

**Sexual
Health
Quarters**

Annual Report 2023 - 2024



Acknowledgement of Country

Sexual Health Quarters recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' resilience, strength and deep spiritual connection to land, waters, and community as Australia's First People and the Traditional Custodians.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures. We acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our head office is located. We recognise their positive contribution to the sexual health and relationship wellbeing of community and offer our respects to Elders past, to those guiding us today and to those shaping the leaders of the future.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

SHQ celebrates diversity and understands the unique and combined experiences of individuals and communities. SHQ is inclusive and rejoices in what makes each of us who we are. Be yourself, we like it that way.

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Acknowledgments

- 100 Women
- Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Commonwealth Government Department of Home Affairs
- Commonwealth Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Lotterywest
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Pride Foundation Australia
- The Co-Group
- WA Cervical Cancer Prevention Program
- WA Department of Communities
- WA Department of Health, Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program
- WA Department of Health, Women's and Newborn Health Service
- WA Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries
- WA Primary Health Alliance

Our vision, values, and services are shaped by consumers, particularly groups of people who regularly commit their time and energy to providing feedback and guidance to SHQ to ensure that our services are relevant, safe, and accessible.

We are grateful for our consumer reference group participants and their passionate advocacy for sexual health and relationship wellbeing.

The SHQ Consumer Reference Group, Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee, LGBTIQ+ Reference Group, Parent and Carer Reference Group and Magenta Advisory Committee allow us to continually shape and improve our services and culture.

Our Vision

Freedom of choice and access to sexual health, respectful relationships, and rights for everyone.

Our Purpose

At SHQ, we believe that sexual health and respectful relationships are the cornerstone of overall wellbeing, impacting individuals, couples, families, and communities. We are driven by the belief that everyone has the right to access high-quality sexual health services, counselling, and education, free from judgment and discrimination.

We stand firm in our commitment to challenge the status quo, break down barriers, and foster inclusivity, striving each day to make a positive and enduring difference in the lives we touch, to challenge social injustice and passionately advocate for those who cannot speak freely.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide affordable and accessible sexual health and relationship clinical care and counselling, and through education, empower those we serve, regardless of age, culture, gender, sexuality, belief, or ability, with the understanding and confidence to make informed choices about their sexual health and relationships.

Our Values



**Respect
for All**



**Courageous
and Genuine**



**Friendly and
Compassionate**



**Stronger
Together**



CEO and Chairperson's REPORT

We are proud to share the progress we have made this year, in what has been another year of significant investment and change for SHQ. A year in which we have continued to innovate and grow, delivering on our mission through the expansion of our provision of services and programs, as well as continued advocacy for laws and policies to protect the rights of our priority populations and improve the accessibility of sexual and reproductive health services for all.

In November 2023, we embarked on a journey to redevelop our iconic Northbridge building in response to growing demand for our clinic, counselling, and education services. In April 2024, we unveiled our newly renovated building, including modern clinical rooms, a more private and spacious waiting area, advanced training facilities and friendlier counselling rooms. The redevelopment will allow us to continue to advance health equity for all and provide a safe space where people are able to make informed decisions about their sexual health and relationships in a safe and affirming environment.

Across the world, sexual and reproductive rights have increasingly been under attack. While we have enjoyed monumental wins in the past year, we are taking nothing for granted. Working closely with the Family Planning Alliance Australia and the International Planned Parenthood Foundation, we have continued to fight for, and safeguard, sexual health rights here and across the world.

SHQ played a key role in the consultation and planning process of the Abortion Legislation Reform Bill 2023, to fully decriminalise abortion and abolish a number of barriers to reproductive healthcare, and we were thrilled to see it pass parliament in September 2023.

A week after the historic reforms became law, SHQ hosted a riveting panel event delving into a critical moment in Western Australian history—the 1998 reforms that changed the landscape of abortion access in the State. *Abortion in Context: The Path to Decriminalisation in Western Australia* gave attendees the opportunity to hear from Cheryl Davenport AM and others at the forefront of the movement advocating for women's rights and reproductive autonomy.

