

# ANNUAL REPORT



A SOCIETY WHERE UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS IS IMPLICIT

# CONTENTS

Our Values, Vision and Mission	3
Management Committee	4
OurPlace	5
Executive Officer's Report	6
Cool Program	7-10
Our Programs	11
Mi Place	12-13
Cool Program	14
Carer Support Darwin	15-16
Karama Cottage	17
Carer Support Alice Springs	18
Mi Track Tennant Creek	19
NDIS Services	20
Mi Networks/ Sane Forums	21
Community Engagement	22
Our Supporters	23
National Partners	24
Treasurers Report	25
Financial Summary	25

# **OUR VALUES**

## **COMMITMENT**

To provide appropriate services in a timely and co-ordinated manner. We also acknowledge that our staff are our most essential resource and we are committed to value, respect, support and encourage them accordingly.

# RESPECT

To recognise the right of all stakeholders to be listened to and to be able to make informed choices.

### **INTEGRITY**

To provide services that are of the highest ethical standards and are non-coercive and non-exploitative regardless of age, gender, cultural background, social status, geographical location, sexual orientation, disability or religion.

### **OUR VISION**

A society where understanding and acceptance of mental illness is implicit and all those affected by mental illness are able to make a valued contribution.

### **OUR MISSION**

Our mission is to provide high quality recovery-based programs offering support, education, information, and respite to all people whose lives are affected by mental illness. Our goal is to reduce community restrictions experienced by all people affected by mental illness and improve their quality of life.

# MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

# BRONWYN RUSSELL PRESIDENT

Bronwyn's previous roles have included Executive Director, Engineers Australia NT and Mental Health Coordinator, GP Network NT, Bronwyn currently sits on National Boards of Mental Health Carers Australia and Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia and is a trustee for Psychosis Australia.

# LYN BARLOW TREASURER

Lyn Barlow worked many years as a senior bookkeeper and was Treasurer to a number of community agencies, before retiring. Lyn has since come out of retirement to join the MIFA(NT) Management committee in the role of Treasurer.

# ORDINARY MEMBER

Teresa Hall is a partner in Ward Keller's commercial division. Teresa has double degree's in law and arts. After running her own practice in South Australia, Teresa who was born in Darwin, returned to the Territory to take up the position at Ward Keller. Teresa has a strong interest in mental health and joined the MIFA(NT) management committee in May 2018.

# JOY GREEN VICE PRESIDENT

MIFA(NT). While her initial inpetus was to advocate on behalf of her son, Joy's reach has extended to all people with a mental illness and their carers. In 2008 Joy was nominated for the Australian of the Year Award and was consequently awarded the NT Senior of the Year for her work in Mental Health.

# KAREN MCARTHUR ORDINARY MEMBER

Karen McArthur now retired has previously worked with indigenous youth and victims of domestic crime. Karen's qualifications including a Batchelor of Behavioural Science Degree, Certificate 1V in Community Services, Youth Work and Alcohol and Other Drugs. Karen has a lived experience as a carer of a family member diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. Karen has also filled the role as a carer representative on the NT PIR Reference Group (Partners in Recovery Programme) within the NT PHN.

# MAUREEN BOOTH ORDINARY MEMBER

Maureen Booth has been a member of MIFA(NT) for approximately 5 years and more recently a committee member. Maureen cares for her partner of 20 yrs who suffers from post traumatic stress disorder. Maureen is 70 yrs old and has lived in Darwin since 1978 and is interested in mental health as she has friends and family who have had their struggles for many years.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



This year has provided many challenges to people throughout the world. Covid19 has had a detrimental effect on mental health for those with a current diagnosis, as well as carers and many whose jobs were uncertain or ceased.

It meant that MIFA(NT) had to suspend face to face contact for a short period of time and, although we are back operating, there is no certainty about the future. National statistics reflect the results of this virus. Please remain vigilant as we are not sure what the outcome will be.

This year we have initiated our NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) business and have been able to offer a range of programs as part of our activities. As a consequence of the implementation of NDIS, a lot of our previous block funding will no longer be available to us.

The youth program in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek (MiTrack) has been extended until June 2021 and we are hoping there will be some way of extending this into the future.

The Mental Health Week dinner had Detective Craig Semple as the speaker. This event always gives our guests insight into the world of others and provides an opportunity to share experiences in a safe environment.

