

Liptember  
Foundation



# Impact Report

Financial Year 2023-24

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# A Message from the Liptember Foundation CEO

This year has been one of incredible growth and impact for the Liptember Foundation as we continue to advance our mission to improve mental health outcomes for women across Australia. Our commitment to research, advocacy, and mental health program development has never been stronger, and I'm proud to share the significant strides we've made in these areas.



Our annual women's mental health research has provided crucial insights, helping us to better understand the unique challenges faced by women and shaping our approach to advocacy at a national level, as well as underpinning future funding decisions to fill the

gaps. We've expanded our awareness campaigns, reaching more women than ever before with critical community mental health messaging, encouraging help seeking and aiming to eliminate the stigma that surrounds mental ill-health. Our commitments to funding external research and impact programs have made a tangible difference, providing much-needed support and fostering resilience within our communities as well as key insights into women's specific mental health treatments and their effectiveness.

This year, our fundraising campaigns, Liptember and Lip-Stick It, have once again been pivotal in delivering the revenue that fuels our work. These initiatives not only generate essential funds but also raise awareness of the mental health challenges women face, bringing these important issues to the forefront of public consciousness. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our partners, donors, and fundraisers whose unwavering support makes all of this possible. Your contributions are driving real change, and together, we are making a lasting impact.

As we look to the future, we are committed to reinvesting into areas that will have the greatest impact on women's mental health. We are expanding our own programs and initiatives, enhancing our educational materials, and continuing our investment

in research. Additionally, we are moving more into the space of advocacy, education, and awareness, ensuring that mental health remains a priority on the national agenda.

While there is still much work ahead, our long-term data continues to deepen our understanding of women's experiences, uncovering trends and informing how we can make a meaningful difference. As the Liptember Foundation continues to expand, we plan to invest further in our annual research, uncovering insights that will serve as a call to action for national change at government levels, advocating for policies and funding that address the unique mental health needs of women and gender-diverse people, making it easier to access services and support. Our aim is to expand our reach, ensuring that our advocacy for women's mental health extends to every corner of the nation, driving national conversations and influencing policy to ensure better mental health outcomes for all women and gender diverse individuals in Australia; paving the way for a future where mental health approaches are tailored to women.

Thank you for standing with us in our important work. Together, we are not only improving mental health outcomes for women today but also building a future where every woman has the support they need to thrive and live an optimal, mentally healthy life.

– Luke Morris, CEO & Founder of the Liptember Foundation



# The Liptember Foundation's Mental Health Advisory Panel

The Mental Health Advisory Panel was established in 2022 to advise, collaborate and critically evaluate areas of need within the women's mental health space.

The Liptember Foundation's focus on delivering 'informed impact' requires collaboration with experts, advocates and allies in the mental health space to ensure funds are distributed towards the most critical women's mental health outcomes.

Made up of people who know this space intimately and live and breathe it each day, the role of the MHAP is to provide guidance, offer valuable insights and give direction and expertise to the Liptember Foundation Team.



## Professor Marie-Paule Austin

Prof Austin is the Director of the St John of God Health Care Chair Perinatal and Women's Mental Health Research Unit, Sydney. She has a strong national and international profile in the field of perinatal mental health and is a lead researcher in a number of studies examining the impact of stress in pregnancy on infant outcomes.

These collaborations include McGill University, the University of Queensland, Mater Hospital and Macquarie University.



## Professor Navjot Bhullar

A Research Professor of Psychology at CSU - Her program of research focusses on understanding psychological and environmental influences on mental health and wellbeing. Specifically, she is interested in exploring risk and resilience profiles and how profile membership is associated with mental health outcomes,

and designing and evaluating targeted messaging to support people in distress. She also has extensive experience in conducting survey-based research, program design and evaluation, and advanced statistical analyses.



## Phillipa Brown

Phillipa is the CEO and Founder of MeHelp.com.au Online Psychology, a platform dedicated to advancing the accessibility and reach of mental health services throughout Australia.

Her career as a psychologist has expanded from the education sector providing essential psychological support to youth and leading well-being programs in schools and universities, to working in private practice. Her expertise and commitment to suicide prevention and crisis support reflect her past contributions.

Beyond her professional role, Phillipa is a devoted mother and balances her leadership roles at work and home. Her advocacy for women's mental health is deeply rooted in the belief that every woman should have access to mental health resources and support. Phillipa is driven by making positive changes to accessibility in the Australian mental health landscape, where her role at Liptember allows her to actively push for advancements in the accessibility of mental health support for every woman in Australia.



