



**Women's
Health
Tasmania**

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2024 / 2025**

We acknowledge and pay respect to Palawa/
Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the original owners
of Lutruwita/Tasmania. Women's Health Tasmania
is located in Nipaluna/Hobart, Palawa country. We
acknowledge the Muwinina people of this country and
the Tasmanian Aboriginal community of today.

 Cover: Mural painted by Grace Williams, November 2025.

Printed on 100% recycled paper.

 Thank you to Karen Brown Photography for our beautiful team photos.

 Mural launch.



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Sorting undies sizes for The Undies Project mailout.

 TUSA Student Life Expo, February 2025.



Conference participants.



A year of change and achievement

 Maura Boland, Board Chair and Kelly Bruce, CEO.



We write this message as the new Chair and CEO of Women's Health Tasmania, acknowledging the activities and achievements of those whose stewardship led Women's Health Tasmania during 2024-25.

This past year was one of notable change for the organisation with the retirement of CEO Jo Flanagan. Jo's extraordinary efforts throughout her leadership and the vision and determination with which she guided Women's Health Tasmania through this particularly complex year have served us well. This year also saw the departure of Chair Naomi Bryant who had contributed to our Board since 2017.

It is with gratitude that we acknowledge the work of all who contributed to the achievements of 2024-25: Jo Flanagan, Naomi Bryant, interim Board Chair Lakshmi Sundram, long-term outgoing board members Rachel Andrew and Dr Rebekah McWhirter,

new Board Members Dr Catherine Moulton, Bharti Kour and Maura Boland and all of the staff and volunteers whose skills, compassion and professionalism ensure every person who contacts Women's Health Tasmania knows they are cared for and respected.

We are inspired by how, while navigating major internal change and with minimal resources, Women's Health Tasmania has maintained its unwavering work championing women's health and rights.

This speaks to the strength and resilience of all involved and the enduring commitment of our staff, volunteers, Board and partners.

The foundation and mission established 36 years ago and progressed by hundreds of women since Women's Health Tasmania's founding have positioned us well to meet the past year's challenges and those that no doubt lie ahead.



Throughout 2024–25, Women’s Health Tasmania remained steadfast in its commitment to ensuring that all women have access to the information, services, and support they need to make choices about their own health. Our work on reproductive choice pathways continues to be a cornerstone of this effort. We have continued to advocate for equitable, timely access to contraception and abortion care across the State, particularly for women in rural and regional communities, where access remains most constrained.

Through collaborations with health professionals, government, and community partners we have strengthened referral pathways and improved the visibility of reproductive health options for Tasmanians. This work is grounded in our belief that reproductive autonomy is central to women’s wellbeing, equality and dignity.

At the same time, we have also navigated a challenging fiscal environment. The tightening of the State Budget and ongoing cost-of-living pressures have placed considerable strain on community services and the women we serve. Despite this,

Women’s Health Tasmania has continued to deliver high-quality programs and maintain financial stability through careful management, creative partnerships, and the dedication of our team.

We are proud that women can continue to turn to Women’s Health Tasmania for reliable health information, counselling, and support. Their trust in our work underscores the enduring importance of a women-centred, feminist health organisation in Tasmania.

We again extend our thanks and appreciation to all those who contributed to the successes of the past year and we thank our partners and funders, including the Tasmanian Government, for their continued support of women’s health and wellbeing.

Together, we will continue to advocate, educate and lead in the pursuit of health equity for all women in Tasmania.

Maura Boland, Board Chair
Kelly Bruce, CEO

Our mission

We are Lutruwita/Tasmania's leading voice in advancing women's health and wellbeing.



The WHT team at the 2025 Tasmanian Reproductive Health Conference.

Our vision

Tasmania is a place with empowered individuals, supportive communities, and equitable systems.



Elinor Heard, policy officer.

Our priorities

Advocacy

We advance gender equity by creating change in our systems and society to ensure individuals are valued.