MIFA(NT) was presented the Mental Health Workplace Award, a recognition that we are very proud of, but also illuminates the amazing work of our staff and board. A big thank you to all involved. This is an industry that has frequent staff turnover and this year has been no exception.

I compliment the staff in the way they are able to settle in and adapt to a new workplace when this occurs. I thank all staff for the dedication and hard work with the many changes we have been facing and a special thanks to Lorraine as our leader. The Board have also had many challenges and I thank those that are retiring and welcome our new faces.

Bronwyn Russell President

# EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



From end to end this year has been like no other, not only for MIFA(NT) but also for participants of our programs and the whole of the NT and indeed the Nation.

The year commenced with MIFA(NT) rolling out our NDIS services. The new fee for service business model for the organisation had been under preparation for the months preceding the new year, however the implementation of these services had their own set of challenges for the organisation including tweaking systems we had developed and then finding further adaptations were required as we put those systems into use.

Implementation also included bringing staff on board who had predominantly worked in a block funded environment to working in a fee for service model which has significant differences and also having a larger volume of casual workers than we have had in the past.

Up to date, the outcomes or our NDIS services have been excellent, however it is a constant work in progress to ensure all obligations are met to our NDIS clients and the NDIA.

Our block funded programs including support for carers and families, our drop in centre for people with a mental illness (Mi Place) and our early intervention program (Mi Track)

have continued alongside our NDIS services providing important support to those without an NDIS package.

Without these programs people would fall through the gap between clinical and NDIS services. It is therefore extremely important for these programs to be available for people in the community.

During the second quarter of last year a review was conducted of our early intervention program Mi Track based in Tennant Creek and Alice Springs. The review culminated in a Social Impact report for the program (which can be found on our website) which highlights the importance of the program in the region for children and young people. I would also like to congratulate Olusugun Martins (Team Leader of Mi Track Tennant Creek) for winning the NT Mental Health Week Award for Mental Health Worker.

This year our Department of Social Services block funding for Mental Health Carer Respite was discontinued in May with the advent of the online Carer Gateway platform. The transition of carers to the online platform coincided with the outbreak of COVID19 in the Territory which ironically forced people to engage with the use of not only this platform but also digital ways of communicating with loved ones and friends.

Prior to developing a COVID plan whereby we could resume meeting face to face with clients, we saw staff across all of our programs continuing to provide services throughout the COVID19 period through digital services such as Zoom and Teams as well as by telephone and email. I would like to commend all our staff in managing to quickly implement this new form of communication within our new COVID environment and also for quickly adapting to the COVID plan which included physical distancing and washing hands, enabling them to continue working face to face with clients.

Looking forward to the future, we will be living in a COVID environment for some time to come, however we hope to be able to continue to safely provide important services to those who need it and to see some expansion of our NDIS services. I would like to thank the staff and board for their commitment during a challenging year and look forward to achieving our goals next year.