## Professor Deb Loxton

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Is Chair of the National Women's Health Research Translation and Impact Network. She is the Director of the Centre for Women's Health Research, a research centre of the University of Newcastle, Deputy Director of the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health, and Lead of the Hunter Medical Research Institute's Women's Health Research Program.

Women's health over the life span has been at the centre of Professor Loxton's research for over two decades and remains her primary research interest.

Her main areas of expertise are the impact of violence over the life course, maternal morbidity and mortality, and longitudinal research methods. She has authored over 200 publications, produced more than 30 reports for government, and graduated 34 PhD students. Results from her research have informed international, national and local policies that address women's health and violence against women and she continues to passionately advocate for the rights of all women to live free from violence and with optimal health.



## Dr. Melissa Casey

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Melissa focuses on optimising individuals' mental health and wellbeing in the context of relationships at home, work and the community. Her relational approach explicitly deals with the I/WE paradox and that we become the best version of ourselves in the context of the complex relationship we have with ourselves and others.

Melissa pursued doctoral and post-doctoral studies in neuroscience and has applied her deeper understanding of neural networks and the "social brain"-behaviour relationship to optimising human experience and wellbeing. Melissa had led several award-winning mental health care innovations that have transformed the delivery of Clinical Mental Health care in Victoria, and is a respected expert in the area of Mental Health and Wellbeing. Melissa was a technical expert on the Department of Health's Technical Advisory Group (2021) for the Wellbeing Centres announced by the Royal Commission. An organisational psychologist who is clinically

trained, Melissa was Director of Psychology at Monash Health for 10 years, Chair of Vic/Tas/ACT AHPRA Regional Psychology Board for 4 years, Deputy Chair for a further 3 years, and teaches in the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery at Monash University. Melissa has provided clinical wellbeing and sexual harassment support services to the Victorian Courts' staff over the last 2 years, and is a consultant psychologist in the Women's Hospital. Melissa designed the innovative Social Model of Women's Health (2020), a first in a tertiary hospital in Australia that provides mental health and wellbeing services that deal with the particular psychosocial risks that women face to their mental health and wellbeing. Melissa has published a number of journal articles including Building More Trust Between Doctors and Patients (HBR 2018). Melissa's capabilities were specifically recognised in the Columbia University Press text, Design Thinking for the Greater Good (Liedtka, J et al., (2017), and her clinical mental health programs have received several Ministerial awards.



## Madhavi Nawana Parker

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Madhavi has provided young people, families, and schools with lifelong tools to develop resilience, confidence, wellbeing and social-emotional intelligence through counselling, professional development, parent workshops, online training, and an extensive range of published works for over 20 years. Madhavi is broadly recognised in Australia and overseas for her compassionate, strength-focused approach to improving mental health, confidence, resilience, and wellbeing.

Madhavi studied Psychology and Rehabilitation Counselling at University,

developed and delivered social skills programs at Autism SA and for two decades has consulted in private practice working closely with young people, their families and schools. With a strong track record for equipping people with confidence, emotional regulation tools and improved relationship skills, Madhavi brings these skills to leadership and executive teams, helping to improve their ability to manage stress, improve wellbeing and use a positive mindset in the workplace.

# Making an Informed Impact through a Gender Lens

## Why is making an Informed Impact so important to the Liptember Foundation?

We are driven to make the largest impact possible for the women who need it most. It is important to us that our community of fundraisers and supporters know exactly where their contribution is going, the women we are supporting and why funding has been allocated to specific areas.

## How do we make an Informed Impact?

We collaboratively work alongside a community of experts, advocates and allies to raise and distribute funds towards the most critical women's mental health outcomes. In simplified terms, making an informed impact is about relying on, and drawing valuable insights and direction from the people who know this space intimately and live and breathe it each day. Think psychologists, medical researchers, clinical social workers, mental health service providers, hospitals and community members with lived experience... all of whom are passionate about reducing the burden of mental illness on Australian women and ensuring funding makes it to those most in need through critical programs, initiatives, support services and research. By making this informed impact commitment, it will provide us and our community with an added layer of confidence that we are meaningfully distributing and allocating our fundraising dollars to the most worthwhile and impactful mental health outcomes.



## How do we measure impact?

To confidently ensure that we are making the most 'informed' impact possible we are committed to making funding decisions underpinned by scientifically valid, ongoing research that specifically focuses on Australian women, their experiences and needs and adequately filling the gaps in mental health programs, initiatives, support services and research.

