



**Green Cross Project Inc**

# Annual Report

For the year ending 30 June 2023

Green Cross Project Inc is an incorporated body established by members of the Victorian Commandery of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem to oversee some of its charitable works in regions of the State of Victoria.



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Since 2016 GCPI has maintained authorisation to use the registered tick from the ACNC.

## Welcome to Green Cross Project Inc (GCPI)

GCPI has had a very productive and pleasing year. It was a year of normalisation, where the strong focus for our buses was the deployment of Covid vaccinations, which has given way to reengaging with more traditional outreach and health services and activities for the disadvantaged. That said, we still live with the impacts of Covid. The health organisations we partner with are now seeking to re-align their services to patient needs compared with providing services against a funding source. This development places our buses in a unique and cogent position.

Following the signing of the MoU with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the Committee of Management has focused much of its efforts on generating sufficient funds to purchase and refurbish a new vehicle (an LDV V80 vehicle). I was deeply humbled and delighted to see significant financial support from Patron Lady Potter AC CRM and the Vera Moore Foundation (Mr Roger Blythman RDF) (and the Alfred Felton Bequest – May 2022) to provide sufficient funds to purchase a new vehicle and refurbish it into a mobile clinic.

Once launched, GCPI will service much of Victoria. GCPI looks forward to working with VACCHO as it presents an excellent opportunity to engage in proactive healthcare. By providing early cancer screening and eye diagnostic services, we hope to improve the quality of life for those in rural and regional Victoria and help reduce the costs (and pressure on Victoria's health system).

GCPI receives no government funding and relies on its membership (and the odd Foundation donation). The focus for GCPI has been to ensure a more sustainable income stream. The work done by the Philanthropic sub-committee (under our David Richards' leadership) has been valuable in helping to generate income to cover critical operating costs. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the significant support provided by Mr Warrington Cameron and Mrs Trish Cameron. Their generosity has helped ensure a solid, stable income for GCPI, covering much of our annual operational expenses. Given the demand for more vehicles, the target will be \$100,000 this year.

Seeing Dr Ian Dickson AM take advantage of the slides developed on GCPI and present them to various groups was gratifying. Not only has this helped promote GCPI, but it has also generated many thousands of dollars for GCPI.

I am pleased that we can now meet in person and acknowledge the support of the Right Reverend the Honourable Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE KStJ, who kindly offers the use of his boardroom for our Committee of Management meetings.

We also acknowledge the ongoing support of the Grand Prior of Australia (Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem), the Hon Gavin Fielding AM GCLJ CMLJ. I would like to extend my personal thanks to all the Green Cross Committee of Management members and the general membership of GCPI, who were a tremendous help during the year.

I commend the 2022-23 GCPI Annual Report for your perusal and acceptance.



Anthony Kennedy OAM KHS KLJ OMLJ  
Chairman, Green Cross Project Inc

## GCPI Governance

GCPI is honoured to have as our patron:



**Lady Potter AC CMRI, Grand Prior Emeritus  
of the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem**

The governance of Green Cross Project Inc. resides in a Committee of Management duly elected at the Annual General Meeting of Green Cross Project Inc. It consists of the following members:



Mr Anthony Kennedy OAM KHS KLJ OMLJ  
Chairman



Mr Chris Prior OJ  
Vice Chairman



Mr David Richards CU  
Hon Treasurer



Mr Max Carr KLJ CMLJ  
Committee Member



Mrs Cynthia Hines CU  
Committee Member



Mr Peter Newman OJ  
Secretary



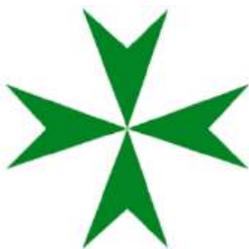
Mrs Heather Sanderson CU  
Committee Member



Dr Ann Tomlison CU  
Committee Member



Mr John Herbig KLJ GOMLJ  
Committee Member



Mr Cesar Lopez OJ  
Committee Member



With services returning to normal, cohealth started to return to its range of health services, including community and allied health services in Melbourne’s ever-increasing western suburbs. However, GCPI bus was used for a mix of vaccinations and more traditional outreach activities.

