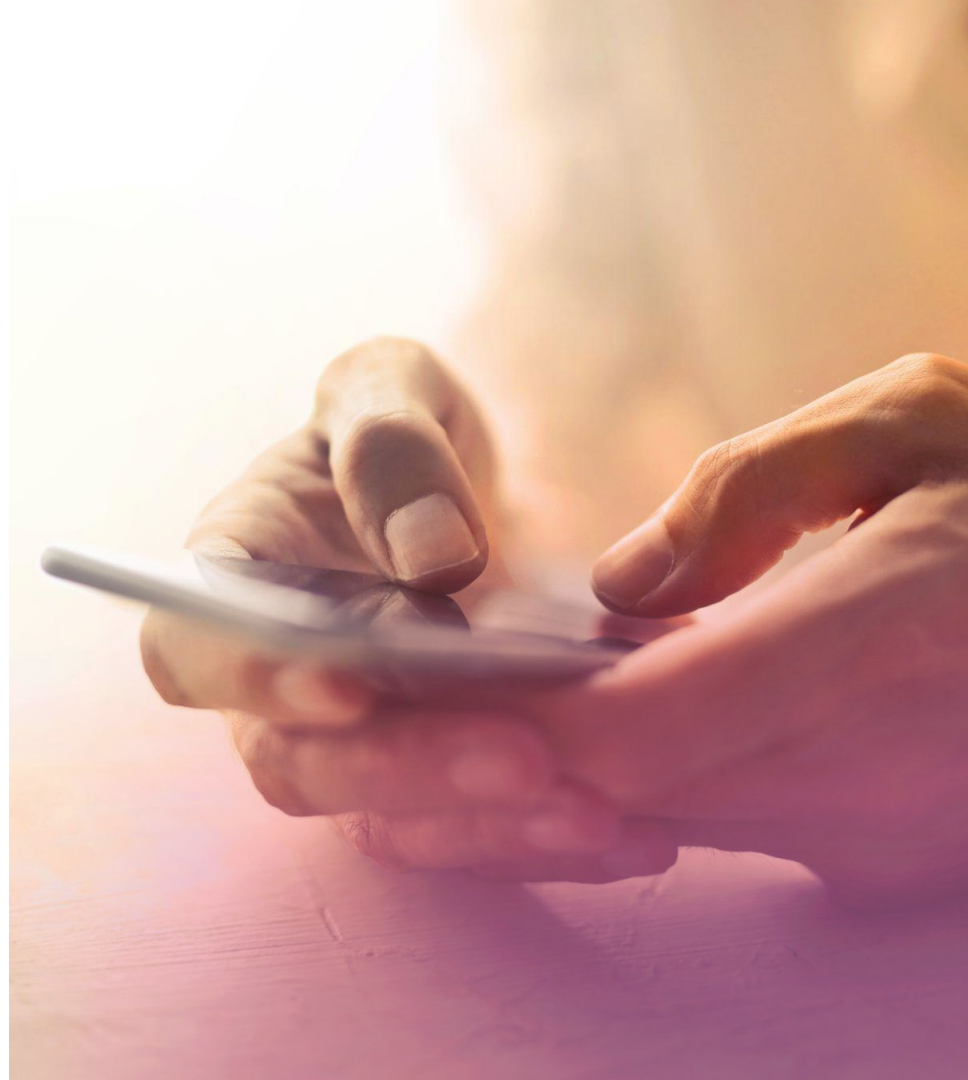


# Impact Report FY 2020/2021



Griefline recognises the continuous and deep connection to Country of Aboriginal people as the first peoples of this nation. In this way we respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of our Country throughout Australia.

We pay tribute to Elders past, present and emerging and respect the collective ancestry that has brought us all here today.

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**Grief is the universal natural response to loss. In times of suffering, having the courage to seek help is the beginning of the healing process.**

Griefline is the steady hand that reaches out and invites courageous conversations to humanise grief and support people to find peace in togetherness. We believe everyone should feel supported in their grief and loss and accept it as a normal, universal experience.



## OUR VISION

To lead and inspire the national mental health industry in finding collaborative ways to prevent the escalation of mental health disorders resulting from grief and loss.

## OUR MISSION

Be present for people in a safe space to help them find courage through their grief and discover hope and healing after loss.

## OUR HISTORY

Established in 1987 with bipartisan support by the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, and operated as part of the outreach department at Bethlehem Hospital in Caulfield, Victoria.

By 2007, Griefline became an independent, not-for-profit organisation continuing its essential work of supporting those in need while growing in the services delivered, including grief and loss community education, extending the helpline to rural areas.

In 2013, telephone counselling was extended to people living in Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania, followed by Western Australian in 2015.

More recently, demand for our telephone and online support has surged as people from across Australia increasingly seek help to face grief in ways they never have before.