Education

We promote women's health through delivery of programs and policies that create positive outcomes.

Capacity

We strengthen our ability to respond to emerging challenges.



Zumba with Rhonda.

Our values

Equity

We are kind and fair, and make sure everyone has opportunities to speak and be heard.

Choice

We uphold informed choices, and adhere to a feminist perspective in all that we do.

Impact

We make a difference by listening, collaborating with others, using evidence, and being innovative and adventurous.



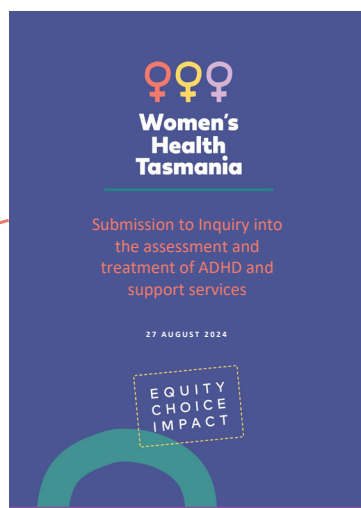
Our impact: advocacy

In 2024–2025, our efforts focused on amplifying women's voices and influencing policy to create lasting, systemic change.

We continued to advocate for equitable access to health services, reproductive choice, and gender-informed policy across all levels of government and maintained a strong, credible presence in public discussions about women's health and wellbeing.

Our team members engaged directly with policymakers, health professionals and community organisations to highlight the realities facing Tasmanian women, particularly in the areas of reproductive health, mental wellbeing and access to care in regional and rural communities.

This year, we continued our commitment to consult with and represent the needs and interests of women and gender diverse folk in Tasmanian health policy development and reform through submissions to government, reports and issues papers on a range of topics.



Submissions to Government

Submission to the Tasmanian Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into the assessment of ADHD and support services

This submission, authored by ADHD expert and advocate Heidi La Paglia, drew from lived experience through consultation with more than 100 Tasmanians. The submission provided 20 recommendations aimed at removing barriers to accessible and equitable ADHD assessment and treatment in our communities.

Submission to the Select Committee on reproductive, maternal and paediatric health services in Tasmania

Using primary research from our *Talking about having a baby in Tasmania* project as a basis, this submission identified gaps in current reproductive and maternal healthcare service provision, including low levels of specialist reproductive health knowledge in the primary care workforce and a lack of accessible perinatal mental healthcare. Recommendations drew attention to the need to provide support for workforce capacity building and for increased consistency and improved quality of antenatal and birth care across regional Tasmania. Women's Health Tasmania presented further evidence at a Parliamentary Hearing in March 2025.

Response to the Discussion Paper: Healthy Active Tasmania – 20 Year Preventive Health Strategy

Women's Health Tasmania acknowledged the Paper's strengths, including its recognition of the social determinants of health, while also highlighting its central failure to acknowledge gender as a key health determinant, and specifically, to recognise the unique healthcare needs of girls and women across the lifespan. Women's Health Tasmania continues to advocate to stakeholders at all levels for the inclusion of women's health, and a gender lens more broadly, in the final iteration of the new Strategy.

Research Reports and Issues Papers

Talking about having a baby in Tasmania

This report added to our 'talking to' qualitative research series that amplifies lived experience perspectives on key health topics for women.

The project asked women and birthing people in Tasmania who had given birth after 1 January 2021 about their experiences of pregnancy, birth and postnatal care services. The report concluded that the experiences of participants suggest not all people living in Tasmania enjoy equal access to maternal health service safety, choice and inclusion.



Understanding late abortion

This paper expanded our understanding of late abortion, its practical involvement of consumers and service providers and the heightened ethical and ideological discourses that surround it.

This research represented an initial step in our development of an intentional and informed approach to support improved access to late abortion in Tasmania. The paper's findings led to an invitation to join the Australian Reproductive Justice Network, convened by the University of Melbourne's Reproductive Justice Hallmark Research Initiative.