The cohealth Green Cross Outreach Bus Steering Committee, led by Ms Leanna Helquist is comprised of the following members:

 <p><b>Mr James Duffy</b> Homelessness Leader</p>	 <p><b>Mr Ben Quinn</b> Homelessness Program Facilitator</p>
 <p><b>Ms Vaan Phongsavan</b> Nurse, Community Health</p>	 <p><b>Mr Beau Brach</b> Homeless Support Worker</p>
 <p><b>Ms Anthea Taalman</b> Homeless Support Worker</p>	

### **cohealth’s Green Cross Outreach Bus achievements**

The focus for cohealth’s staff using GCOB-2 for 2022-23 has fallen into two halves. During the latter half of 2022, the focus was on supporting access to vaccinations for people experiencing homelessness. In the colder months, influenza vaccinations were also included in the program.

Specifically, the bus was extensively used (3-5 days a week) for health promotion, connecting people to GP support and distributing health packs for those significantly adversely impacted by the pandemic. In addition to these activities, the bus played an essential role in administering monkey pox vaccines.

In addition, the bus has been used to visit critical locations across cohealth's catchment to deliver various health services. Examples include cohealth's nursing staff visiting aged care

facilities such as Older Person's Community Housing in Altona. The nursing services include health assessments, personal alarm assessments, appropriate referrals, connecting and communicating with other health and aged care providers, information about aged care and carer support.

## Case study: Thorne Harbour Health's Use of GCOB-02



In addition to these activities, the bus has been used for specific one-off events, such as Thorne Harbour's use of the bus at the ChillOut Festival, providing free screening tests. ChillOut is an event that brings together the rural LGBTIQ community, artists and the broader community for 25 years.

The festival is held in regional Victoria – Daylesford and is the largest festival in the Hepburn Shire. The Green Cross Outreach Bus has proved very suitable for such events. Thorne Harbour acknowledged that the bus has a favourable layout, mainly for testing and having conversations with clients.

The second half of the financial year saw a reduced vaccination program and a greater focus on cohealth's outreach team using the bus for its activities in Melbourne CBD. The City Street Health team provides immediate support in the CBD.

cohealth's City Street Health team comprises community nurses, peer workers with lived experience of homelessness and substance use, case managers, alcohol and other drug harm reduction workers, dual diagnosis clinicians, recreation and inclusion workers, addiction medicine specialist registrar, and an Aboriginal health worker).



*Image Above: cohealth deploying covid vaccinations*

As the Covid pandemic comes to a close, cohealth is now investing a considerable amount of time planning its activities for the next 12-18 months. Of particular focus for cohealth and the use of the bus will be:

- Continue using the bus as a mobile health clinic for aged-care facilities (such as Altona).
- Providing nursing support services in caravan parks such as the Honey Hush Caravan Park (in Laverton North).
- Focusing on the OD and outreach team in the CBD to create a mobile drop-in space to improve engagement with the homeless.
- Ramping up the Street Doctor Program.

### Street Doctor Program

It was deeply encouraging to learn that cohealth re-established the Street Doctor program. In previous years, GCPI provided \$25,000 in seed funding to support a mobile GP to attend to the health needs of homeless people within the cohealth catchment, mainly within the city. In 2019 an additional \$10,000 was provided.

The impacts of Covid, saw a significant change in health service needs. Cohealth has organised a GP connected with the Royal Melbourne Hospital and seeks to deploy the service 2-3 days a week.

This GP uses the small Green Cross bus. This service focuses on CBD and engages people requiring addiction, drug, and alcohol services. In addition to the GP, the bus is supported by allied staff (such as senior nursing and associated health staff). In certain instances, clients can access a GP via telehealth services.



*Above: cohealth's previous Street Doctor in action*

### Monash Health

Monash Health is Victoria's largest public health service. It provides safe, high-quality care to one-quarter of Melbourne's population, across the entire lifespan, from pre-birth to end-of-life. In 2020, with the acquisition of its third vehicle, GCPI commenced another exciting chapter in its evolution, entering into a new partnership with Monash Health to provide a range of healthcare services in Melbourne's southeast.