## ABOUT GRIEFLINE

We support Australians in their grief by providing space to be heard without judgement or labels and offering hope and healing after loss.

The service we provide is only made possible by the selfless efforts of our incredible volunteer counsellors. With them, Griefline is dedicated to connecting people and communities through their experience with grief and loss, so they can better support each other together.



**We listen** — our compassionate telephone supporters are available 365 days a year.



**We connect** — through our supportive online community and forums.



**We empower** — with access to tools, wellbeing practices and coping strategies.



## OUR SERVICES

Griefline provides help and support to people no matter who they are, where they live or what time of day they call. Through diverse pathways, we reach out to connect with the community, share our knowledge and empower help-seekers.

We do this through our toll-free Helpline and 24/7 Online Moderated Forums that form the community's frontline responders to grief and loss. We also support our help-seekers through our grief and loss online resources, support groups, Care-to-Call outbound call pilot program and Policeline for those experiencing trauma and sudden loss.



**Toll-free helpline**



**24/7 online moderated forums**



**Online resources**



**Support groups**



**Care-to-call program**



**Policeline**

“Suffering is all around us, but it’s the courage to just reach out for help that is in fact the beginning of the healing process.”

**GRIEFLINE HELPLINE VOLUNTEER**

## OUR SUPPORTERS

With the support of the following benefactors and suppliers, Griefline has been able to realise our strategic goals for the financial year:

### Benefactors

- Australian Department of Health
- South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN)
- Alfred Health
- Community Enterprise Foundation (CEF)
- Rotary District 9800 (Rotary)
- Murrumbeena Community Bank (MCB)

### Suppliers

- Light Creative
- The XFactor Collective
  - Progressive PR
  - Sarah Birken

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CO-CHAIRS

In 2020/2021 Griefline faced its biggest challenge, being survival.

In our roles as Co-Chairs we have worked closely with our fellow directors, our newly formed executive team, our courageous and resolute volunteers, and all stakeholders and are pleased to share that the transformation process that has been undertaken has achieved our goal of survival.

Like all NFP's, there is always more we can do, more lives we can help, and more services we can deliver. However, we have solidified our foundation model, and due to the support from both the Commonwealth and NSW governments, we are looking forward to continuing our success in touching more lives through our impact than ever before.

Griefline is considered a valuable contributor towards the national mental health industry's common goal of proactively impacting the preventative escalation of mental health disorders due to the experience of grief and loss.

Griefline is proud to be known as an organisation of depth, consistency, sincerity, and credibility. We have solidified a model of care that has agility to evolve with pace to the changing needs of the Australian community.

In a time when the resilience of our community was challenged like never before, not only the pandemic, but bushfires, floods and droughts, business viability rocked to its core, as an organisation we needed to internally find the resilience and foresight to respond with pace to the growing complexity our community experienced in the everyday and the far-reaching impacts of grief and loss.



**Board Co-Chair**

Nicky Mackie



**Board Co-Chair**

Sarah Godfrey

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CO-CHAIRS CONT'D**

At Griefline we are exceptionally proud of the team's professionalism and commitment to be available without judgment to respond, to listen, to connect, and to empower our help seekers with a diversity of tools, and the sense of connection greater than ever before.

With the drive and professionalism of our executive team, our volunteers and our marketing and support teams, our entrepreneurial board, the organisation extended its diversity of connection options to forums, and an increased volunteer team who were onboarded and trained within record time. Supported by our industry leading volunteer training to be ready to support our community.

As leaders of the business, our executive team and board members have been sought after by other mental health NFPs and services to be consulted on everything grief and loss, enhancing the professional reputation of Griefline.

Our community, state and federal governments, and philanthropic community remain engaged and supportive of the future direction of Griefline, and our partnerships are stronger than ever before.

Griefline has placed itself as an organisation of merit, future sustainability and as having a reputation as experts in the field of grief and loss.

Griefline is set to deliver continued organisational growth that responds to support the Australian community in their experiences of grief and loss.

We are committed to the prevention of the escalation of mental health disorders due to unresolved and unsupported grief and loss.

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CO-CHAIRS CONT'D**

To enable our organisational responsiveness, our executive team has led an operational improvement program to optimise our data management systems and provide real time valuable insights into the industry and community trends, and in doing so has accelerated our design and response rate to support structures to respond to the identified trends.

As Griefline was faced with a shortage of team members, we pivoted to give back to our volunteers, addressing their support needs and providing them with a higher level of support than ever before.

Without the commitment and dedication of our volunteers, we could have only achieved such a small proportion of what our community needed. We are truly blessed to have such passionate representatives and client advocates in our team, and to thank them does not feel enough.

With the engagement of the executive team and board co-chairs in mental health forums and discussion groups, Griefline's future looks bright.

