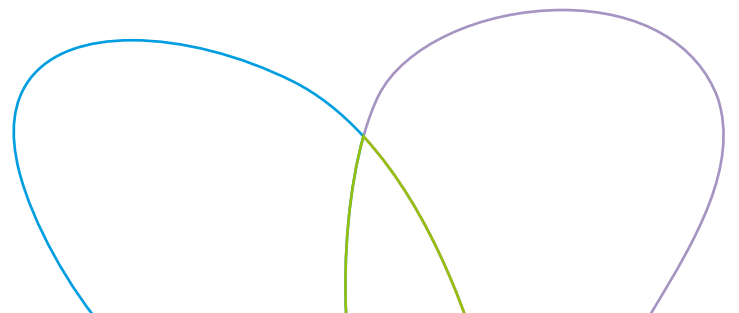




emerge

australia

Annual Report 2017



Mission:

To support, provide information and advocacy for people associated with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

Vision:

Universal awareness and acknowledgement of ME/CFS as a medical condition.

Values:

To serve the best interests of people affected by ME/CFS with integrity, compassion and empathy.

About Emerge Australia

Emerge Australia (formerly known as ME/CFS VicTasNT), has been working to support people with ME/CFS and associated conditions for 37 years and has members from around Australia.

The condition is widely misunderstood and support, research and medical education are seriously under-resourced. In addition to their poor health, people with the condition, experience stigma and misunderstanding and are often socially isolated. Our role in supporting and advocating for people with the condition is of vital importance.

The landscape in which we work is slowly changing, with increasing recognition of the condition and increased research collaboration.

Our most immediate task is to improve how ME/CFS is understood and supported in Australia. We are working to ensure that people affected by ME/CFS have access to a broad range of accessible and affordable programs that enhance their quality of life, by building strong partnerships, and working to build a financially sustainable and transparent organisation.





CEO Report

In the past year Emerge Australia has had the privilege of assisting tens of thousands of people impacted by ME/CFS across Australia.

I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of our previous CEO, Elizabeth Logan, who worked tirelessly to grow Emerge Australia's work. When I transferred from the Committee of Management to the CEO role I was pleased to have the opportunity to work with many people impacted by the same illness that impacts my daughter, Amy.

Throughout the past year we have been able to steward our limited resources to provide real and needed help to many people.

Our website is the first port of call for many people navigating the complex world of ME/CFS. In the past year Michael Yang has led a great team of volunteers who have continually updated and improved the site - which now receives thousands of visitors every week. Similarly, Sally and Nola have done a wonderful job with our social media reach.

I have been welcomed at several of the Peer Support Groups and observed first-hand the way members are able to serve and encourage each other as they cope with life with ME/CFS. I am so grateful for the volunteer leaders of these groups who work tirelessly to provide rich and meaningful experiences for group participants.

Our Emerge Journal has been expertly produced by Angus Tonkin and Kerrie McCure. Many people comment favourably on its professional style, wide-ranging topics and topical articles. This has been supplemented with regular eNews updates that keep our members up-to-date with news and developments.

Over the second half of the year we have benefited from an influx of new volunteers. This has enabled us to improve the response times to web and phone enquiries, as well as make a raft of improvements to the way our office operates.

Our Afternoon Tea at Federation Square was a chance to mark ME / CFS Awareness Day. A capacity crowd came together to hear several speakers and a keynote address from former Senator Scott Ludlam.

I would like to acknowledge the many supporters who have assisted us, some over many years. These include donors, DHHS, sponsors and philanthropic trusts who provide financial support that has helped grow our work.

Our part-time staff - Elaine and Laura provide our members and volunteers great support and are always looking for new ways to grow and improve our work. I am also grateful for our diligent Committee of Management who give freely of their time and professional expertise.

In the coming year we see many opportunities to better serve people with ME/CFS and we will be working hard to help more people.

John Jeffries
Chief Executive Officer





President's Report

This year we continued to see the effects of growing awareness of ME/CFS in the community and strengthening of advocacy groups here and abroad. After years of swimming against the tide (we have been in existence since 1980!), it is exciting to feel we are now part of a bigger national and international push for better recognition and treatment of ME/CFS.

Emerge Australia was pleased to be able to contribute to some strategic advocacy initiatives this year and was delighted to have the support of former Senator Scott Ludlam who was able to raise the issue of underfunding of (and inappropriate) ME/CFS research by the National Medical and Health Research Council and to put to this body the pressing need for more funding targeting diagnosis and effective treatment.

Jen Brea is an American woman who has taken a leading role in advocating for more research funding and better support for people with ME/CFS. Despite being very unwell, Jen has managed to establish an international social media network: MEAction, spearhead the Millions Missing advocacy campaign, present a moving and informative TED Talk, and direct and feature in a much-anticipated documentary: "Unrest".

We were really pleased to support the second Millions Missing campaign in Melbourne, in the pouring rain last October. This campaign is gathering momentum nationally and internationally and has some great key messages for raising awareness of the issue. The event also presented Elizabeth, John and I with the opportunity to meet a number of members and activists who had left their beds and their houses and braved the elements to make their voices heard.

During the year Elizabeth Logan resigned as CEO after 12 months in the role for personal reasons. We have been very fortunate to welcome to the role John Jeffries OAM. John had been on our committee for just over a year, and has a daughter with ME/CFS, so has first-hand personal experience with the condition. John has extensive experience in managing not-for-profits and already

the organisation is benefiting from his strategic, networking and fund-raising skills.