Lorraine Davies
Executive Officer



**210** 

CARERS RECEIVED SUPPORT DARWIN

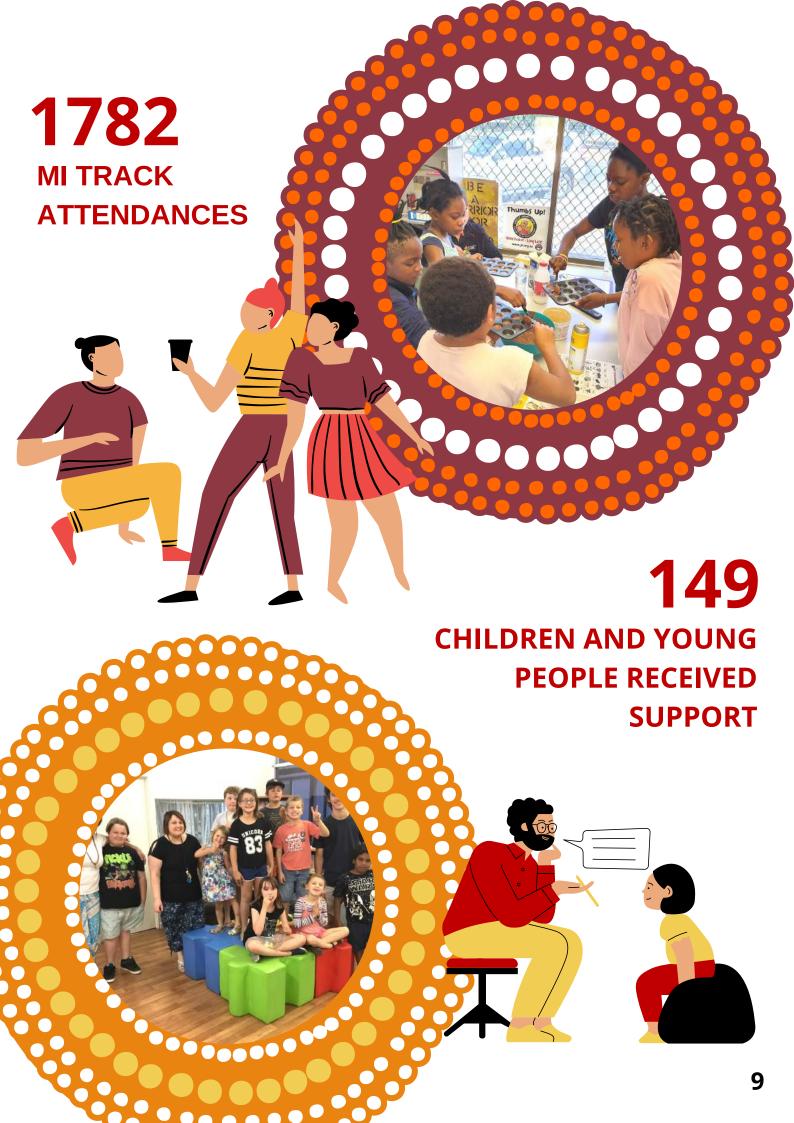
49
CARERS ALICE
SPRINGS



**5110** 

DARWIN CARER
ATTENDANCES
CALD 15 & ABORIGINAL 17

152
ACTIVITIES ALICE SPRINGS







# **NDIS**

25% SUPPORT COORDINATION

60% SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

**6% DAILY LIVING** 

9% SHORT TERM ACCOMMODATION



# **MIPLACE**

MiPlace is a Drop in Centre that welcomes people living with Mental Illnesses.
MiPlace is committed to their COVID-19
Safety Plan and adheres to physical distancing measures and health and hygiene principles at all times which has enabled Participants to continue to attend a safe and relaxing environment. During this stressful time our new Participant numbers have continued to grow.





In 2020 MiPlace continued to assist participants to work towards their social and recreational goals and skills development by engaging in programs and activities that they have requested at our monthly participants meetings, feedback and are included in participants support plans. Some of the activities include yoga, meditation & wellbeing, art, card & board games, jigsaw puzzles, jewellery making, craft, pool competitions, music and gardening. Our participants enjoy socialising and relaxing in the tranquility of our expanding garden area.

Our Notice Board Event is once a month where participants have a "Fun Day Event" some examples of the activities are participants have iced & decorate donuts, decorated icecreams in cones, and made their own pizza.

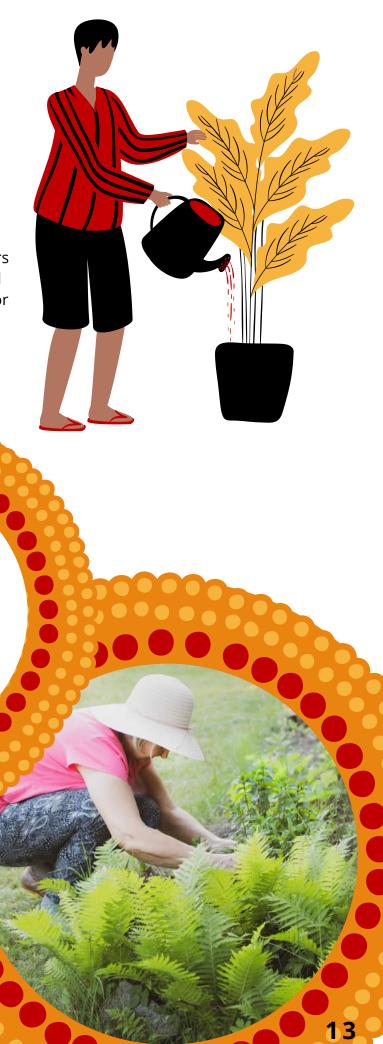
Once a month MiPlace have had a speaker which has included Catholic Care speaking about managing money and Nikki Di Costa health who has discussed issues where Participants have requested information or have had concerns about. Some of these include medication awareness (Why you need to take it, compliance, side affects etc.). Healthy eating (why healthy eating is so important, and how to make easy quick and healthy recipes). Diabetes education (what to look for in foods e.g. quantity of sugar) and exercise and relaxation, mindfulness and wellbeing.