## Why does Gender Matter?

Good mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental illness; it is the ability to fully and effectively participate in society.

There is no doubt that mental health is important for all genders; however, as a result of both biological and gender-related differences, women can suffer from certain mental health conditions at higher rates than men. A range of factors can lead to a woman experiencing poor mental health which span across psychological, biological and social areas.

Biological factors like menstruation, menopause, pregnancy and birth; as well as certain experiences such as miscarriage, ovarian or cervical cancer can each present unique and diverse mental health conditions specifically for women.

Alongside these biological factors, there are different life stages, socioeconomic, political and cultural factors that have a significant impact on the prevalence of mental illness among those who identify as women or womxn.

We know that tailored support services are vital to preventing and managing mental illnesses and increasing the overall wellbeing of women living with existing mental health conditions. As a result, we are committed to undertaking gender-specific mental health research that will pave the way for female-centric (or womxn-centric) methodologies when developing new approaches to mental illness prevention, diagnosis, treatment, support services and programs.



# Another Year of Impact - Our Reflection



## Liptember Foundation – Women's Mental Health Research

The Liptember Foundation is proud to continue its commitment to conducting annual, gender-specific mental health research, launching its newest update in July 2024.

The 2024 research focused on uncovering the reality for Australian women, examining the multi-dimensional aspects of women's mental health in Australia. It continued to identify gaps and trends for better mental health and explored the mental health issues, triggers, and barriers faced by Australian women.

The research identified that the mental health of Australian women remains at a crisis point, with approximately 1 in 2 (54%) Australian women currently experiencing some form of mental health issue. Alarming, 1 in 4 (25%) of these women are dealing with severe mental health disorders. These figures have remained constant since 2022, indicating that the state of women's mental health in this country remains relatively unchanged.

While it is positive that the numbers haven't risen, this report serves as a call to action for national change at government levels, advocating for policies and funding that address the unique mental health needs of women and gender-diverse people, making it easier to access services and support.

The Liptember Foundation is committed to making an informed impact by utilising this research to benchmark and measure impact and change, as well as optimise our work and advocacy in this space effectively. This research paves the way for a future where mental health approaches are tailored to women and backed by research.



## Liptember Foundation – Mental Health Promotion and Awareness Campaign

Each year, our annual women's mental health research uncovers some alarming statistics. Notably in 2023, the barriers to women seeking support highlighted issues such as the cost of living crisis and the stigmas that still exist in society around mental illness.

In 2023:

33% of women felt their mental health issues weren't serious enough to seek help

31% of women couldn't afford to seek help for their mental health issues.

22% of women were embarrassed or ashamed to seek help

So, it was important that the Foundation continued its work to raise awareness of the importance of seeking help for their mental health.

In October 2023, the Liptember Foundation developed a mass, mental health promotion and awareness campaign targeting women around Australia using traditional media like Out of Home (OOH) and Radio as well as digital and social media channels.

The theme of the campaign focused on the cost of living crisis, reducing stigma and encouraging women to prioritise their mental health. Highlighting simple phrases like 'you don't need permission to look after yourself', the campaign struck an emotional chord and resonated with women across the country. This campaign was essential in creating an informed, supportive, and stigma-free environment that encourages women to seek and receive the mental health support they need and deserve.

The campaign had a powerful impact around Australia, reaching over 6 million women with this important message.





## Surf Therapy for Women

Surf therapy is a recognised mental and physical health intervention. Using trained mental health professionals and surf coaches, Liptember Funding has allowed the Waves of Wellness Foundation to deliver a women's Surf Therapy program that tackles mental health head on, right on the beach. The 8-week clinical mental health surf therapy program uses a 'green room therapy' approach using surfing as a conduit to engage women and explore positive therapeutic outcomes.

It has empowered women to put their mental and physical health first through the creation of safe spaces to share lived experiences in a judgement free zone, feel understood, and meaningfully connect with other women. Participating

women were engaged in therapeutic mental health discussion, cognitive behavioural therapy and mindfulness practice; as well as receiving the benefits of a physical, in-water surfing component.

WOW recorded a statistically significant ( $p=0.05$ ) 15.91% improvement in well-being according to the SWEMWBS scale, indicating that participants improved their wellbeing significantly over the course of the eight-week program.

The Liptember Foundation funded placements for women and girls in diverse communities in need across Australia. 72% of participants were from Regional communities in the Central Coast, Wollongong, Newcastle, Ballina, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast regions.