Coinciding with the implementation of the new Abortion legislation in late March 2024, with the support of the Western Australian Health Department, we have expanded our abortion care services to include 1800 4 Choice, a free and confidential unplanned pregnancy and abortion care helpline and website. The service supports those experiencing an unplanned pregnancy with non-directive information and provides advice to clinicians unsure of their obligations under the newly implemented abortion legislation. This initiative is a crucial part of SHQ's long-term plan to continue to build on our provision of quality, accessible abortion care, and dismantle barriers surrounding abortion access.

On International Women's Day, we were pleased to launch our groundbreaking Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Reproductive Coercion and Abuse (RCA) training program. This new addition to our growing suite of capacity building programs was developed by SHQ's Safe to Tell Project Team in consultation with various stakeholders, clinicians, and consumers, and with Curtin University conducting research on the effectiveness of the training, ensuring the work contributes to the growing evidence base on IPV/RCA in Australia. We look forward to further implementing this training for GPs in partnership with the WA Primary Health Alliance in the coming year.

Following the departure of Dr David Owen in December 2023, and after several years of dedicated service in the Deputy Medical Director role, we were pleased to appoint Dr Samantha Johnson into the position of Medical Director. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Dr Owen for his strategic guidance and support during his time as Medical Director.

This year, we also farewelled two long-standing board members, Veronica Walshe and Meagan Roberts. We extend our heartfelt thanks to them for their invaluable contributions and years of dedicated service. At the same time, we were delighted to welcome Henrietta Podgorska to our Board in October. Henrietta brings a wealth of experience and fresh perspectives that will undoubtedly enrich our strategic discussions and decision-making processes as we embark on this next phase of our journey.

As we reflect on this year's many accomplishments, including the completion of the notable and significant renovation of our Roe Street building, we wish to extend heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Board, Executive and Management team, and all the SHQ staff members. Your resilience, adaptability, dedication, creativity, and teamwork have been at the core of everything we have achieved. The unique culture at SHQ - where we work together, support each other, and share a passion for excellence - has been instrumental in driving our achievements and truly sets us apart. This culture equally translates into the exceptional feedback we receive from our clients each and every day.

To our funders, thank you for your trust and confidence in our vision. We are deeply grateful for your partnership. Your support has empowered us to pursue ambitious goals and create lasting impact.

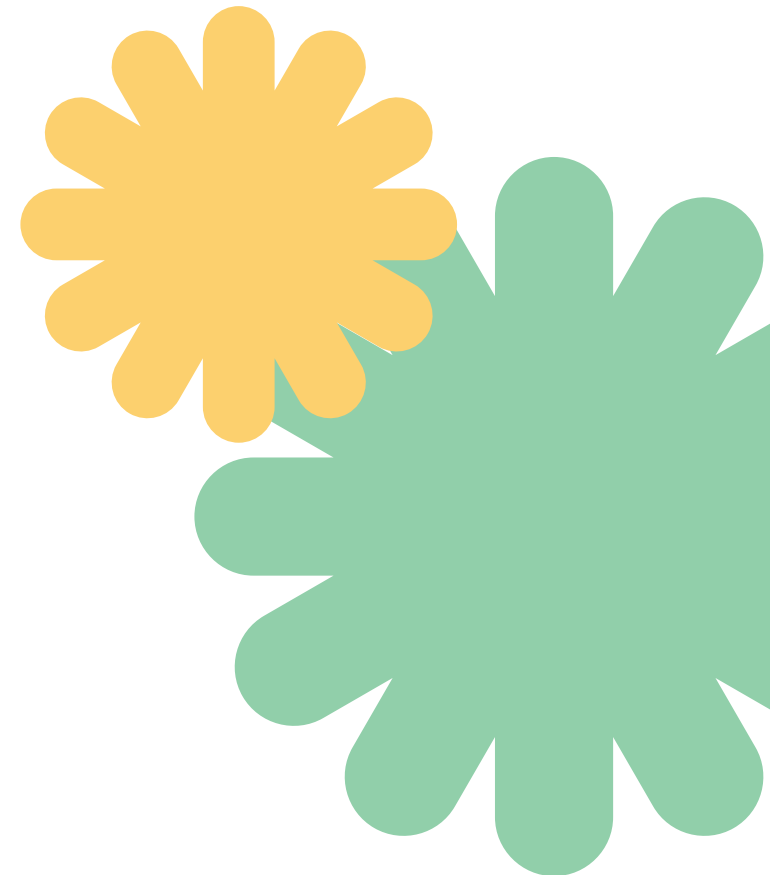
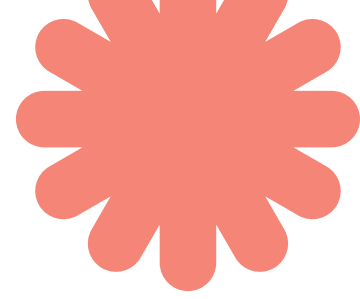
Finally, as we look ahead, we are excited to announce our new Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 and do so with optimism and a clear sense of purpose. The coming year will bring new challenges, but also new opportunities. Our focus remains on sustainable growth and innovation and delivering value to the communities we serve while staying true to our mission and values. We have set clear objectives and actionable steps to achieve our long-term vision. We are incredibly proud of everything we have accomplished this year. We are excited about what lies ahead and look forward to continuing this journey with you all in the coming year.