Case Study: Shaping Women's Services Project

The Shaping Women's Services project considered the question of how traditionally binary services support everyone who needs them and aimed to create a shared benchmark for trans and gender affirming practice in women's services.

Trans and gender diverse people were actively involved in the project which was driven by a partnership formed with Tasmanian feminist services, Hobart Women's Shelter, Engender Equality and Women's Legal Service Tasmania.

The project resulted in development of a trans and gender diverse inclusive service audit tool specifically designed to improve access to women's services.

The partner organisations used the audit tool to evaluate their services and are committed to continuing to work together to share learning and lead cultural change in the women's sector.

We are grateful for the input of the trans and gender diverse advisors who contributed their stories, knowledge and skills to this project. We also thank Working It Out for their advocacy and support. This project was funded through the Department of Premier and Cabinet's LGBTIQ+ Grants program.



Our impact: education

Health promotion and services

In 2024-25 Women's Health Tasmania ran workshops, held events and spoke to people all around the State about everything from self-care and menopause to managing mother-guilt and using contraception.



 Where's Your Line workshop.

Where's Your Line Workshops

We expanded our community capacity building and advocacy work in gender-based violence prevention this year with the introduction of 'Where's Your Line?' (WYL) bystander training. The program is delivered in partnership with local women's specialist organisations Engender Equality, Hobart Women's Shelter and Women's Legal Service Tasmania.

This interactive, evidence-based workshop builds individual and community capacity to identify abusive behaviours and intervene safely. Women's Health Tasmania played an important role in the design of the program, drawing on our research and policy expertise, as well as harnessing the knowledge of our partner organisations.



Community events

We met people where they were by attending community expos and events to share quality evidence-based information about reproductive health, mental health and healthy activities with a diverse range of people.



TUSA Student Life Expo.

Migrant Mother-Baby Playgroup

Our brilliant playgroup facilitators welcomed women from all around the world to connect with each other and their babies.

Counselling

Our dedicated counselling team members delivered more than 200 face-to-face, online and over-the-phone sessions to a wide range of women and people about topics including pregnancy options and decisions, working through life changes and preparing for having a baby.

My counsellor listened, was empathic, warm and kind and offered sound thoughts and strategies.

– Counselling client

 Speaking of Health podcast launch, October 2024.



pregnancychoicestas.org.au

Our Pregnancy Choices Website continued to grow with 206 general practices, pharmacies, pathology and ultrasound services now part of the movement to transparently communicate the sexual and reproductive health services available in Tasmania.



Speaking of Health Podcast

This podcast for health professionals launched its first series with a look at trans and gender diverse people's experiences in a health system that often uses binary gender to talk about and provide health care.

Such useful practical information for me as an allied health professional. Looking forward to the next episode.
– Podcast listener



Walking Group

Women's Health Tasmania's walking group has been active for more than five years, with many loyal and new members. The group provides a welcoming space for women with a range of backgrounds, abilities and health stories.

The walking group has provided many benefits to me. I felt instantly welcomed ... It is such a great feeling being connected to others!
– Walking group participant



Abortion Access Advocacy workshop, Devonport.

Case Study: Counselling and Support

Nadia* recently migrated to Australia to be with her partner and had been struggling with the effects of perimenopause. She attended a Women's Health Tasmania menopause workshop in her town and disclosed to the facilitator that she had problems with her mood. Nadia said she thought this was the result of a combination of menopause and disagreements with her partner. The facilitator connected her with our telehealth counselling service where Nadia explained that while her partner never hit her, he did call her racist names and require that she pay rent to him.

The counsellor worked with Nadia and together they identified that she was experiencing financial and verbal abuse. The counsellor provided information about available family violence options and advocated to housing services to improve Nadia's access.