However, as an organisation in its infancy of reimagining, we continue to operate on a modest budget, to be creative in the depth of our community engagement and service models and to continue our commitment to sustain an organisational future in the provision of support to the Australian community.

We are moved from a Victorian-centric service model, to being sought after at a continuing demand in all states and territories within Australia.

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CO-CHAIRS CONT'D**

Whilst we are proud of how far the organisation has come, we will continue to knock on doors and speak our truth of the value we provide.

With our maturity as a commercially viable entity, we will continue our path of gaining independent sustainability for our core business operations through the expansion of our commercial health practitioner user-pay professional development and education programs. Ensuring our service offering is more equitable, diverse and inclusive, will result in a more lasting impact in the lives of the Australian community. Through the proactive sourcing of State and Commonwealth government, and philanthropic support to deliver our evidence-based programs.

As Co-Chairs of Griefline, and the voice of our volunteers, our board, our executive team, our employees, and our clients, we are committed to the sustainable presence of Griefline as the leader for all things related to grief and loss in Australia.

Sincerely,

Nicky Mackie and Sarah Godfrey

Griefline Board Co-Chair's

## **STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2019/20 SUMMARY**

### **Sustainability**

- Secure funding from government departments invested in the prevention of mental-ill health as a result of grief and loss
- Access to reliable data for more accurate and consistent reporting

### **Support our volunteers**

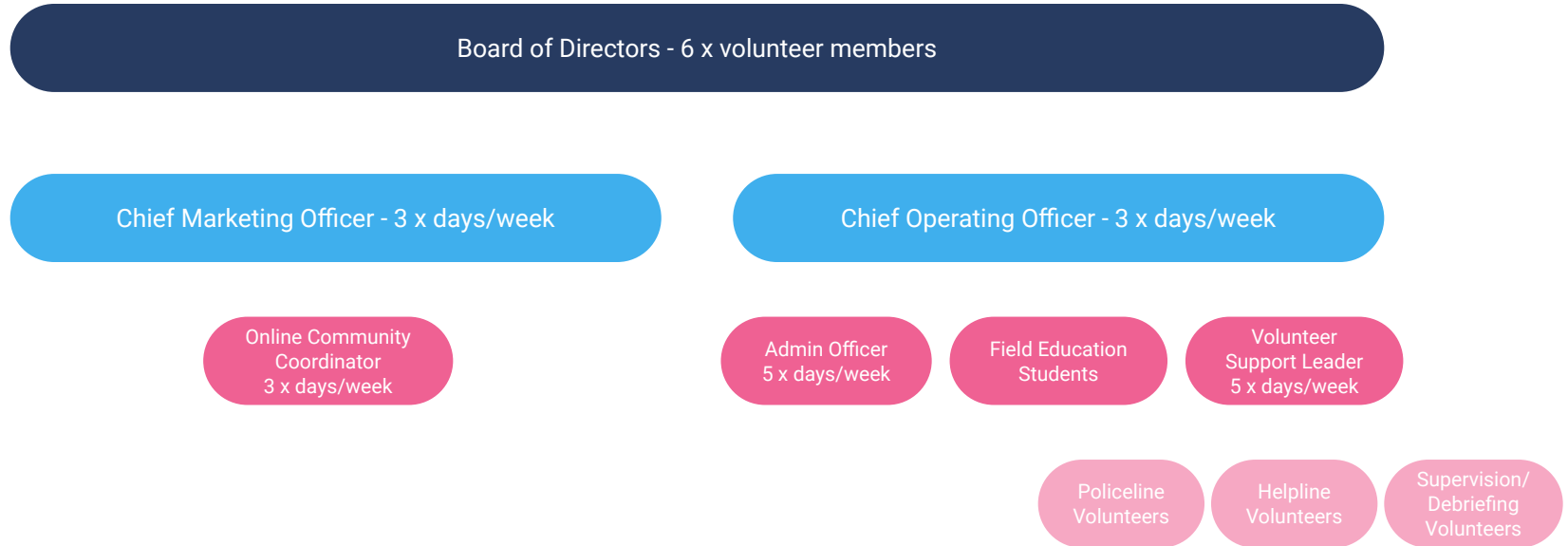
- Deployment of online volunteer training to increase the number of intakes throughout the year and a more efficient volunteer onboarding experience
- Development of an online Volunteer Village environment for peer to peer support and 24/7 access to in-shift resources and professional development

### **Grow our help-seeker community**

- 24/7 access to online resources for help-seekers, including self-help information, resources and coping strategies
- Online peer to peer support and moderated forums as an alternative to the helpline supporting help-seekers outside helpline hours of operation
- Deployment of an outbound call program supporting the isolated and lonely
- Increase reach and recall of Griefline brand
- Onboard 50+ new volunteers



## ORG STRUCTURE: AS AT JUNE 2021



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

Griefline volunteers are compassionate individuals who are trained in supporting people through their grief and loss experience. They are people of all ages, from a variety of backgrounds, who have a breadth of personal experience.