“

Having done previous clinical options for my mental health which didn't really suit me, finding this group was a godsend. Sitting with a group in nature discussing our problems openly and honestly was so refreshing, much better than a 1 on 1 in a sterile room discussing yourself. It shows you others are facing problems and dealing with it, you bounce off each other, and at the end, you all get to have fun and try something amazingly awesome that just cleanses you and helps you feel alive. You build friendships and connections with the group that encourages you to keep going, especially in today's society with the cost of living and people not really being able to afford the clinical version for mental health this is honestly one of the best experiences of my life.

- Female participant, Sunshine Coast



## Young Transgender Women's "Trans Femme" Wellbeing Pilot Program

Young transgender women face much higher rates of mental illness compared to the general population; with experiences like discrimination, bullying, harassment, vilification and violence being common amongst young transgender women. Thanks to Liptember funding, Open Doors Youth Service established a peer-led support program specifically for young transgender women aged between 12 – 25 based in Queensland. The Wellbeing Pilot Program provided 1:1 case management and counselling, psychosocial workshops as well as social support groups focused on connecting young transgender women and their families with their community.

“

“In the social groups I formed new friendships, I was able to form bonds with people who had similar experiences to me.”

– Phoebe, 17, Brisbane

With no specialised support programs for young transgender women to access previously; this critical investment in a new, deeply specialised pilot program ensured that young transgender women received safe and timely access to support when they needed it most.

After completing the program:

- 69% participants reported on their ability to manage their day today life as excellent to good
- 76% participants reported on their hopefulness for the future as being excellent to good
- 78% participants reported on their overall wellbeing as excellent to good

Liptember's commitment to funding the pilot program also provided the launching pad to receive further Government funding through the Brisbane North Primary Health Network, clearly demonstrating the level of need to the PHN – which means now even more Trans women in Queensland will be able to access this amazing service.

“

The Trans Femme group just makes me feel like I'm not alone... gives me a sense of belonging and it's like a second home. I can come here and feel safe even if I can't find that anywhere else.

– Claire, 17, Brisbane



We are also proud to have continued to support the below impact outcomes through the 2023/24 financial year:

Research:

- Trialling single-session online psychological treatment for Australian women with perinatal depression and anxiety.
- Harnessing hormones to optimise anxiety treatments for women.

Program/Initiatives:

- Facilitator Training & Development for Flourish Girl School Workshops
- Women's "Re-Build" Equine Assisted Learning Program
- 'Facing the Unexpected' Online training program addressing the psychosocial aspects of prenatal diagnosis.

# Successful Recipients of FY 2023-24 Grant Funding



## The 'Strong Enough' Podcast

Eating disorders are a serious mental health issue for girls and women in Australia, with the vast majority of those caring for someone with an eating disorder being female. Families and carers of those living with an eating disorder often experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and social isolation.

EDFA's Strong Enough podcast has been created to fill the gap in support and information for carers and families impacted by eating disorders. Focusing on sharing stories of lived experience, community members share their biggest challenges and successes in the caring journey; offering a unique perspective on the emotional, physical, and psychological impact of these disorders on both the individual and their carer. Each episode also includes meditations as well as guest speakers in the field of research as well as specialists in education, advocacy, and self-care.

The podcast series promotes a greater acceptance of the challenges faced by eating disorder carers and will contribute to reducing stigma, promoting empathy, and fostering a supportive environment for those families affected by eating disorders.

Liptember Foundation will be supporting the production of Seasons 3 and 4 of this vital resource to the families of loved ones with eating disorders.



## BodyKind Women Awareness Campaign

With Body image issues being a main contributor to the decline in women's mental health in recent years and eating disorders disproportionately impacting women, there is an acute need to reduce the prevalence of these complex and costly illnesses in a population that is historically overlooked, especially in relation to public health.

Eating disorders have serious medical, psychiatric, and psychosocial consequences, with the highest mortality rate of all major psychiatric disorders. Yet less than one third of people with eating disorders are currently seeking help.

The creation of the national BodyKind Women Awareness Campaign (in joint collaboration between the Liptember Foundation and Butterfly Foundation) will specifically target women and girls aged 13-65, educating and empowering them to identify risks and protective factors relating to eating disorders or body image issues – breaking down stigma and encouraging help-seeking.

This campaign will build on the success of the Butterfly Foundation's evidence-based BodyKind suite of prevention programs; consisting of a series of videos, blogs, and other digital resources that include lived experience storytelling and peer-led learning opportunities.