** Not her real name*

Case study: Connecting with Peers

Lyndi* had an abortion and felt cut off from her friends and family networks. She found out about Women's Health Tasmania's counselling service through an internet search and met with a counsellor. Lyndi reported that she was feeling a big swirl of conflicting feelings including guilt and sadness. While she said she could handle the sadness, the guilt was affecting her sleep.

Lyndi eventually met with an abortion peer worker online where they shared their feelings and experiences.

Lyndi reported that talking to the peer worker helped validate her choice and said she felt more able to share some of her emotions with the people around her without necessarily having to disclose the abortion. Lyndi also reported that she was sleeping better and no longer felt afraid of the mix of emotions she was experiencing.

** Not her real name*

[Abortion peer worker's] support is life changing. I'm so grateful and hope that women in similar situations are made aware of what's available to them.

– Service user

I didn't expect having to choose would make me feel so uncomfortable and devastated ... nobody around me understood how emotional it all was. [The peer worker] understood.

– Service user

[Now I feel] Bold, Worthy, Validated: I am not the only one who has gone through this experience.

– Service user

Sector Training and Development

In addition to our community education activities, we also provided training and development opportunities for members of the health sector. This year's activities included Tasmania's first Reproductive Health Conference, webinars, partnerships and training events.

It's Time We Talked webinar (in partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS))

It's Time We Talked Director Maree Crabbe presented this session about the impacts of pornography on young people. The group explored concerns about the role porn plays in young people's sexual education, norm setting and promoting sexual violence.

Mental Health Professionals Network (MPHN)

Through MPHN, Women's Health Tasmania coordinated the Hobart Perinatal Mental Health Network and the Tasmanian Women's Mental Health

Network during 2024-25. These multidisciplinary networks created space for professionals and students to learn from their peers. Some of this year's topics were gender affirming mental health care, post abortion support, responding to birth trauma and sex and intimacy in the perinatal period.

Pregnancy Options and Reproductive Coercion training

This training prepared health sector workers including GPs, nurses, and allied health and women's sector workers to have non-directive conversations about pregnancy and to identify and respond to reproductive coercion in intimate partner settings.

Training for First Year Medical Students

These sessions discussed gender, health and why we need women's health services. This program is part of an ongoing community partnership with the University of Tasmania's School of Medicine.





 Tasmanian Reproductive Health Conference , May 2025.

Case Study: Tasmania's First Reproductive Health Conference

Women's Health Tasmanian hosted the state's inaugural Tasmanian Reproductive Health Conference in May 2025. Eighty attendees from all areas of the health sector joined lived experience representatives for this one day event with the theme of Quality and Access.

Keynote speakers included Professor Danielle Mazza AM who shared key innovations in reproductive health, and Professor Barbara Baird AM who spoke about the fight for abortion access across Australia. The conference also hosted the launch of a national call to address the reproductive health needs of Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) workers spearheaded by Bonney Corbin, Chair of the Australian Women's Health Alliance.

Feedback from participants was very positive with a universal request that the conference become a repeat event.

I walked away feeling so inspired, motivated, and enthusiastic.
– Conference participant

I am aware of more local services as well as local advocacy.
– Conference participant

I am inspired to continue to advocate for reproductive rights!
– Conference participant

Farewell and thank you to Jo Flanagan

In August 2025, Jo retired after seven years in her role as CEO with Women's Health Tasmania.

In that time, Jo carefully steered the organisation from being a Hobart-focused service to one that provided support, information and activities statewide. She positioned WHT to amplify Tasmanian women's voices to influence public policy and create better health outcomes for them.

Jo ensured we had the right connections, both in Lutruwita and interstate, strengthening our national influence and collaboration. This meant our work was better aligned with national advocacy and that we were able to share the expertise from Tasmania where we were leading some areas of reproductive health.

Jo was the brain behind the Undies Project which gives Tasmanians on low incomes free period undies. Her idea has led to thousands of Tasmanian girls, women and people with periods using premium quality period undies, improving their quality of life, saving them money and helping keep single use products out of landfill.