Monash Health's Green Cross Outreach Bus Steering Committee representatives are led by Ms Julia White, Director of Nursing.



Ms Julia Oxley  
Community General Manager



Ms Sara Edwards  
Manager - Youth and Family Team

Ms Julia White  
Director of Nursing

### Monash Health Green Bus achievements

Monash Health advised that over the past few months, there has been significant planning regarding changes to their service delivery model. As expected, service health delivery is changing in a post-covid environment.

Monash Health is seeking to move away from a funding-based delivery model with a significant change to a 'patient care journey' model instead. The critical change is to look at the homeless people's needs and build services around that. There will also be a stronger focus on linking up services within Monash Health and Not-for-profits in the Monash Health catchment.

There is a new focus on supporting residential accommodation, particularly those in short-term accommodation, such as supported residential service accommodation (SRS) - for vulnerable people, crisis accommodation, refugees and caravan parks, etc

Under this new model, there will be a range of health services provided:

- Nursing-supported services
- Linkages back to GP clinics
- Physio and allied health services
- Specialised clinic services for people with diabetes and ongoing heart issues
- Outreach programs and social work
- Aboriginal health team
- Dental service.

Monash Health has also outlined that their health services would work more closely with other not-for-profit organisations within the catchment, including South East Community Links (SECL). GCPI is familiar with SECL, given that it deploys the Christmas parcels and socks on behalf of Monash Health, which has been provided by GCPI over the past couple of years.



SECL's Chief Executive Officer, Mr Peter McNamara said that "pairs of socks are the 3<sup>rd</sup> most requested item of clothing from the homeless and disadvantaged, yet SECL does not often receive many donated pairs of socks". Mr McNamara thanked GCPI and Underworks for their support, particularly given that the high cost of living was starting to significantly impact families in the region.

*Image above: Staff at SECL with the socks donated by Underworks and GCPI*

## VACCHO

Over the past 12 months, GCPI has sought to raise funds to purchase its next vehicle to support its next project. During this time, GCPI signed a MoU with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACHHO) regarding extending their services in rural and regional Victoria. This initiative stemmed from GCPI's VACCHO support during the Covid vaccine(s) rollout in 2021.

Expanding services into rural and regional Victoria represents an opportunity for VACCHO to target their efforts into eye diagnostic services and early cancer detection activities. In addition,

this project helps to make GCPI a genuine Victorian project as it extends its activities beyond metropolitan Melbourne.

In March 2023, the Vice President of GCPI secured an LDV V80 vehicle as GCOB 4. The vehicle is Mader International, being refurbished into a mobile clinic, which will be fit for purpose for VACCHO's needs.

This exciting project extends the reach of GCPI. It has the potential to showcase how proactive health measures can improve health outcomes for those living in rural and regional Victoria and reduce costs on the health system.



*The image above: with GCPI's Treasurer, Mr David Richards, and Vice President Mr Chris Prior and Mr Phil Mance - Director of Allan Mance Motors.*

## **Other Developments**



*Image Above: GCOB-3*

Towards the end of the 2022-23 financial year, GCPI decided to sell its large bus. This reflected that the demand for the vehicle was low (and not used much at all during Covid) and that the small vehicles, which don't require a specific bus licence, are more suitable for the line of what health now undertakes.

Given the significant impact Covid has had on global supply chains, specifically for motor vehicles, the GCPI Committee of Management was deeply encouraged to see the bus not only sold to a worthy cause but also to achieve a very reasonable price. The Committee of Management appreciated the advice that Jamison Alliott provided.

