territory — 2%
- Western Australia — 1%
- Unknown ———— 14%



**Online requests by age group**

- 18 – 25 ———— 23%
- 26 – 31 ———— 17%
- 32 – 37 ———— 15%
- 38 – 43 ———— 16%
- 44- 49 ———— 10%
- 50 – 55 ———— 10%
- 56 – 61 ———— 6%
- 62 – 67 ———— 3%
- Unknown ———— 1%

# Our Volunteers


## - Pillars of strength

GriefLine's volunteer program is its pillar of strength, and much of this is not only to the people that the organisation attracts but the training that is offered.

The past year has seen the Magistrates Court of Victoria support our training program which includes a vigorous screening process. This includes telephone contact, written communication, face to face interviews and workshop.


Once screened, each potential volunteer takes part in a Loss and Grief 40-hour training course over a five-month period. The course which covers a range of subjects from what is grief, counselling skills, and grief across the life span. Each volunteer undergoes regular professional development and ongoing supervision which is available 24 hours a day.

### Number of volunteers

 **104** helpline callers  
**200** volunteers

 **Men** **14**       **Women** **90**


### Number of training programs

 **2** semesters  
**3620** hours of formal telephone counselling for **40** trainees


### Professional development

 **1,050** hours

### Annual volunteer contribution

 **Over 48,000** hours each year

### Social Return on Investment

 **\$286,000** a year.



### Meet Varda Khan

Varda Khan became a GriefLine counsellor two years ago. It has been an insightful journey which allows her to consider and celebrate her cultural diversity every day.

Varda became a counsellor because she wanted to get involved in community work where she could offer care and support to individuals and families, and develop her counselling and therapeutic skills while completing her tertiary education in Psychology.

She says that GriefLine is important in Australia because it offers confidential telephone counselling services to people who need support and care to express their feelings and experiences.

"Everyone at some point in their lives goes through periods of grief and bereavement or other life related concerns and difficulties," she says.

"We as social beings need support and care to help us through these times and GriefLine is one organisation that provides that space where individuals in our community can receive the support and care to effectively deal with their bereavement and other concerns in life."

# Reaching out to the community

In addition to our national helpline GriefLine runs different programs to reach out to the community. Among the highlights for 2018 were:

## Children's Program

 **Issues faced by clients**

 **Client ages**

|                       |     |         |     |
|-----------------------|-----|---------|-----|
| Family violence       | 11% | 5 – 8   | 29% |
| Bullying              | 11% | 9 – 12  | 43% |
| Anger                 | 5%  | 13 – 14 | 14% |
| Learning difficulties | 11% | 15 – 18 | 14% |
| Separation anxiety    | 5%  |         |     |
| Behaviour             | 5%  |         |     |
| Bereavement           | 26% |         |     |
| Anxiety               | 26% |         |     |

GriefLine has expanded its children and youth counselling program over the past 12 months, thanks to philanthropic and local government grants.

Grants from the Tucker Foundation and the City of Glen Eira have enabled GriefLine to re-start the What About Me program for families in the Kingston and Glen Eira suburbs of Melbourne. The program, which embraces art therapy, writing and non-verbal play, supports children whose siblings have either a disability or are experiencing a loss.

An anonymous \$10,000 donation has allowed GriefLine to purchase a computer and a range of resources and apps that are colourful, interactive and are tailored to highly anxious children. One in 14 young Australians aged 4-17 experienced an anxiety disorder in 2015. This is equivalent to 278,000 young people.

The Tucker Foundation has also provided funds to enable *Through the Eyes of the Child* to increase the hours it currently operates to reach more marginalised children. Many children are referred to GriefLine through local schools, psychologists and GPs because the families are unable to afford private counselling.

*Through the Eyes of the Child* program works in collaboration with local schools, local GPs, psychologists, OzChild, City of Kingston and the City of Glen Eira.

## Police and Emergency

 **Referrals**  
**1806**

GriefLine has been working since 2014 with Victoria Police and Emergency Services who refer people who have experienced trauma. The referrals are to support witnesses, family, friends or anyone associated with incidents which have involved police attendance.

This service, which has never received funding, last year received 1806 referrals from the Victoria Police, an increase on the previous year partially driven by large-scale crises such as the Bourke Street massacre.

GriefLine's reports are used by Victoria Police for inclusion in statistical analysis.

## Cultural Diversity

GriefLine has always embraced cultural diversity whether it is through its volunteers, programs or the people it supports on its telephone helpline. This year GriefLine celebrated Cultural Diversity Week through a series of posts on Facebook of some of the volunteers who come from different countries and who are using their cultural diversity to support others in the Australian community.

We have also introduced a session on migrant grief into our training program to ensure that our volunteers better deal with the increasing number of calls about migrant grief, often initiated due to deaths of family members in another country, conflict with children as they struggle with their bicultural upbringing, isolation of new mothers while they raise a baby in a foreign land, and marital conflicts as couples adjust to the cultures of a new land.