## Providing Emergency Food Relief for Women Escaping Domestic Violence

Women and children escaping domestic violence are exceptionally vulnerable and the impact on their mental health can be catastrophic.

The Liptember foundation is partnering with It's the Little Things Community to deliver 4,000 emergency meals over the next 12 months to women who need it most. To ease the burden, having home cooked meals provided can alleviate some of the pressures a woman and her children experience in these times of hardship.



## Emergency Shelter, Crisis Intervention and Counselling Programs for Women Fleeing Domestic Violence

Domestic and family violence against women in Australia is a critical issue profoundly impacting women's mental health. This violence includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and financial abuse. Women subjected to such violence often suffer from psychological trauma, including PTSD, anxiety, and depression; with continuous exposure to leading to an increased risk of severe mental health disorders. The mental health effects can interfere with daily functioning, work, and relationships, leading to social isolation and higher risks of suicidal thoughts and self-harm. Concerns about children's safety and well-being add further stress.

Every woman deserves a chance to break free from the cycle of violence. Liptember Foundation is partnering with Dawn House in the Northern Territory to support and empower women to regain control over their lives and futures. Expanding and further developing the emergency shelter, crisis intervention and counselling programs will equip even more women with the tools and resources needed to build a secure and independent future after suffering domestic and family violence.



## Psychoeducational Support Group Evaluation for Women Bereaved by Perinatal Loss

Led by Professor Navjot Bhullar; a psychological scientist and mental health researcher at Charles Sturt University – Navjot and her team aim to evaluate the effectiveness of a low cost, easy-to-implement, accessible support for women who experience perinatal loss, to reduce psychological harms as well as improve resilience and help seeking behaviours. This would fill a significant gap in current perinatal bereavement care supports in rural NSW.

Perinatal loss can pose a significant risk to maternal mental health including increased risk of depression, anxiety, grief, guilt and post-traumatic stress. 31% of those who have experienced pregnancy loss suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Liptember Foundation Women's Mental Health Research, 2023). These adverse effects are compounded for women living in rural, regional and remote Australia.

Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of targeted, proactive supports available for women experiencing perinatal loss. This research project will evaluate a support group (known as 'With All My Heart' – WAMH) program for women bereaved by perinatal loss in Central West NSW. This monthly face-to-face support group will offer a safe and supportive environment for women and provide information about readily available supports and self-care, and psychoeducation about grief following perinatal loss.

If proven to be effective, this evidence-based method of perinatal bereavement care could be rolled out nationally, supporting women in a timely and effective environment, decreasing the risks of severe psychological distress, post-traumatic stress and mental health issues.