During 2022-23, the GCPI Committee of Management needed several amendments to its Constitution to reflect changes to Australian Tax law. Working with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC), an amendment was made to GCPI's objects. Our objects are now:

The principal objectives of Green Cross Project Inc are:

- 1) To develop and maintain relevant and up-to-date education programs on health and healthy lifestyles for people who are homeless or disadvantaged;
- 2) Provide appropriate information and counselling concerning disease recognition, prevention, and treatment of people at risk;

The ancillary objectives of Green Cross Project Inc are:

- 3) Establish and maintain facilities and services for the early diagnosis and referral for treatment of people at risk;
- 4) Cooperate with cohealth and Monash Health to achieve these goals;
- 5) Evaluate the service regularly in order to revise such services according to need;
- 6) Initiate and participate in research projects relevant to issues concerned with health and healthy lifestyle management for people at risk; and
- 7) Carry out the mission according to the philosophy of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, mindful of the multicultural society in which we live.

These amendments were submitted to the ACNC, and they were 'pleased to [advise] that no further action was required'. The Committee of Management will continue to monitor ACNC's advice/communications to ensure we continue to comply with its obligations and maintain its registration with the ACNC.

### ***Charitable Trust support***

The GCPI Committee of Management would again like to express its most profound gratitude for the \$10,000 donation from the Vera Moore Foundation. These funds were most welcome and came at an essential time for GCPI, given its fundraising efforts to purchase and refurbish a new vehicle.



*Above: introduction slide on GCPI*

Over the past six months, the Committee of Management has developed a series of presentations for members to use for various talks.

It was particularly encouraging to see that some organisations and individuals have responded positively to the GCPI story and made generous donations. Dr Ian Dickson AM has used these slides well and secured several generous donations for GCPI.

### ***Supportive Projects***

#### **Christmas parcels**

GCPI has provided Christmas parcels (various confectionery items) to the homeless in Melbourne's western and southeastern suburbs for many years. Generally, GCPI is now making up to 230 Christmas parcels for distribution to patients targeted by GCPI's buses. With increasing levels of unemployment and underemployment in these catchments, the Committee of



Management decided this year (and more than ever) that we needed to ensure that the marginalised members of our community were not forgotten. Christmas can be a tough time of the year for some people.

For some, the humble GCPI parcel may be the only gift they receive at Christmas time. So, while a confectionery gift may be small, it is undoubtedly an important gesture.

*Image above: GCPI volunteers wrapping Christmas parcels for Monash Health and cohealth clients.*

## Key Supporters

For the past few years, GCPI has organised a sock appeal. It was pleasing once again to receive advice from Australian clothing company Underworks that it would seek to help GCPI.



Underworks' Head of Sustainability, Ms Annelou Ringers said that "at Underworks, we've partnered with charities such as Food Bank, The Salvation Army, and now Green Cross Project Inc to provide brand new socks to the homeless, displaced and most in need in our community."

Ms Ringers also said "that socks are one of the least donated, but highest demand items amongst the homeless community in Australia". GCPI has been happy to provide these socks to its health service partners.



GCPI is fortunate to have many generous members, including Mr Bryan Stertern-Gill of De Bretts Antique Market. Mr Stertern-Gill kindly donated a wide range of items. These have been sold via online platforms; this has proven to be a successful initiative, which will be extended into 2022-23. We reiterate our appreciation for the support from De Bretts Antique Market.

We continue to receive the support of VicRoads which waives the annual registration fees for the buses. We gratefully acknowledge their valuable assistance. As in previous years, we only pay the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) insurance for the outreach vehicles.



## Financial Statements for 2022-23

**Jamison Allcott**

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS  
BUSINESS ADVISORS

As the Financial Statements for the year show, Green Cross Project Inc. is in an excellent financial position. A copy of the Financial Report for the year ending 30 June 2023 is appended to and forms part of this Annual Report.

In accordance with the *Incorporated Association Reform Act 2012*, the Victorian Government no longer requires incorporated associations with a turnover of less than \$250,000 to provide audited financials. Instead, they can provide reviewed financials, i.e. a member of an appropriate professional body (ICAA, CPA, NIA) can sign off on the financials. Mr Joe Canny FCA reviewed GCPI's 2019-20 accounts.



## **Green Cross Project Inc.**

ABN: 28 596 233 099

### **Green Cross Project Inc**

Green Cross Project Inc is a public benefit charity incorporated body established by members of the Victorian Commandery of the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem to oversee some of its charitable works in regions of the State of Victoria. The management resides in a Committee of Management duly elected at the Annual General Meeting of Green Cross Project Inc.