Since March, MiPlace has held limited special events (due to Covid-19) however prior to March events were held normally and were generally celebrated all over Australia. These events provide an opportunity for participants to participate in social activities to raise awareness and reduce the stigma Surrounding Mental Illness. Some of the special events this year held at MiPlace that Participants enjoyed celebrating were Christmas Lunch, Melbourne Cup, R U OK day, Mental Health Week which included the MiPlace Open Day and the Art Exhibition/Competition.

The National Dental Association instructed participant on how to look after their oral health and provided participants with a small dental kit. Centrelink discussed payments and eligibility requirements and what is needed to access them.

The ever popular miPlace garden has been the centre of attention this year, with planting and maintenance activities bringing people closer to nature. With the help of plant and seed donations from Bunnings, participants have grown produce that has been used in the kitchen as well as flowers and decorative plants. For those that have worked in the garden they have a sense of achievement for creating a relaxing and peaceful place for both themselves and others to socialise.

"I just want to comment on how good a job you guys do, the service is a safe place where feel welcomed relaxing in a friendly atmosphere. It has been a huge goal this year to be out in the community"



# **COOL PROGRAM**

The Cool Program is committed to their COVID-19 Safety Plan and adheres to physical distancing measures and health and hygiene principles at all times which has enabled Participants to continue to stay safe and enjoy their outings.

The Cool Program offers activities in the wider community every Tuesday afternoon and one Saturday a fortnight (excluding public holidays). These outings enable people living with mental illnesses to attend and enjoy outings they would not have the opportunity to attend otherwise as well as to socialise with other people. This program is particularly important for those that are living alone or social isolated and enables participants to be active in their community.

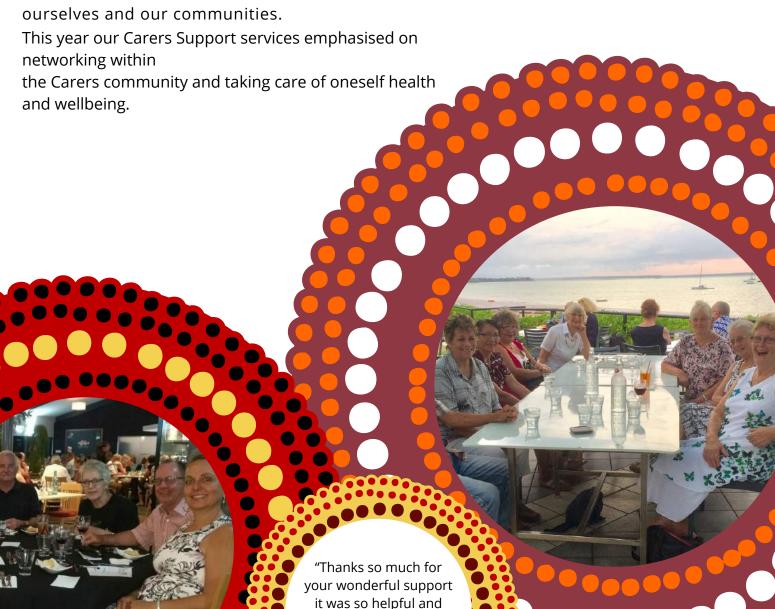
In 2019/2020 year the Cool Program Participants continued to hop on the "Cool Bus" and enjoy activities that they requested at their monthly participants meetings, feedback or are included in participants support plans. Some of the outings have included walks at the Botanical Gardens and Marlow's Lagoon, BBQ's at Howard Springs and Berry Springs Reserves, checking out the street art in Darwin City, swimming at Lake Alexander, fishing at Stokes Hill Wharf and Elizabeth River Bridge and visits to Coolalinga and Parap Markets. During the warmer months participants had the opportunity to visit the museums and art galleries, take a self-guided tour of Parliament House and also go on an op shopping tour. The Participants have also been able to relax, enjoying the fresh air and chat about anything and everything whilst they soak in the amazing scenery and great company.