Non-judgemental, they are all exceptional listeners.

Many of our volunteers have lived experiences with grief and loss. Some are studying to become counsellors or mental health practitioners, while others are community members who are driven to support others through their experiences of grief and loss.

As of June 2021, Griefline has volunteers based in every state and territory of Australia.



## **STUDENT PLACEMENTS WITH GRIEFLINE**

In 2020/21 Griefline partnered with Monash University and Melbourne University to provide field education and placement opportunities for 10 students:

- Masters of Social work – 9 x students
- Masters of Counselling – 1 x student

**Student field education placement**

**Volunteer counselling hours**

**Student counselling hours**

## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: GRANTS AND FUNDING FOR SERVICE ENHANCEMENT AND EXPANSION

Looking back over July 2020 – June 2021, it's been a year of bravely stepping forward and offering our all to create a more stable and sustainable operation. With the support of our benefactors, we invested in the enhancement and expansion of our services and developed programs targeted at supporting those at risk of complex grief disorders, loneliness and isolation.

Funding for our core operations was sought from every level of government. We successfully won a RFP with the NSW Ministry of Health.

- With grants received from the CEF, Rotary District 9800 and Murrumbidgee Bank, we launched online resources to compliment our helpline service and piloted an outbound program to support the lonely and isolated. Our online moderated forums and Grief and Loss Resource Hub launched in December 2020 and in the period up to June 2021, we received over 500 registered forum users and over 16,000 pageviews of our resources. Overall usage of our website increased by over 43% compared to the previous year.
- A funding milestone was achieved in May 2021 with The Department of Health allocating funding to Griefline to improve the mental health outcomes for Australians experiencing grief and loss. This commitment from the Commonwealth further validates the importance of our work at a national level (12 months to June 2022)

## **ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: GRANTS AND FUNDING FOR SERVICE ENHANCEMENT AND EXPANSION**

- In June 2021, Griefline won a three and half year contract with NSW Ministry of Health. By winning the contract, Griefline has been given an enormous opportunity to provide multi-faceted support to more people in NSW than ever before (3.5 years July 2021 to Dec 2024).
- Vic Health got behind our Care to Call program to promote this important program to municipalities throughout Victoria which is aimed at supporting the lonely and isolated in the community.
- Our priority is to work with the regional and rural municipalities most affected by the natural disasters that have ravaged the state in the past 2 years. For more information about this program, click [here](#).
- South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network extended the funding contract for Griefline to deliver low intensity mental health support until June 2023 (the original program contract was due to expire in June 2021). The extension of the program funding enables Griefline to continue to provide free telephone counselling to support persons referred from Victoria Police Victims Advisory Unit.
- Partnering with Alfred Health, Griefline has successfully delivered 3 x group support programs for carers and individuals who have lost a loved one. Facilitated by a Griefline counsellor, the program consists of 3 sessions, delivered over 3 weeks.

## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: ENHANCING THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Crucial to the enhancement of our volunteer experience at Griefline was taking the time to shine a spotlight on this important cohort who have played an integral part in supporting our organisation and Australian help-seekers during a year of many challenges and obstacles.

- We sought to provide more clarity, consistency, and context to our volunteers about our purpose as an organisation and included them in the development of our corporate narrative.
- To simplify the experience for volunteers logging into the helpline remotely, and gain access to real-time call data, we transitioned to a new cloud- based phone system.
- To capture and report a higher volunteer of more accurate data from helpline callers, we introduced a digital “call sheet” integrated with our Salesforce CRM which also delivered a more efficient and user-friendly experience for our volunteers
- We commenced production of an intranet to create an online “Volunteer Village” for our volunteers to access a one-stop platform for shift support resources, self-care tools, professional development and peer to peer communication.

## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: ENHANCING THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE CONT'D

In May 2021, we nominated four volunteers to be recognised as part of The Glen Eira City Council Volunteer Recognition Program 2021. The following volunteers, were recognised for their service to Griefline across through the helpline, Policeline and volunteer debriefing:

- Sue Wilson – 10+ years of continuous service
- Mary Salter – 10+ years of continuous service
- Amanda Marler – over 500 hours of service
- Louise Jardine – over 500 hours of service



Pictured – Sue Wilson at the 2021 Glen Eira Volunteer Awards Ceremony



## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: ENHANCING THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE CONT'D

- With the generous support of various Australian businesses (listed on page 34), we were able to show our volunteers our appreciation through gifting, rewards and prizes using their products and services.
- We elevated our annual volunteer awards program to recognise the contributions specific individuals made to Griefline, and how they represented our core values of courage, connection and compassion.