### **Mission Statement**

Green Cross Project Inc works to provide a health management service to meet the needs of homeless, disadvantaged, and marginalised young and adult members in the community about health maintenance, disease prevention, primary care and support of the highest standards, which, with Christian values of compassion, justice, honesty, equality and benevolence, recognises the needs and rights of the individual, regardless of gender, race, creed, and social standing. It provides 'Green Cross Outreach Buses' on a regional basis to assist health workers and community members in gaining and providing information about issues relating to people at risk.

### **Goals**

The goals of the project are:

- To develop and maintain relevant and up-to-date education programs on health and healthy lifestyle;
- To provide appropriate information and counselling concerning disease recognition, prevention, and management;
- To establish and maintain facilities and services for the early diagnosis and referral for treatment of people at risk;
- To cooperate with services such as cohealth, Monash Health and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Control Health Organisation to achieve these goals;
- To evaluate the service regularly in order to revise such services according to need
- To initiate and participate in research projects relevant to issues concerned with health and healthy lifestyle management for people at risk; and
- To carry out the mission according to the philosophy of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus of Jerusalem and the Christian values contained therein, mindful of the multicultural society in which we live.

The prime services offered by the Outreach Bus team include:

- Health education;
- Disease prevention;
- Primary consultation;
- Dental care;
- Counselling;
- Referrals; and
- General information and assistance.



## **Green Cross Outreach Buses – A Short History**

In the mid-1990s, the Military and Hospitaller Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem, at the request of the then Minister for Youth Affairs, established a pilot program in Dandenong because of the exceptionally high percentage of youth unemployment in that area. A bus, originally known as “Ken’s Bus”, had been donated by Grenda’s (now Ventura) for outreach purposes. Green Cross Project Inc. was granted sole access to provide the initial Green Cross Mobile Health Service. This bus has since been replaced by another 64-seater bus, which has been converted into a mobile consulting suite in the rear compartment with the forward compartment containing a meeting area, coffee-making facilities, information stands and television and DVD equipment. The bus is also designed to include a BBQ and a retractable canopy for use when the bus is stationary.

Until the end of 2012, the Outreach Bus was used in partnership with Southern Health Outreach Programs, including Southern Health Greater Dandenong Community Health Service Youth Program, Southern Health Mental Health Outreach Team, Southern Health Primary Care Community Outreach Team (incl. Drug and Alcohol Service), Royal District Nursing Service (Homeless Persons Program) and local community services.

When Southern Health were no longer able to support the program, Green Cross Project Inc. was fortunate in being able to find new partners in the Western Region Health Centre (WRHC). In 2014, WRHC (covering the Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Brimbank, Wyndham, Melton and Hume local government areas) merged with North Yarra Community Health (covering Collingwood, Carlton and Fitzroy), and Doutta Galla Community Health (covering Melbourne and Moonee Valley). The merged entity is now called cohealth.

In mid-2015, a second outreach bus, a converted Toyota HiAce vehicle, was added to our fleet and at the end of the 2015/16 FY, a medium-sized Toyota Coaster Bus, was acquired.

In 2018, GCPI provided \$25,000 to partner with cohealth on a new initiative – a mobile GP service, now known as the “Street Doctor”. Using our outreach buses, this service focused on providing holistic services to homeless and disadvantaged members of cohealth’s catchment region. This service was extended in 2019. In August 2019, Melbourne City Council had also contributed to this service with a \$ 200,000 grant (covering two years, including funds available for Latrobe University to undertake an evaluation).

During 2019, discussions with Monash Health reached a stage where a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between GCPI and Monash Health in July 2019. This MoU enabled GCPI to extend its services to the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne (extending as far as Cockatoo and Pakenham). This initiative was supported by the generosity of the Collier Foundation and the Vera Moore Foundation.

In September 2019, GCPI was able to acquire its third outreach bus. In late December 2019, the third bus was refurbished and handed over to Monash Health for use from January 2020 on. This initiative was supported by cohealth and Monash Health in delivering much needed services to the disadvantaged across much of greater Melbourne.