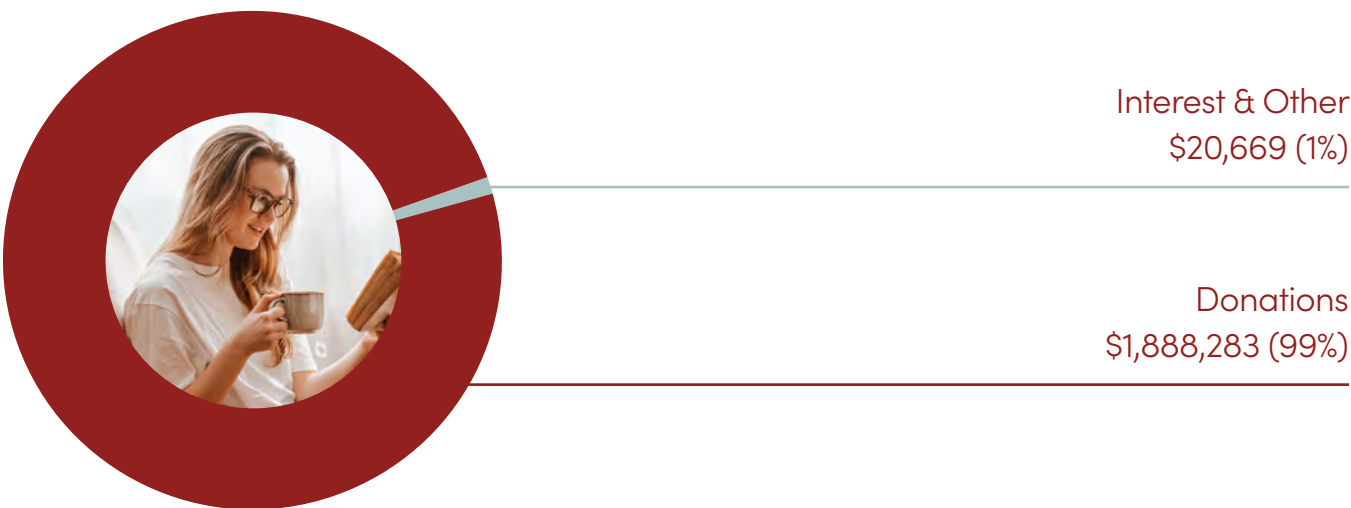
# Financial Summary FY 2023-24

For the 12 months ending 30 June 2024

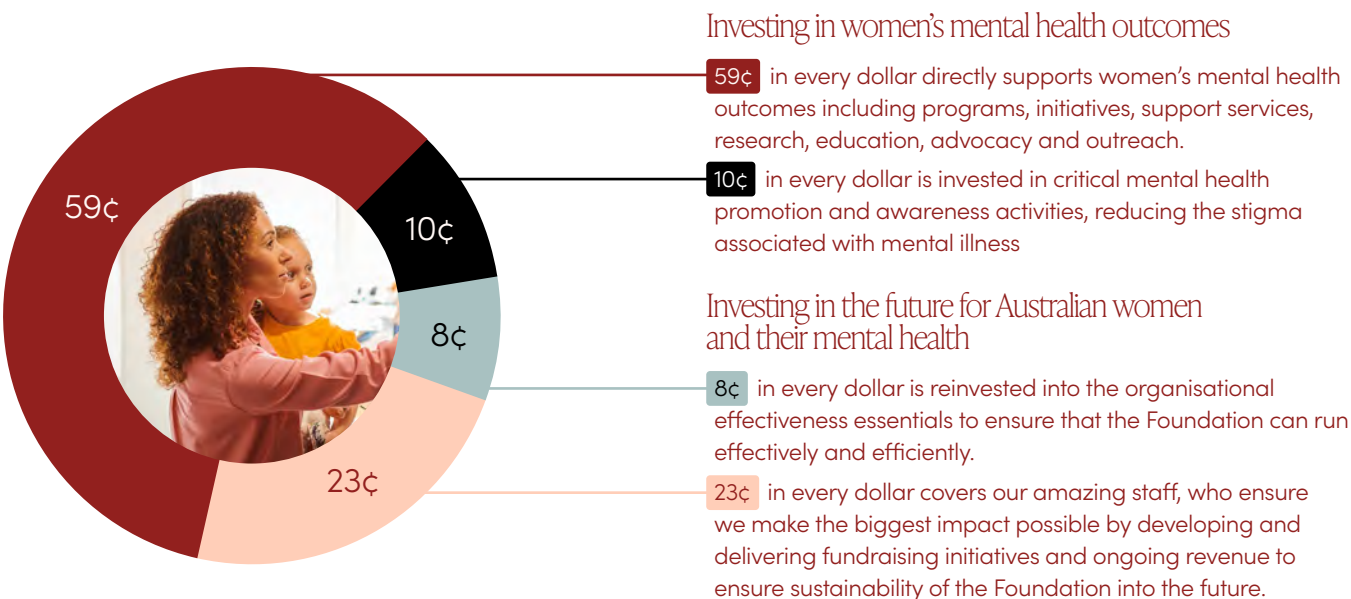
At the Liptember Foundation, we are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that every dollar raised is used in the most effective way to maximize our impact on the mental health of women across Australia. To deliver on our mission—whether through research, advocacy work, program development, or the day-to-day operations that keep our organisation running—we recognise that strategic investment in these areas is essential. Our expenditure in these key areas is not just about sustaining our current efforts; they are about building a stronger, more resilient organisation that

can adapt to change and continue advocating for women and delivering positive mental health outcomes for years to come. We are encouraged by the engagement of our donors, fundraisers, and partners, who understand the costs of delivering our work and actively support our growth. We want to thank them for trusting us to ensure their kindness provides amazing outcomes for the women of Australia. Together, we are not only addressing the symptoms of mental ill-health but also tackling its root causes, ensuring a brighter, mentally healthier future for women in our community.

## WHERE OUR INCOME CAME FROM IN 2023/24:



## HOW YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS WERE INVESTED IN 2023/24:



# Thank you for reading our FY 2023-24 Impact Report.

For more insights into the impact that we are making,  
head to [liptemberfoundation.org.au/our-impact](https://liptemberfoundation.org.au/our-impact).



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