In 2021 Jo's determined and consistent advocacy was a major contributor to the State Government's decision to ensure Tasmanians have fee-free access to surgical terminations through Tasmanian public hospitals. Tasmania now has a robust access system and is proving to be an influential model for other jurisdictions. Jo also participated in national advocacy against the Religious Discrimination Bill, which threatened to override anti-discrimination protections and undermine fundamental human rights.

Jo led WHT through the COVID-19 pandemic by pivoting the team to online health promotion and launching engaging fortnightly newsletters, keeping us connected to the community while expanding WHT's digital capacity and accessibility, allowing more women to access services.

There are so many other achievements we could list but for lack of space we'll finish with this. Jo's creativity and leadership contributed to a positive culture at Women's Health Tasmania that was collegial, values based and accountable. She did what great leaders do: create safety and remove

barriers so that the team could put our values into practice and provide the person-centered care that improves lives.

The WHT team wish Jo all the best in retirement and think she's in with a shot for Best and Fairest for her role in local, but highly unofficial AFLW team, the Turbo Chooks.



Jo making head scarves for the Rosie Day fundraiser, 2019.



Multicultural Council of Tasmania health event,
November 2025.



Abortion Access Advocacy workshop in Cygnet.



Conference, May 2025.



Meditation class.

Highlights 2024-25

112

women dropped into our North Hobart office to get crisis support or use our shower

354

women rang the Women's Health Information Line

2,060

more pairs of undies were distributed to low income menstruators

1,851

women attended webinars, workshops or training

359

women received support from the Women's Health Fund to access abortions or contraception

285

women accessed counselling – face to face or using telehealth services

1,955

attendances at face-to-face activity classes

14,254

attendances at online classes

99%

of Tasmania's Local Government areas are represented in the people that accessed our services

21,300

occasions of service to Tasmanian women and gender diverse folk

99%

of clients reported an improvement in their capacity to manage their health and wellbeing after accessing WHT services



Zumba online class.



St Helens menopause workshop.



WHT team learning pilates with Susan.

Our team



Our dedicated team members are passionate, skilled and deeply committed to Women's Health Tasmania's feminist values. Their compassion and integrity show in all they do to help ensure women across Tasmania are listened to and supported to take charge of their own health.

OUR STAFF

- **Jo Flanagan**, CEO (retired July 2025)
- **Kelly Bruce**, CEO (from August 2025)
- **Lucinda Shannon**, Deputy CEO
- **Maree Ransley**, Health Worker / Intake Worker
- **BJ Hook**, Health Worker / Intake Worker
- **Elinor Heard**, Policy Officer
- **Margie Law**, Project Manager
- **Kelly Madden**, Psychologist
- **Heidi Morton**, Social Worker
- **Amirah Onwuegbuzie**, Playgroup Facilitator
- **Barb Smith**, Playgroup Facilitator
- **Julie Cooper**, Finance Officer
- **Zoe Elliot**, Administration Officer
- **Venus Acuzar**, Cleaner

OUR VOLUNTEERS AND HEALTH PROMOTION ACTIVITY PROVIDERS

- **Rhonda Anthony**
- **Jane Bell**
- **Valerie Cameron**
- **Jean Gilbert**
- **Maree Grimsdale**
- **Jane McArthur**
- **Kath McLean**
- **Susan Oakley**
- **Andrea Pereira**
- **Jen Van Achteren**
- **Frances Williamson**



AAA Workshop, Sheffield.



Our Board

Our volunteer Board members provide essential governance and valuable strategic guidance to our organisation.