Rick Brooks
Chair



Debra Barnes
CEO



Meet Our Board



Rick Brooks
Chairperson



Maria Quaggan
Vice Chairperson
Member of the Finance, Audit and
Risk Committee



Natalia Gemmell
Vice Chairperson



Henrietta Podgorska
Board Member
Commenced October 2023



Meagan Roberts
Board Member
Resigned November 2023



Hayden Thomas
Board Member
Chair of the Finance, Audit and
Risk Committee



Luke Austin
Board Member



Veronica Walshe
Vice Chairperson
Resigned November 2023



Stacie Mēi Laccohee-Duffield
Board Member
Member of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

Preserving History While Embracing Innovation: SHQ's Redevelopment Journey

After celebrating our 50th anniversary, we embarked on an ambitious journey to redevelop our iconic Northbridge building.

Thanks to the flexibility of our dedicated staff and the loyalty of our clients, we were able to seamlessly move our services offsite and online over the five months our building was closed.

In April 2024, we proudly reopened our doors, unveiling a state-of-the-art facility that offers modern clinical suites, a more private and spacious waiting area, advanced training facilities and friendlier, more welcoming counselling rooms.

This redevelopment marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to delivering freedom of choice and access to sexual health, respectful relationships, and rights for everyone. We have made substantial investments in our infrastructure to ensure that everyone who needs our services can access them now and into the future.

Client, staff, and stakeholder feedback played a central role in every decision we made, with accessibility as a top priority throughout the planning and implementation of the project. This upgrade is part of SHQ's long-term commitment to removing barriers to sexual health and relationship wellbeing for those who need it most.

As demand for our services continues to grow each year, we are ready to meet the evolving needs of the community with this enhanced facility.

While the iconic SHQ building, purpose-built in 1988, remains a timeless fixture in the heart of Northbridge, the redevelopment ensures it is now equipped for the future.

The redevelopment project was generously supported by Lotterywest.





Empowering Choice Western Australia's State-Wide First Abortion Care and Information Helpline

The launch of the 1800 4 Choice helpline on 27 March 2024 coincided with the implementation of the Abortion Legislation Reform Act 2023, marking a significant milestone in expanding access to reproductive health services in Western Australia. This free, confidential helpline was established to ensure timely, non-judgmental, and pro-choice support for individuals facing unintended pregnancy and seeking abortion care.

As a key element supporting the reforms introduced by the new legislation, 1800 4 Choice has played a crucial role in improving access to care and streamlining service coordination across the state. The helpline not only offers direct support to those seeking abortion services but also serves as a vital link between clients and healthcare providers adapting to the updated legal landscape.