Pictured -clockwise, starting top left:

**2020 Catherine Cini award** - Shelley Andretta (Policeline)  
**Compassion award** - Rebecca Malka (Board member/Helpline/Debriefing)  
**Courage award** - Kirstie Waring (Policeline)  
**Courage award** - Myrto Balamatsias (Admin)  
**Connection award** - Fouz Fatima (Helpline/Online Forums) not pictured





## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: BRAND AND AWARENESS

As we approached the Summer of 2020/21, the board took action to improve trust and faith in our organisation, while driving a clear message to the community, and prospective financial supporters of our situation at the time – establish financial stability, or reduce or fold our service offering to the community.

- We embarked on a media campaign, spear-headed by our PR partners, to seek financial support for our programs and services, while driving a campaign of awareness for the important work we do in supporting the bereaved and grieving on a national scale.
- The campaign worked, garnering recognition for the work we do at a national level, driving help-seekers from all over Australia to our services, and opening doors for meaningful conversations with other NFPs with a shared purpose.
- We invested in uncovering our true purpose as an organisation, to galvanise our internal and external stakeholders, utilising the professional services of a “strategic sense-maker” Sarah Birken who helped us to deliver a corporate narrative with clarity, consistency, context and credibility

## ACTIVITIES SUMMARY: BRAND AND AWARENESS CONT'D

- We created a resource hub on our website rich with psychoeducation for people seeking coping strategies, information and resources to support them, and the people they care for, through their grief experience
- We shared across social media, the stories of real people facing the challenges of COVID-19, the many resulting losses caused by enforced isolations, and the devastating loss of human life
- We developed a campaign message #gettokowgrief #griefawareness with the ongoing purpose to normalise the grief experience, sharing our message of hope and healing after loss

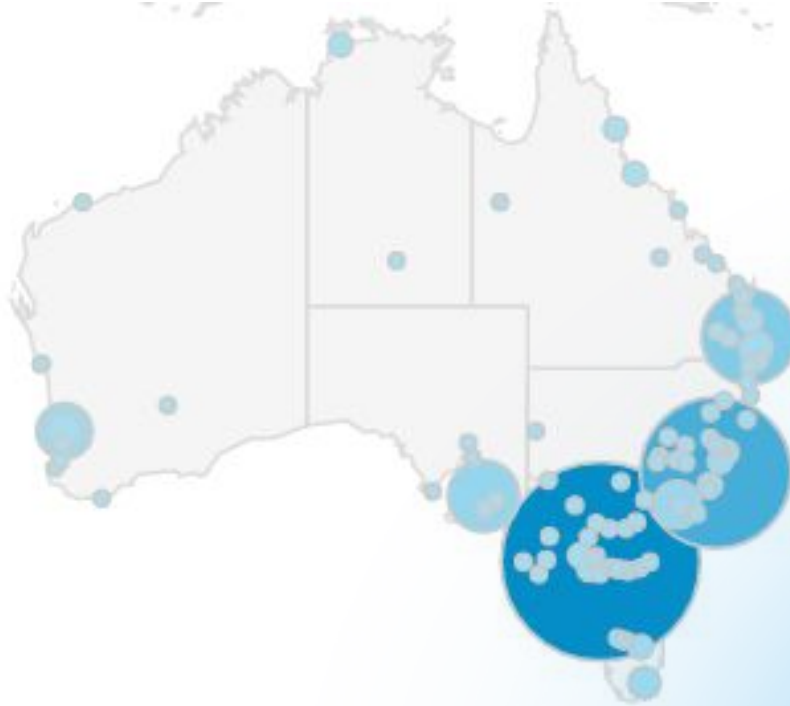
## OUR IMPACT

	FY 2020/2021	FY 2019/20
Calls to our helpline	41,470	12,582
New users of our website*	41,235	28,896
Total number of active volunteers	172	91
Total new volunteers recruited and trained	102	59
% of calls & web users referred to Griefline from other services**	30%	26.5%
% of callers & web users are outside of Victoria**	64.5%	58%
Referrals received from Victoria Police Victims Advisory Unit	2,028	1,409
University student placements	10	10

\*data sourced from Google Analytics

\*\*data sourced from Google Analytics and anonymous call records (calls greater than 5 minutes and where caller consented)