- **Maura Boland**, Chair (joined April 2025)
Managing Director, The Insight Partnership
- **Ari Magalhaes**, Deputy Chair
Economist and Business Strategic, Managing Director, Omni Strategy
- **Casey Garrett**, Treasurer
Corporate Affairs and Logistics Manager, Tasmanian Oyster Co
- **Lauren Yates Jones**, Secretary
Brand Strategist
- **Lakshmi Sundram**, Public Officer and Interim Chair (December 2024 to April 2025)
Legal Practitioner, Office of the State Litigator
- **Rachel Andrew**, Previous Deputy Chair (resigned August 2024)
Pelvic Floor Physiotherapist
- **Naomi Bryant**, Previous Chair (resigned December 2024)
Legal Practitioner and Mediator
- **Vikki Iwanicki**, Board Member
Councillor, West Coast Council and Centre Leader, Queenstown Child and Family and Learning Centre
- **Bharti Kour**, Board Member (joined April 2025)
Industrial Officer, Australian Education Union (Tasmanian Branch)
- **Emilie Linscott**, Board Member
Manager, Office of the Deputy Secretary (Parks and Wildlife Service), Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania
- **Dr Sue Mallett**, Board Member
Clinical Director, Launceston Women's Health Clinic
- **Dr Rebekah McWhirter**, Previous Treasurer (resigned December 2024)
Associate Professor, Health Law and Ethics, School of Medicine, Deakin University
- **Dr Catherine Mould**, Board Member (joined October 2024)
Regional Medical Officer South, Family Planning Tasmania
- **Dr Meredith Nash**, Board Member
Executive Director – Communications and Engagement, ANROWS, Consultant and Executive Coach

GOOD-BYE, JEN

This year we farewelled Jen Van Achteren from her formal staff role with Women's Health Tasmania. Jen was a health worker with us for 15 years and brought an unwavering commitment to social justice to all she did. We wish Jen the best in her next chapter which, luckily for us, includes continuing to provide her yoga classes for us.



Our partners

The partnerships we have built with organisations across Tasmania strengthen all of the work we do. All of our partner organisations share our core commitment to the improved wellbeing of women. While this is not an exhaustive list, we would like to thank:

- Children by Choice
- Clarence Plains Child and Family Learning Centre
- Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
- Circular Head Council
- Connected Beginnings Lutruwita/Tasmania
- Dorset Community House
- Engender Equality
- Family Planning Tasmania
- Gidget Foundation Australia
- Health Action Team Central Highlands (HATCH)
- Health Promotion South, Tasmanian Health Service (THS)
- Hobart Women's Shelter
- Leprena Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Congress Church (UAICC)
- Mary Hutchinson Women's Prison
- Mental Health Providers Network
- Mind Muscle Movement
- Migrant Resource Centre South
- Modibodi
- Multicultural Council of Tasmania (MCOT)
- Okines Community House
- Peacock Centre / Safe Haven
- SANE Australia
- TasCAHRD
- Tasmanian University Students Association (TUSA)
- TasPorts
- TasTAFE
- The Hobart Clinic
- University of Tasmania
- Wayraparattee Child and Family Learning Centre
- Welcome Cultural Services Northern Tasmania
- West Moonah Neighbourhood House
- Women's Legal Service Tasmania
- Working It Out



Conference, May 2025.



*Webinar behind the scenes,
November 2024.*

Walking together in health and harmony

This year we were honoured to have proud Palawa woman Grace Williams create a mural on our North Hobart building. The work, titled *Walking Together in Health and Harmony*, wraps around the building, telling a story of what health means to us, connection to land, and the journeys we take together.

This mural is a tribute to the sacredness of place and the strength of community. It invites us to walk together in harmony, drawing on the lessons of our ancestors and the healing power of the land to create a healthier, stronger future for all.

— Grace Williams, artist



Mural artist Grace Williams (third from right) and her family with Deputy Lord Mayor Zelinda Sherlock (left) and Jo Flanagan (right).

Grace hopes the work helps younger people, and both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to feel welcomed and connected at Women’s Health Tasmania.

The project was funded through the City of Hobart Community Grants Program.