The helpline, staffed by trained registered nurses, operates Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm and provides vital support to both the public and healthcare professionals across the state.

Since its inception, 1800 4 Choice has steadily gained momentum, addressing the growing demand for clear, compassionate, and accessible reproductive health services.

In addition to the helpline, a dedicated website with an interactive map was developed in collaboration with Spatial Vision, providing users with an intuitive tool to find local abortion services across public and private sectors. The map includes clinicians, pharmacists, counsellors, pathology, and imaging services, with over 150 professionals registered (most opting to be publicly listed). The platform significantly streamlines the process for individuals in navigating the care they need.

To ensure that healthcare professionals are well-prepared to offer high-quality, informed care under the updated legislation, SHQ launched a comprehensive series of professional development sessions accredited by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

The 1800 4 Choice service's reach has been amplified through a multi-channel marketing campaign developed with Likeable Creative. The campaign uses a mix of media platforms, including audio, social media, and outdoor advertising. These efforts continue to raise awareness, ensuring that individuals who need abortion services know where to find them. As the service evolves, a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework is being implemented to assess the impact of 1800 4 Choice on service accessibility and community health outcomes.

SHQ is a pro-choice organisation committed to enhancing the reproductive health needs of the Western Australian community to ensure access to appropriate, inclusive and non-judgemental care when needed.

Prevention and Early Intervention in Primary Care: Responding to Disclosures of Intimate Partner Violence and Reproductive Coercion and Abuse

In March 2024, SHQ concluded a three-year project to educate and activate Australia's healthcare workforce in the fight against violence and abuse.

The Safe to Tell – Primary Care Project successfully developed, reviewed, and piloted a comprehensive six-module eLearning package designed to build foundational knowledge on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Reproductive Coercion and Abuse (RCA).

Healthcare professionals from 30 healthcare clinics across the Perth metropolitan area took part in this training, which covered essential topics, including an overview of IPV and RCA, their significance in the health sector, how to recognise and respond to cases, where to refer to specialist services, and the importance of self-care when working with clients impacted by violence.

To further enhance practical application, additional face-to-face workshops were offered to provide healthcare professionals with the opportunity to put their new knowledge and skills into practice through role-playing and group discussions under the supervision of skilled professionals.

The project involved several quantitative research and evaluation methods used to measure the success of the project.

By the end of the project healthcare professionals would have:

- improved ability to recognise patients at risk.
- developed an appropriate response to disclosure of exposure to violence; and
- learnt how and where to refer patients in their local area.

Main findings included:

- 100% of GPs and 98% of clinicians reported increased knowledge and skills in recognising signs of IPV/RCA
- 100% of GPs and 96% of clinicians reported increased knowledge and capacity in responding to disclosures of IPV/RCA.
- 100% of GPs and 96% of clinicians reported increased knowledge and capacity in referring patients impacted by IPV/RCA

The pilot project's success led to the nationwide release of the eLearning package for healthcare professionals on 8 March 2024. Additionally, an extensive suite of tools and resources was developed to support healthcare professionals in recognising, responding to, and referring cases of IPV and RCA, which are now accessible for healthcare professionals alongside the eLearning modules.

SHQ extends its gratitude to the Department of Local Government, Sport, and Cultural Industries for funding this critical project. We also express sincere appreciation to all project partners, including Curtin University, Ishar Multicultural Services, South Coastal Health and Community Services and Luma, along with the advisory groups, participants and stakeholders who generously shared their time, knowledge, and resources for this project. This project could not have succeeded without their cooperation and involvement.