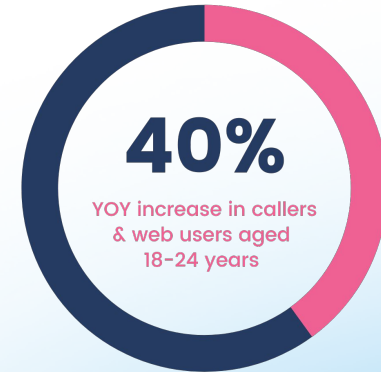
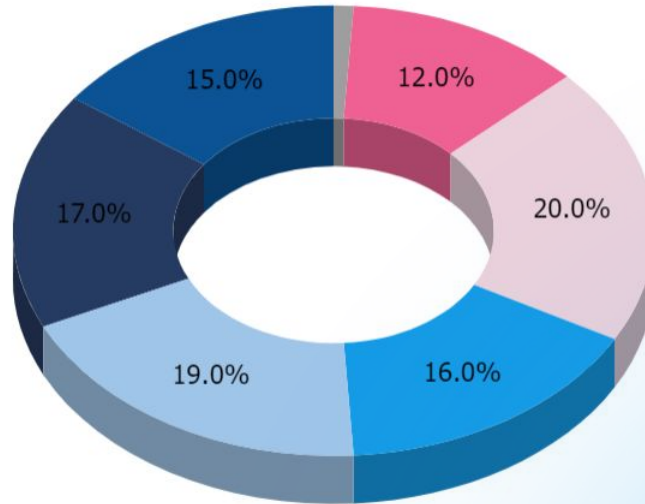
## WHERE OUR HELP-SEEKERS ARE LOCATED



SOURCE: Google Analytics sessions data demonstrating location of users when actively engaged with the GriefLine website  
July 1 2020 - June 30 2021

## THE AGE OF OUR HELP-SEEKERS

- under 18
- 18-24
- 25-35
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-85



SOURCE: Google Analytics and anonymous call records (calls greater than 5 minutes and where caller consented)  
July 1 2020 - June 30 2021 data compared with July 1 2019 - June 30 2020 data

## THE TOP PRESENTING ISSUES OF OUR HELP-SEEKERS

RANK	REASON FOR CALLING	RANK	REASON FOR CALLING
1	Mental health issues	9	Suicidal thoughts/intentions
2	Bereavement (prior)	10	Affected by suicide
3	Lonely/isolated	11	Financial issues
4	Health issues	12	Pet bereavement
5	Family issues	13	Addiction
6	Intimate relationship issues	14	Domestic/family violence
7	Change of life situation	15	COVID-19
8	Bereavement (this year)	16	Carer

SOURCE: ranked based on the number of times the subject matter was discussed during conversations on the helpline.  
(anonymous call records of conversations greater than 5 minutes and where caller consented) July 1 2020 – June 30 2021

“I have hesitated to call this service as I saw a Google rating. My dad passed over a year ago, yet so much more...the counsellor listened, respected my emotional space, helped contain yet allow me expansion and offered excellent tool that she intuitive felt. Seriously, I can now move forward just for the now... Relief. Thank you Griefline.”

**GRIEFLINE HELPLINE USER**

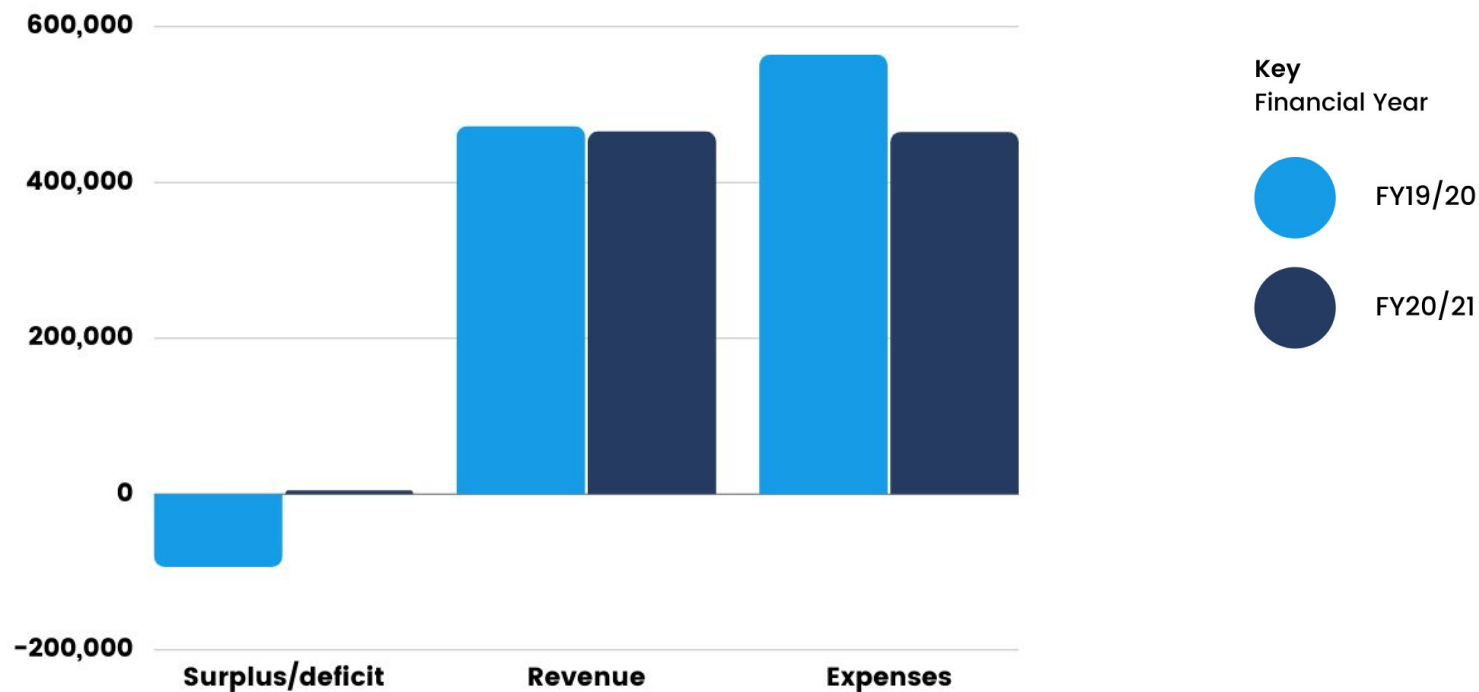
## FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY

- Griefline's operational result for the last financial year as a \$91,693 loss, due to an asset write down and significant one-off expenditure to improve the Griefline website and online resources
- The asset write off of \$11,824 relates to assets from prior financial years that could not be identified within the current Griefline office
- \$75,000 in expenses related to upgrading and improving the Griefline website resulted in the creation of an improved help-seeker experience, additional on-line tools and resources and a visual presence and image consistent with the Griefline brand
- Griefline generated an additional \$50,000 in income from grief and loss training courses compared to previous financial year
- Griefline identified a number of operational cost savings that will be reflected in the 2021/22 financial year, which include grant writing to be done by Griefline team (saving \$17,000 ), moving to a cloud based phone solution (saving \$15,000)
- Generating income from training courses and industry professional development is a focus area for Griefline in 2021/22 financial year, to assist in reducing reliance on government funding and move towards more financial sustainability
- Funding received from Commonwealth Government included as grants received in advance, and noted on balance sheet. These funds will be used in the 2021/22 financial year, contributing towards salaries and other operational expenses

You can access the full financial report from the ASIC website or request a copy by emailing [admin@griefline.org.au](mailto:admin@griefline.org.au)



FINANCIAL REPORT SUMMARY CONT'D



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANK YOU

Griefline has always enjoyed a wonderful level of community support. We would like to thank everyone for your contributions large and small.

### Grants and funding

- Rotary District 9800
- Murrumbeena Community Bank
- Community Enterprise Foundation
- Commonwealth Government
- VicHealth
- National Australia Bank Foundation
- South Eastern Melbourne PHN
- Alfred Health

### Volunteer gifting

- NativeBliss Australia
- Australian Botanical Soap
- Strandbags
- Peninsula Hotsprings
- Crust Pizza
- Noelle Australia
- Pan MacMillan

### Donors

- Phillips Cohen and Associates
- The Magistrates Court of Victoria
- Datt Foundation
- Miller Foundation
- Media Merchants
- Murrumbeena House Occasional Care

### Individual donors

- Linda Collard
- Anna Tesorio
- Peter Gill
- Laila Andre
- Janine Caleo
- David Hall
- Robert Adelman
- Angela Webber
- Alyscia Watt
- Theresa Chapman
- Abe Paluch
- H. Paterson
- Many anonymous donations

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND THANK YOU

### Corporate and community partners

- Kiwanis Brighton Bayside
- Smiling Mind
- Bang Bang Studios
- The Promo Collective
- City of Glen Eira
- City of Kingston

### Fundraising

- \$85 Jumbuck Mini-Spit Society
- Bunnings Moorabbin
- Minimax Brighton
- Amanda Peppard
- People Assets
- Moving Mindsets

“Griefline has been there for me for over the past two years. The volunteers are not only kind and understanding but they have given me suggestions on how to deal with my grief. They have listened to me sob hysterically and they have explained that the feelings I did not expect to have after a loved one passed, were completely normal. I cannot speak highly enough of Griefline.

**GRIEFLINE HELPLINE USER**

## LOOKING FORWARD: OBJECTIVES

Our purpose is what drives us, it motivates us, it's the reason we come to work every day, it captures what it means to be part of this organisation.