The MIFA(NT) Carer Support Program provides individual/ group support and respite to people caring for someone with a mental illness. The program offers social activities as well as overnight stays at our respite accommodation in order for carers to step away from their caring roles and also to develop peer support networks. Our education programs assist carers to build on their knowledge of mental illness and how to provide self care while caring for others.

With the COVID 19 impact this year, we need more than ever to find ways to stay connected within ourselves and our communities.



your resource material was a timely reminder"

# Carers Support Groups

The Carers support groups have continued to be held weekly in Darwin for Darwin suburban residents and in Palmerston for those living in Palmerston and the rural areas enabling carers to attend the group closest to them.

The groups may sometimes have a speaker such as an NDIS representative or an activity or may also be just a catch up session.

During the year the carer walk and talk sessions on Nightcliff foreshore also provided an opportunity for carers to connect with a similar minded group.

The groups are informal and carers who attend can talk about what they would like to address and any issues they would like to resolve. The carer groups are also a place where everyone is heard and where they can identify as themselves not just a carer, which encourages friendships to develop and peer support outside of the group meetings.

## Carers Individual One-on-One Support

This service is for carers who are needing assistance to understand their situation, find out information about how to support someone with a mental illness and what other supports are available in the community. Over the past year carers have been supported to access services for themselves and the person they are caring for such as psychologists, Centrelink payments, NDIS housing options, the community visitors program, Health Complaints Commission and counselling services.

Carers have also been provided with information regarding caring for themselves, future planning, the Carer Gateway and information about mental health issues and illnesses.



### **Carer Connect**

Carer Connect is held out of work hours once a month and provides an opportunity for carers to take a break from their caring role and is usually in an informal setting where carers can be with peers and catch up on the latest news or talk about what is happening in their lives. Carer Connect activities have included trips to the cinema or dinner at one of the many restaurants in the Top End including those near the ocean where the lovely Darwin sunsets can be observed.

For special events such as Carers Week or Mental Health Week, our Carer Connect program has included a pamper session and sunset cruise.



# KARAMA COTTAGE

Karama Cottage is a multi - use overnight stay accommodation for people living with a mental illness or caring for someone with a mental illness.





Karama Cottage provides short term supported accommodation for participants living with a psychosocial disability however have an NDIS plan. At Karama Cottage participants can relax or learn independent living skills with support from caring workers.

Karama Cottage also offers respite accommodation for people caring for somebody a mental illness.

Caring for someone with a mental illness can often be stressful and tiring with limited opportunities for a break. Here at MIFA(NT) we recognise that carers need to have a break in order to recharge and be able to effectively look after someone with a mental illness.

Karama Cottage is an elevated style house is located on a quiet street in Karama, offering a warm and welcoming atmosphere designed to help guests relax. The house is close to shops, bus routes, bike tracks, Holmes Jungle Park and Crocodylus Park.

Accommodation options vary according to the needs of the people requesting to stay at the house. Options include weekend breaks, overnight stays or longer breaks, and can also be regular planned stays or one offs. The options are tailored to support the person's needs.

# CARER SUPPORT ALICE SPRINGS

The MIFA(NT) Carer Support Program in Alice Springs provides respite and individual/ group support to people caring for someone with a mental illness. The program offers social activities for carers to meet with others and share their caring stories with their peers. Each week carers meet for a different activity and once a month the Carer Connect group meet for dinner and a movie. These peer support sessions offer carers an opportunity to informally connect with others in a similar situation and provide a preventative mechanism to help carers cope with their caring role.

Individual support provides an opportunity for carers to meet with the Carer Support Coordinator to discuss their caring role. This is a time when carer's are usually going through a crisis and are at their most distressed. Our empathetic Carer Support Coordinator is able to provide support through listening to assess the needs of the carer and providing emotional support, information to assist with caring for the person and referrals to relevant services.

The service also provides education in the form of our Carer Assist program which is a modulated program that discusses signs and symptoms of various mental illnesses, caring for oneself while caring for another person and also where to get help.

Throughout this year carers have attended a number of activities including bare foot bowls, golf, yoga, art activities and coffee and cake. The Carer Assist education program has also run throughout the year with the most common modules requested being Module 6 Assisting with difficult times and emotions and Module 4 Assisting with Depression.



"I wish to express my gratitude towards MIFA(NT) for support given and respite from caring"

# MI TRACK TENNANT CREEK

2019/2020 had been a remarkable year for Mi track program in Tennant Creek. It has been a year full of accomplishment in various diverse ways in terms of client's achieving their goals and community engagement.