Our Year in Review

Clinical Services

Our Clinical Services Team provides specialised sexual and reproductive clinical and counselling services to the Western Australian community. This year, our clinical team played an important part in the WA response to the Mpox outbreak with the support of the vaccine rollout as well as support the ongoing response to the national syphilis epidemic. Through upgrades in our booking systems and our new clinical facilities, we have improved accessibility to our services via our same-day clinic and increased our STI screening to all clients attending the clinic. Our clinical services continue to expand and innovate to meet the needs of the communities we serve and this year after a successful pilot, we were delighted to officially launch our Gender Affirming Service. Provided by experienced professionals with expertise in transgender and non-binary healthcare, the service offers a range of affordable services, including hormone therapy and counselling.

Magenta Sex Worker Outreach Project

Magenta continues to provide a breadth of education and support to WA Sex Workers across the State, in addition to essential outreach supports, and with safe referral pathways for sex workers, the service is inclusive of three sexual health clinics per week.

Clinical Education

Developing and improving the skills of primary care workers is an essential part of our broader aim to improve sexual and reproductive health care. Our Clinical Education Team delivers a wide range of sexual and reproductive health education for doctors, nurses, and other health workers. Our core courses include the Certificate in Reproductive and Sexual Health (for doctors and nurses/midwives), Cervical Screening, IUD Insertion Training, Contraceptive Implant Training, and IPV/RCA education and training. The team continue to innovate by delivering training via live webinars in addition to being delivered face-to-face to improve access and promote upskilling of regional clinicians. This year the team partnered with the Human Rights Law Centre to deliver a live webinar for clinicians on Western Australia's updated abortion laws, and introduced a new workshop, Essentials of Medical Abortion in WA, to improve capacity and encourage more doctors to offer medical abortion in their practice. These courses continue to be highly sought after, with most fully booked throughout the year.

Finding My Voice Project

A project working directly with young women 15-19 years old, the Project empowered young women to not only recognise respectful and disrespectful relationships but also educate and support them to identify and assert their boundaries, as well as help them find their voice in effectively communicating sexual consent.

BASE Project

The Building and Supporting Educational Inclusivity 'BASE' Project, designed to build the capacity of Western Australian secondary schools to provide safe and inclusive spaces for LGBTIQ+ students, staff, and families, was delivered this year to three schools across the state. The BASE Project filled a crucial gap in the practical supports that currently exist in this space.

Mooditj Leader Training

This year, our Aboriginal Educators delivered nine Mooditj Leader Training programs in WA and nationally in the Northern Territory and South Australia. This three-part training is a resilience, relationship and sexual health education program designed for Aboriginal community members or people working with young Aboriginal people.

LGBTIQ+ Diversity and Inclusion Training

SHQ provides multiple options for LGBTIQ+ diversity training. This year, our LGBTIQ+ Diversity and Inclusion training was delivered to over 750 participants via face-to-face and online workshops.



Pop-Up STI Testing

This year, SHQ launched a pilot program offering STI testing at events across the Perth metropolitan area, reinforcing its commitment to expanding access to sexual health services and reducing the stigma surrounding STI testing. The initiative was first rolled out at SEXPO Perth in April, where free STI testing was made available to attendees, resulting in over 40 tests being conducted. Notably, half of those tested were ineligible for Medicare, and two returned a positive result. SHQ will continue to roll out pop-up STI testing at selected events.

Modified Service Delivery Pilot Project

In partnership with the Pat Giles Centre for Non-Violence, the Disability Counselling Team worked to develop, implement, and deliver workshop materials and training to help bridge the gap between Family and Domestic Violence and disability services.

My Voice Matters Project

Delivered by the SHQ Disability Counselling and education teams, My Voice Matters is a unique program aimed at building the capacity of older people living with disability living in aged care and accommodation facilities. This year, the program was delivered across 12 full-day education sessions in partnership with local disability and aged care providers.

Communications and Resources

Sexual and reproductive health information is constantly changing. With our key platforms, our SHQ newsletter continues to be an important channel for information sharing, including health information, resources and workforce development opportunities. In addition, our SHARE Forum continues to be well attended and received by the health and community workforce.

Over the past year, we have reviewed many of our resources whilst developing a number of new ones, including the “friendly drawings” used to support young people in understanding their bodies.