SUPPORTED BY



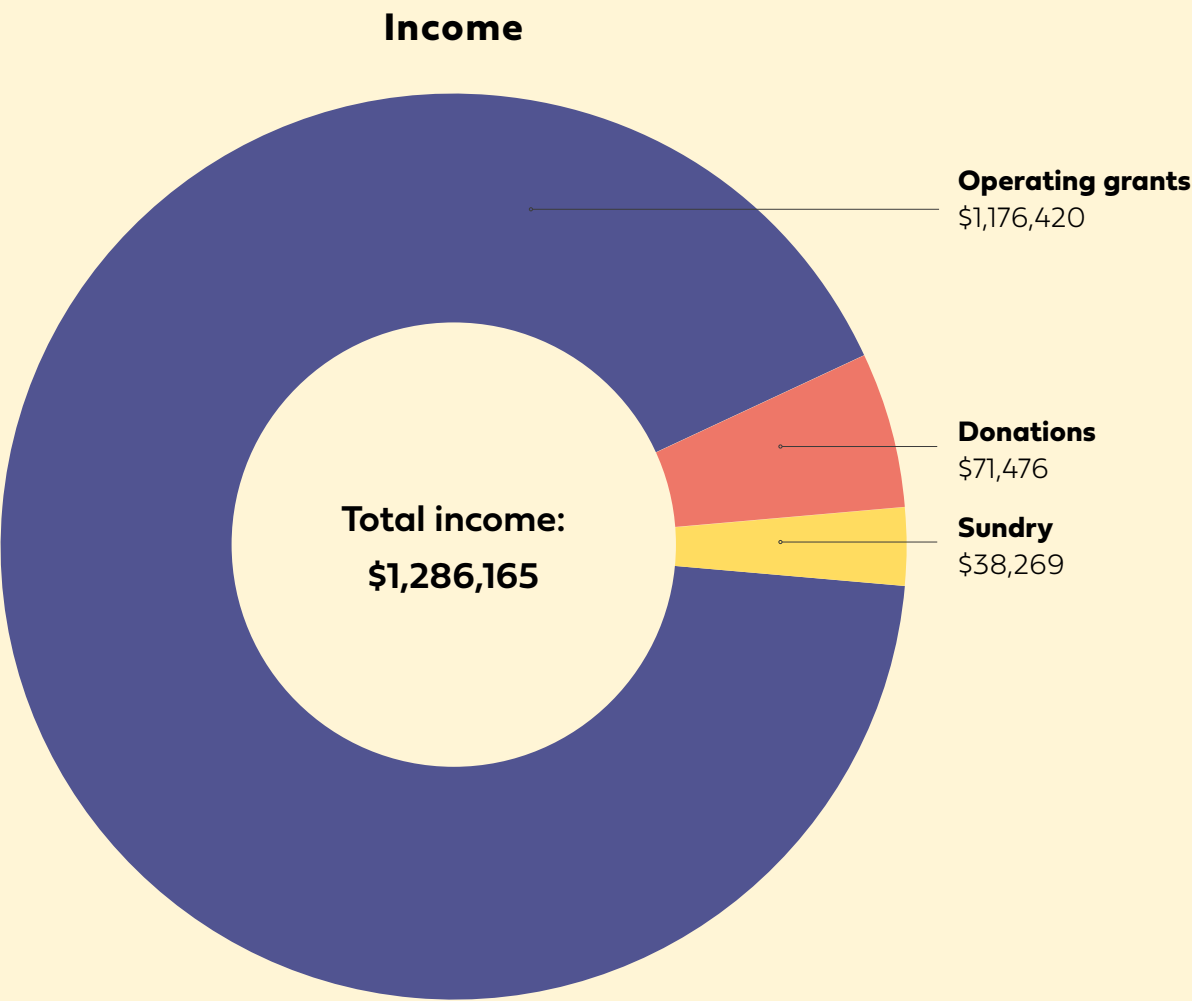
City of HOBART

Video showing the making of the mural:

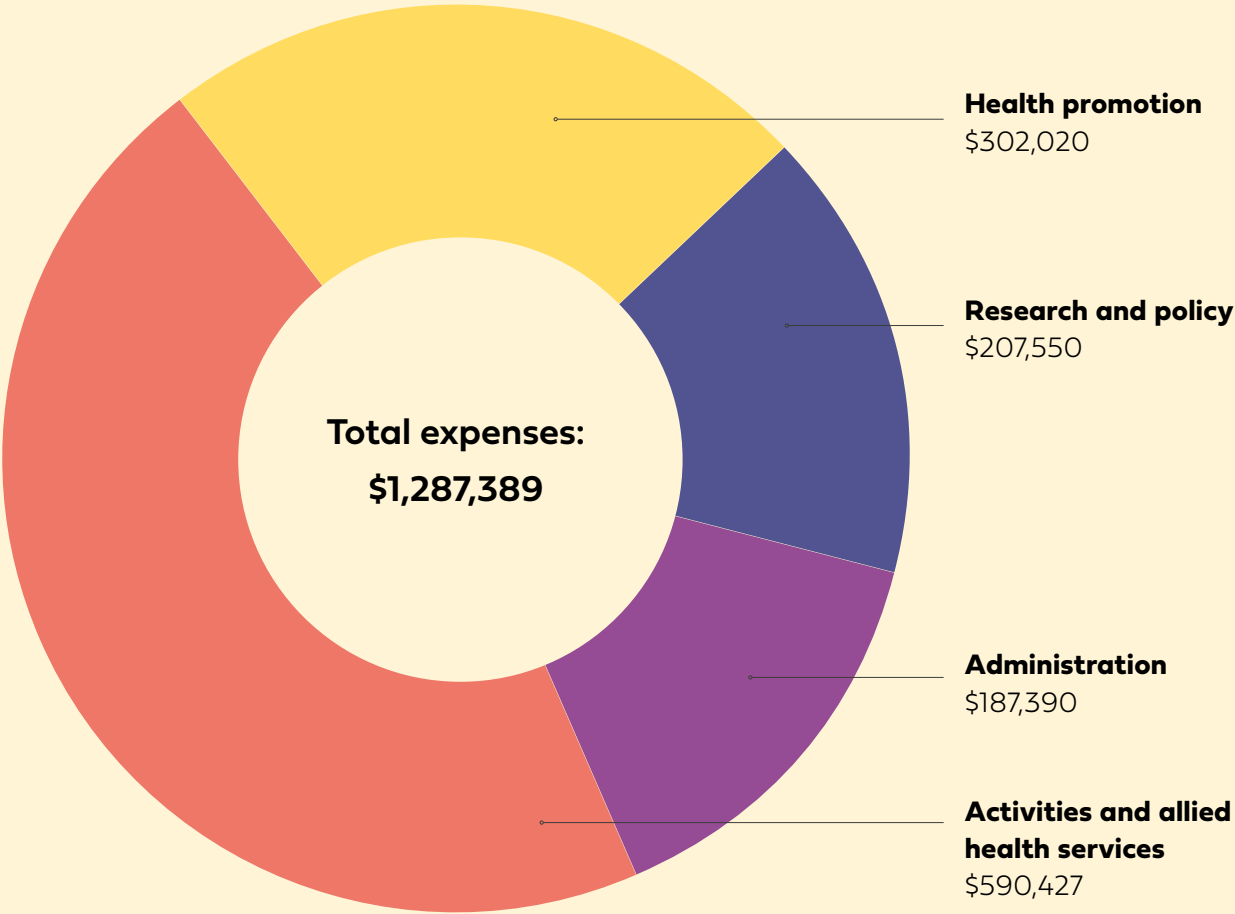


Finances

In this report you will find a summary of the Financial Statements for the year ending 30th June 2025. These reports are available in full on the Women's Health Tasmania website.



Expenses



Women's Health Tasmania

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