The year witnessed a great leap in our client's school engagement out of over 35 being clients being case managed during this year, more than 50% of our client's school attendance improved tremendously for this period as testified by parents and family members due to the proactive engagement through Mi Track program. Mi-track provided the needed encouragement by building support for clients through advise and collaboration with service providers to assist struggling families support their children. On top of improved school attendance, 15% of our clients were supported through the often difficult period of transitioning to high school from primary school.

### **Family Holistic Integration Interventions**

Mi Track program had been able to support our client's family integration in terms of working with parents and clients holistically to promote harmony and care. The program has supported about 10% of our clients in assisting families by promoting good parenting through advice and mentorship with consultations by the Mi Track case coordinators. The outcomes of these interventions have seen families encouraged by the positive changed behaviour of their children, with a grandfather stating: "My MIFANT friends have been great".





### **Healthy Living MIFA(NT)**

In partnership with Anyinginyi health facilitated weekly healthy living talks for 60% of our clients through the after-school program. This has received a lot of commendation by parents and service providers. Promotion of hygiene, brushing of teeth and general cleanliness has been the core of the talks facilitated by different health workers from Anyinginyi Health twice weekly and facilitated by Mi Track case workers and tailored to suit the needs of each child. Each week approximately 20 children in attend the Healthy Living program with 60% of the children experiencing improved hygiene. The grandparents of one child commented that "Mi Track was helping re-shape the life of their grandson"

### **School Holiday**

Program 2019-2020 witnessed high attendance at the Mi Track organised school holiday programs pre COVID19. Activities have included art and craft, cooking, mind building games, circus activities and a various educative activities. Approximately 120 children benefited from the program including 30% of our clients being part of all activities. Many families love our school holiday programs and the activities have connected the community through utilising local facilitators and venues. Having structured activities for children and young people in the community during school holidays have also provided positive pursuits for children and young people to engage in when little or nothing is happening within their communities at these times. Gerry McCarthy MLA quoted "You guys are doing a great job" with regard to the Mi Track school holiday program. All through the year our effort and community engagement has been felt by the community. Looking forward to October 22nd for the great Colour fun run of the year in Tennant Creek!

# **NDIS SUPPORT**

Over the past year, MIFA(NT) commenced providing NDIS services under the following categories:

Support Coordination | Group and Centre based | Activities | Participation in Community | Social | Civic Activities | Development in Daily Living and Life Skills | Assistance with | Daily Life Tasks in a Group or Shared Living Arrangement | Assistance in Coordinating or Managing Life | Stages | Accommodation/Tennancy Assistance



With an increase in the number of people getting an NDIS plan, we are beginning to see a larger number of people accessing all of our NDIS services and it has been great to see people's recovery journey improving with the services they are now able to access.

As the NDIS evolves, MIFA(NT) has had to be equally flexible in order to integrate the changes into our business model with constant tweaking of our systems to ensure our clients receive the best service possible and the organisation remains compliant. During the year we received a grant to transition to the NDIS with which we purchased an electronic client management system. This system will reduce our NDIS administration workload by up to 50% and provide a better opportunity for tracking our client's progress towards their goals.







## **MI NETWORKS**

Mi Networks is an initiative by the Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia. Mi Networks promises that we can help connect people with a mental illness, their carers and families to the information and services they need. Mi Networks will provide relevant and up-to-date information and will link people to the best programs and services to suit their requirements. Mi Networks promises that people can expect this personalised service at every location.



## **SANE AUSTRALIA**

In partnership with SANE, Mental Illness Fellowship provides an online forum for people living with a mental illness and another forum for families and friends of people living with a mental illness. The forums provide a free, peer-to-peer service where carers and people living with mental illness can link up and share stories, tips and offer support. The forums are anonymous and moderated to ensure they remain safe and welcoming for all members of the community. Both forums can be found on our website.

# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Throughout the year MIFA(NT) engages with the community to raise awareness about mental health in an effort to reduce stigma, provide information about mental health and how to get help and also training regarding supporting someone with a mental Illness.

Throughout the year, MIFA(NT) has raised awareness about mental health and stigma by providing information and activities within our communities. These activities included information stalls at shopping centres, expo's and events, our Mental Health Week Corporate Dinner, talks at services and agencies and our own open days.