National Condom Day 2024

For Condom Day, 14 February 2024, the resources focused on how the question ‘Do you have a condom?’ would look in different languages. To collect the languages, we invited SHQ staff and young people to provide their own translations. A total of 21 translations were provided, and 13 were selected for the poster. A total of 2550 condoms, 208 posters, and 1040 stickers were sent out to or collected by 52 services and organisations. These posters received a strong positive response when displayed at events targeting culturally and linguistically diverse people who recognised their language on the poster.

Our Impact 2024



Clinical Services



5,934

Total number of clients



17,789

STI/BBV tests undertaken



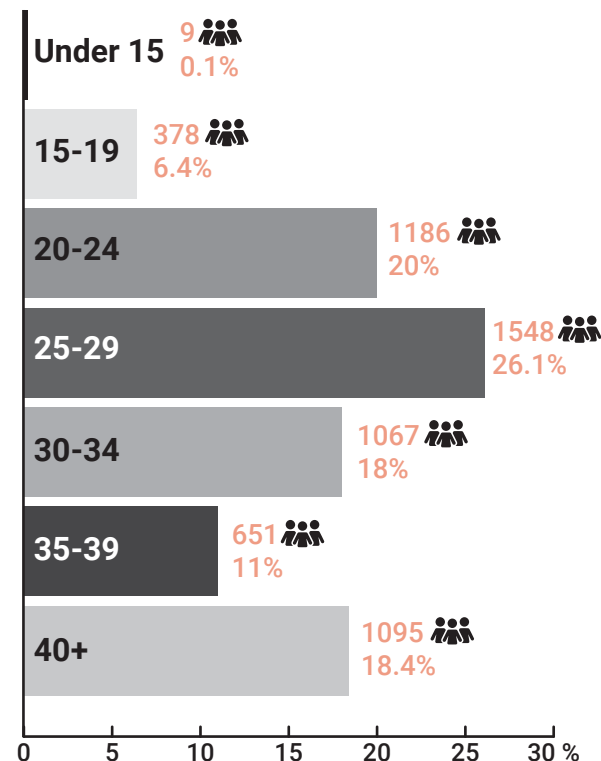
10,487

Total number of appointments



Clinical Services

Age Breakdown



Magenta



521

Total number of appointments



267

Total number of clients



Clinical Education



154

Total doctors attended

131

Theory

2

IPV online module

21

CST Self collection online module



191

Total nurses attended

168

Theory

8

IPV online module

15

CST Self collection online module



Sex Worker Information and Education

10,076

Total number of interactions



Sexual Health Helpline



7,205

Total number of contacts



Training

271
Registrar clinics
315
Teaching clinics



Counselling

351 **813**
Total number of clients
Total number of appointments



Disability Counselling

292 **2,978**
Total number of clients
Total number of appointments

Education and Events

4,820 **1,332**
Total participants
Total professionals trained

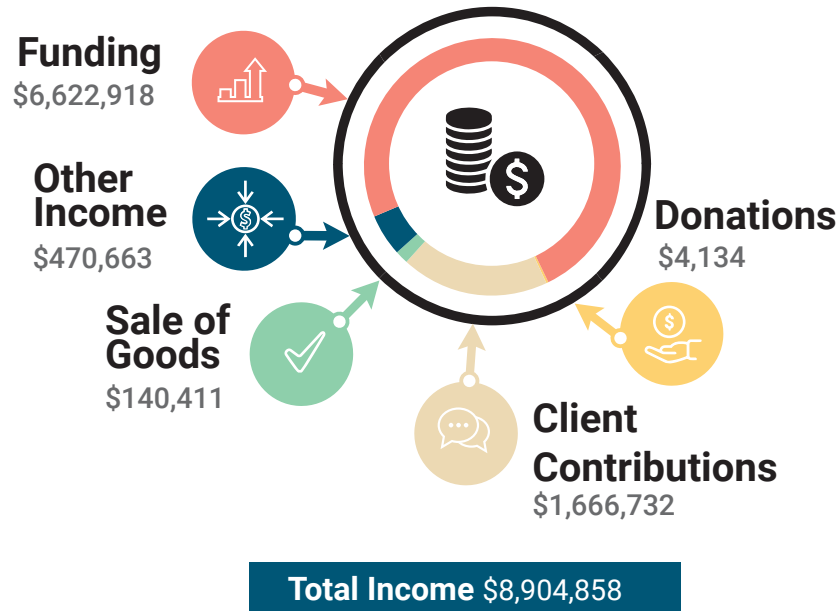
Expos/Events

17,648 Total number of contacts

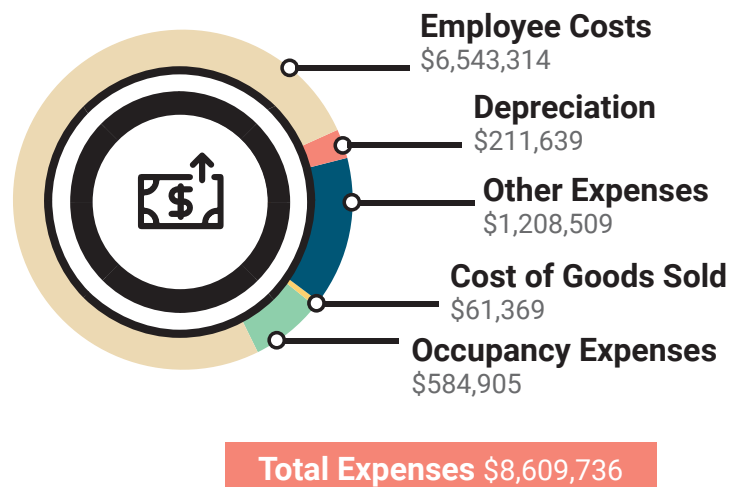


Financials

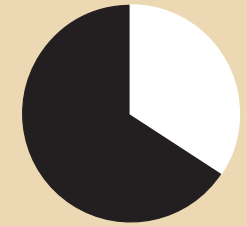
Income



Expenses



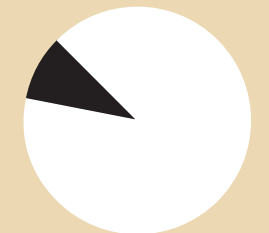
Assets



- Current Assets \$3,056,675