Interstate expansion of programs and services

Recruitment of counsellors and supervisors

Partnerships with professional practitioner organisations

Income-generating online training courses

Programs and services that are more inclusive and accessible

Research into efficacy and impact of programs and services

Expansion of volunteer professional development and supervision

## **LOOKING FORWARD: ACTIVITIES SUMMARY FY 2021/22**

### **Interstate expansion of programs and services**

- 6 x session counselling program supporting people experiencing prolonged grief (funded by NSW Ministry of Health)
- Expansion of Care to Call in NSW and Far North Queensland (funded by NSW Ministry of Health and The Douglas Community and Sports Club Inc.)
- Interstate expansion of Support Groups (funding by NSW Ministry of Health)
- Life After Loss – a Podcast series sharing the stories of natural disaster survivors (funded by NAB grant)

### **Recruitment of counsellors and supervisors**

Supporting the growth across our volunteer cohort and paid counsellors for the NSW Health and Policeline 6 x session counselling programs.

### **Partnership with professional practitioner member organisations**

Recruitment of PACFA member practitioners to facilitate onwards referrals from the NSW Health and Policeline 6 x session counselling programs.

### **Expansion of our volunteer professional development and supervision**

Launch of the Volunteer Village intranet and online learning management system.

## LOOKING FORWARD: ACTIVITIES SUMMARY FY 2021/22 CONT'D

### **Income-generating online courses**

- Train the Carer (pilot program funded by City of Glen Eira)
- Advanced Grief Theories (offered as CPD for PACFA practitioners with a view to expand to other member organisations)

### **Programs and services that are more inclusive and accessible**

- Activate our reconciliation plan to assist our organisation to embed the principles and purpose of reconciliation
- Updated website user interface so that it is accessible for hearing and sight-impaired users
- Fact sheets and resources for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse help-seekers

### **Research into the efficacy and impact of our programs and services**

With the support of our University Placement Partners and drawing upon data extracted from:

- Salesforce CRM
- Google Analytics
- 8x8 telecommunications platform and
- Our new online client intake and assessment platform (powered by Conekter)

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

We are honoured to receive support from partners who believe in our mission to be present for people in a safe space to help them find courage through their grief, and discover hope and healing after loss.

At Griefline, we are committed to developing long term and mutually beneficial partnerships with partners who share our mission, vision and values.

Without our partners, Griefline's impact to tens of thousands of Australians each year would be non-existent.

A partnership with Griefline is an experience of shared value.

It can also be a way to involve your team/workforce/stakeholders in making a difference and having lasting impact in the community.





## PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### 01 Non-financial

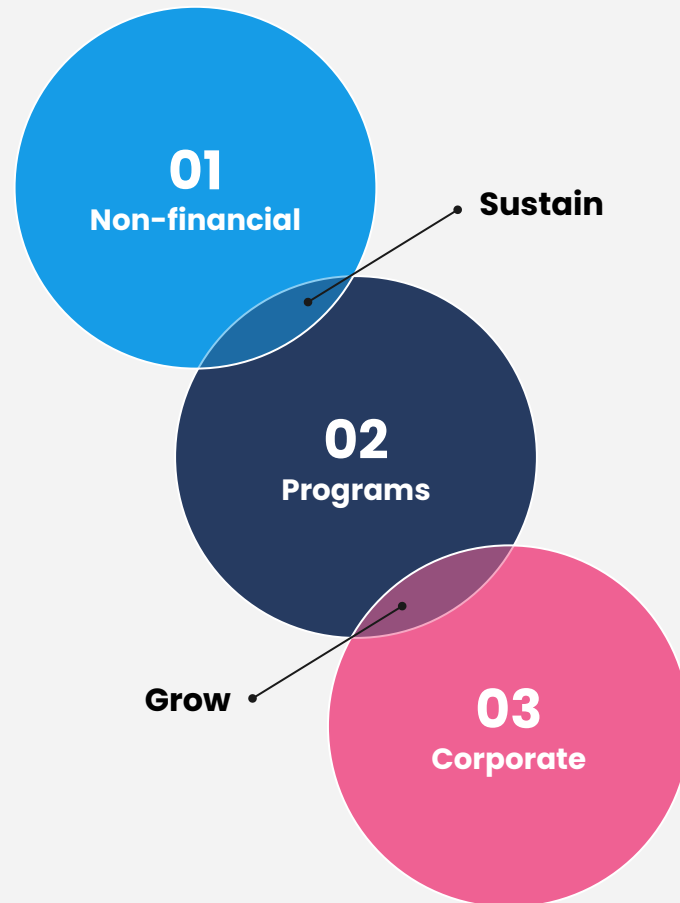
- Volunteer referrals
- Program referrals
- Service referrals
- Volunteer professional development
- Marketing & content syndication
- Research

### 02 Programs

- Sustain existing programs and services
- Interstate expansion of specialised care programs
- Donations, fundraising and bequests

### 03 Corporate

- Telco sponsorship
- Volunteer intranet sponsorship
- Marketing and advertising sponsorship
- Helpline operations sponsor



## CONNECT WITH GRIEFLINE

Please click the icon to follow, like and engage.