## Education and Training



### Speaking engagements

32

GriefLine continued to provide training to community groups and professionals working in hospitals, health care centres, and other specialist providers. During the year, we delivered 32 speaking engagements.

The major seminar conducted over the last year was *Born in One Country Dying in Another – The Power of Story*. It gave the Chinese and Indian communities the chance to look at common migrant themes and discuss issues which are often unacknowledged.

Seminar speakers and panellists included **Dr. Manjula O' Connor** Consultant Psychiatrist, Chair Family Violence Working Group, Executive Director Australasian Centre for Human Rights & Health; **May Hu, OAM JP**, President & Founder of National Australian Chinese Women Association, Chair of Chinese International Arts Festival & Chinese Writers Festival; **Dorothy Yiu, OAM JP**, Counsellor, Chinese Cancer Society of Victoria; **Manpreet Kaur Singh**, Journalist & Executive Producer for SBS Radio Punjabi & Member of the Media Advisory Group for Our Watch; **Hao Wu**, Social Worker with Australian Red Cross working in the Migration Support Program; **Dolly Huang**, Board Member for the Centre for Holistic Health and Social Worker specialising in care of older adults; and **Cr George Hua**, Councillor, City of Kingston. Panel Moderator was **Kristina Kukolja** – a multi award-winning journalist.

## Advocacy

GriefLine has made verbal and written submissions on a range of issues that affect people experiencing loss and grief. Among them is the **National Disability Insurance Scheme** which offers life changing support for many, but has been the source of disappointment for others.

Our concern with NDIS is focussed on adult children with a mental illness or high functioning autism. They do not qualify under the NDIS and, for now, the burden of care remains with older parents – many of whom need care too. Callers into GriefLine on NDIS through the year highlighted the loss of their work, their grief for the 'invisible disability,' and their fear for their children's future.

We have also taken part in media interviews on mental health, focussing on grief associated with poor wellbeing. As part of **Mental Health Week 2017**, we called on employers to use the week to start a conversation about mental health and grief. Mental health conditions are estimated to cost Australian workplaces nearly \$11 billion each year.

GriefLine staff were interviewed on *Radio National, ABC Melbourne, Southern FM, 3AW, the Leader Newspaper series, Bendigo Advertiser* and other regional papers.



### Chamberlain Foundation raises funds through Razor Ride

Twenty cyclists pedalled 636km through Victoria in early 2018 to raise funds for suicide prevention and mental health. The ride was led by co-founder of the Chamberlain Foundation and Senior AFL Field Umpire, Ray Chamberlain.

The Foundation was established in 2015 by Ray, together with his brothers Peter and Brian to support organisations providing services to people suffering with mental health and suicide.

We thank all riders, volunteers and sponsors, Bendigo Bank and Giant Ormond.

# How you can help

GriefLine manages Australia's only dedicated loss and grief national telephone counselling service, providing anonymous support and specialist counselling services to individuals and families who are experiencing loss and grief, resulting from a broad range of circumstances.

We also run specialist services for children, migrant women and communities, survivors of cancer and men.

## Donate

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible and. You can donate online: [www.griefline.org.au/make-donation](http://www.griefline.org.au/make-donation)

## Volunteer

We have a rigorous recruitment process for all volunteers, who need to have strong listening skills, are mature aged and can bring their life experience to the line. Contact us on 03 9935 7444 between 10.30am and 3.30pm.

## Subscribe to our newsletter

Joining our mailing list is a great way to keep up to date with what GriefLine is doing. We will send you our e-newsletter and occasional emails regarding campaigns, fundraising activities or events. Please subscribe online: [www.griefline.org.au](http://www.griefline.org.au)

## Bequests

Bequests, large and small, have a positive impact on our work and on the lives of people who are experiencing loss and grief. A bequest is a charitable gift made as part of your Will. All bequests are exempt from State and Commonwealth duties.

## Partner with us

GriefLine is committed to long-term, mutually-beneficial partnerships with local community groups, philanthropic organisations and businesses who share our vision of delivering counselling and support to individuals and families experiencing loss and grief.

Donations and partnerships enable us to ensure our financial stability and continue to deliver our services.

For further information about how you can help, please call us on (03) 9935 7444.



479 Warrigal Road,  
Moorabbin, Victoria 3189  
T: 9935 7444

[www.griefline.org.au](http://www.griefline.org.au)

 **Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/grieflineservices](http://www.facebook.com/grieflineservices)

 **Twitter:**  
[www.twitter.com/griefline](http://www.twitter.com/griefline)

 **LinkedIn:**  
[www.linkedin.com/company/griefline-community-and-family-services](http://www.linkedin.com/company/griefline-community-and-family-services)