- Non-Current Assets \$6,318,722
- Total Assets \$9,375,397**



Liabilities



- Current Liabilities \$2,771,249
- Non-Current Liabilities \$281,782
- Total Liabilities \$3,053,031**

Equity \$6,322,366

Our People



Gwen Leavesley Award Karen Molhuysen

Karen Molhuysen is SHQ's Coordinator of Community Education and Development. Karen's remarkable contributions to sexual and reproductive health have transformed countless lives throughout her career. Whether guiding young people in sessions or mentoring professionals, she creates an inclusive, respectful space for all. Her influence in the community has been profound, enhancing knowledge, changing perceptions, and improving access to sexual health education and services for some of WA's most vulnerable populations. Karen's dedication is evident in the numerous impactful projects she has initiated and nurtured at SHQ, including the HERS Program, prison programs, and diversity training, among others. A tireless advocate for young people, women, and human rights, demonstrates why she is so deserving of this award.



At SHQ, our culture is deeply rooted in celebrating diversity, promoting inclusivity, and creating a respectful, safe, welcoming environment. This core philosophy shapes our approach to recruitment and people management. Even through another challenging year, the health and well-being of our staff remained a top priority. Our people strategy continues to focus on understanding the evolving needs of our current and future workforce, with a steadfast commitment to offering the professional development and support they need to achieve our strategic goals, now and into the future.

Staff Service Awards



20 Years' Service
Kylie Sutton



15 Years' Service
Karen Bonte
Samara Pierce



10 Years' Service
Gwenda Zanella



5 Years' Service
Adam Pettie
Catherine Brooker
Shauna Beech
Suzanne Higgins

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