Our fourth annual Mental Health Week Corporate Dinner opened Mental Health Week on the Monday and this year our guests included Katherine Marchment who spoke of her own experiences of living with a mental illness and how MIFA(NT) has helped with her recovery journey, Joy Green who as a founding member spoke about the early days of MIFA(NT) and our keynote speaker Craig Semple who was a senior detective in the NSW police force where he experienced PTSD.

Craig spoke about the gradual onset of mental ill health and how important it is to manage good mental health. MIFA(NT) was also lucky to be nominated for and to win the NT Mental Health Workplace Award.

The Award was presented at an Awards Ceremony at the Darwin Museum by the Deputy Minister for Mental Health Ms Ngaree Ah Kit.





# WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank all our supporters without whom all MIFA(NT) programs, services and activities would not occur. Support comes in many forms including financial, volunteering, national systemic advocacy and provision of services to name a few. We are deeply grateful to all those who have supported MIFA(NT) throughout the year.























MERCURE DARWIN AIRPORT RESORT | KARAWA TRAINING RESTAURANT | CROCOSAURUS COVE | MERCURE KAKADU CROCODILE HOTEL | EAT – A – PIZZA | TRADARA BRISCOE MARY RIVER WILDERNESS RETREAT | KAKADU TOURISM | OAKS ELAN | CRAIG SEMPLE CAROL RICHARDSON

# **NATIONAL PARTNERS**



MIFA(NT) is the NT member of the Mental Illness Fellowship Australia(MIFA) a national alliance of not for profit mental health service providers. MIFA provides an Australian voice to international mental health net-works as well as national voice representing a federation of organisations around the country. Over the past year, MIFA has been focusing on advocating for people who may not get an NDIS package however their current services may not exist in the future.



Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) was initially founded through the grassroots efforts of mental health carers. MHCA currently works at a national level to advocate on behalf of mental health carers. This year MHCA has been focusing on ensuring mental health carers will still get support in an NDIS world. MHCA is also part of an alliance that has formed the Caring Fairly Campaign to strenghten the rights of carers in Australia.

# **Board Representation**

Our staff and board members sit on various boards and committees that ensures the choice of those with mental illness and the families and carers represented. The boards and groups listed below are those where decisions are made that can influeence state and national policy.

NT Mental Health Coalition
Psychosis Trust Australia
Mental Health Carers Australia
Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia
Community Mental Health Australia

# **Treasurers Report**

The MIFA(NT) audit this year was conducted by BDH Consulting Pty Ltd. In the opinion of the auditor the financial reports presented fairly and the financial performance of the organisation as at 30th June 2020 ended in accordance with accounting policies to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Act.

During the 2019/2020 financial year, a contract that was also due to end was extended for a further year ensuring consistent funding in relation to the previous year. The increase in income was attributed to the commencement of our NDIS business together with the ATO Cashflow Boost due to COVID 19.

Throughout the financial year expenses have increased in alignment with NDIS costs however the members funds have also increased due to the NDIS business.

At the end of next financial year MIFA(NT) will see the contract which was extended this year cease. This will significantly reduce our income, however it is expected that the NDIS business will expand to compensate the loss of funding.



To make a donation to MIFA(NT), via the link: http://www.givenow.com.au/MIFANT

# **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

INCOME SUMMARY	2020	2019
FUNDING	1,829,174	1,731,034
OTHER INCOME	525,498	36,703
TOTAL INCOME	2354672	1,767,737
EVDENDITUDE CHAMARY	2020	2019
EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2020	
OPERATING EXPENDITURE	2,038,058	1,726,645
OPERATING SURPLUS	316,615	41,809
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	316,615	41,809
FINANCIAL POSITION	2020	2019
ASSETS		
CASH ASSETS	975,690	746,294
OTHER ASSETS	163,082	25,583
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,138,772	771,877
PROPERTY PLANT & EQUIPMENT	60,790	78,560
OTHER	20,127	20,127
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	80,617	98,687
TOTAL ASSETS	1,219,389	870,565
LIABILITIES	2020	2019
PAYABLES	173,324	155,367
FINANCIAL	3205	5341
CURRENT TAX LIABIITIES	13,554	14,734
PROVISIONS	94,393	76,825
TOTAL LIABILITIES	284,477	252,267
NET ASSETS	934,912	618,297
MEMBERS FUNDS	934,912	618,297