This year we said farewell to committee members Kath Ferry (Vice President) and Wesley Fawaz and of course John Jeffries. We also welcomed new committee members Caitlin Phillips-Peddlesden and Rebecca Davey.

Caitlin is an international community development worker, who has worked for a number of non-profit organisations. Caitlin is an ME/CFS patient in recovery and initially became involved with us as a volunteer on the Connect with ME/CFS Peer Support programs.

Rebecca Davey is President of the ACT ME/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Society and CEO of Arthritis ACT and brings to the organisation extensive knowledge of chronic disease management as well as management skills.

Caitlin and Rebecca both live in NSW, which gives us an opportunity to be more fully representative of our membership, which encompasses members from every state, and to have a closer working relationship with the ACT Society.

I am pleased that this year, our financial situation has improved and we have finished the year with a healthy surplus. We receive and are grateful for a small recurrent grant from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and are otherwise dependent on our fundraising efforts and our donors for all our operational costs. Needless to say, the stronger our budget is, the more programs and initiatives we can support.

I would like to thank Elizabeth Logan and John Jeffries, the staff and volunteers, including the Committee of Management, our members and our donors for your dedication to improving the lives of people with ME/CFS. Together, we know we are making a difference.

Sally Missing
President



Treasurers Report

Treasurer's Report 30 June 2017

Through a combination of effort, hard work and initiative, another strong surplus of \$42,743 has been recorded for 2016/17. This follows on from the surplus achieved in 2015/16 and places our organisation in a solid financial position.

Donors continue to provide significant support so that we can progress our strategies for which we are extremely grateful.

Special thanks to the CEOs - Elizabeth Logan who left us in February and replaced by former Committee Member John Jeffries. John has hit the ground running and his efforts have seen our financial position improve significantly.

A big thank you to all our supporters new and old who have placed Emerge in a stronger position moving forward. Their generosity and tireless efforts allow our organisation to make a difference to those affected by ME/CFS.

Russell Smith (MIPA; CTA)
Treasurer



Info line volunteers - Louise, Emerly and Pauline



Balance Sheet - Emerge Australia Inc.

	As at 30 June 2017	As at June 2016
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	\$157,726.56	\$140,513.91
Accounts Receivable	\$1,000.00	\$686.40
Cash on Hand	\$227.75	\$83.90
Stock on Hand	\$1,989.00	\$1,989.00
Security Deposit	\$1,012.30	\$1,012.30
Total Current Assets	\$161,955.61	\$144,285.51
Total Fixed Assets	\$2,123.38	\$6,413.14
Total Assets	\$164,078.99	\$150,698.65
Liabilities and shareholder's equity		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$663.17	\$2,128.76
Income in Advance	\$35,712.10	\$60,050.00
Other Current Liabilities	\$4,765.92	\$8,324.88
Total Current Liabilities	\$41,141.19	\$70,503.64
Shareholder's equity		
Retained Earnings	\$80,195.01	\$43,401.26
Net Income	\$42,742.79	\$36,793.75
Total Shareholder's Equity	\$122,937.80	\$80,195.01
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$164,078.99	\$150,698.65

Profit and Loss - Emerge Australia Inc.

	As at 30 June 2017	As at June 2016
Income		
Sales	\$3,496.37	\$3,035.47
Government Grants	\$46,021.09	\$78,203.42
One-off Grants	\$26,287.90	\$30,000.00
Tied Grants	\$4,000.00	\$4,950.00
Membership	\$15,350.07	\$14,510.56
Gifts and Donations	\$116,756.99	\$61,207.14
Interest	\$923.60	\$972.02
Fundraising	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Income	\$0.00	\$60.22
Total Income	\$212,836.02	\$192,938.83
Gross Profit	\$212,836.02	\$192,938.83
Expenses		
Accommodation	\$12,888.53	\$15,184.45
Facilities and Equipment	\$5,500.22	\$2,042.40
Staffing Costs	\$117,795.32	\$100,987.74
Communication	\$6,041.66	\$11,597.78
Insurance	\$0.00	\$454.55
Emerge Costs	\$10,492.80	\$12,502.33
Administration	\$8,219.52	\$13,376.20
Program Costs	\$9,154.60	\$0.00
GST Rounding	\$0.58	-\$0.37
Total Expenses	\$170,093.23	\$156,145.08
Net Earnings	\$42,742.79	\$36,793.75

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EMERGE AUSTRALIA INC

Scope

I certify that I have audited the attached financial statements of Emerge Australia Inc for the period ended 30 June 2016, consisting of statement of financial position and notes to and forming part of the financial accounts.

The Organisation's Committee of Management is responsible for the financial statements and I have determined that the accounting policies used are appropriate to meet the requirements of the members. I have conducted an independent audit of these financial statements in order to express an opinion to the members of the organisation.

The financial report has been prepared for the distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee's financial reporting requirements under its constitution. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than a member, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures on the financial statements. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements, are presently fairly in accordance with applicable Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements, so as to present a view which is consistent without understanding of the Organisation's financial position and the results of its operations.

Audit Opinion

The audit opinion expressed has been formed on the above basis.

In my opinion, the financial statements of Emerge Australia Inc are drawn up:

- a) So as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Organisation as at 30 June 2017 and of the results of its operations for the period ended 30 June 2017
- b) In accordance with applicable Accounting Standards; and
- c) In accordance with the provision of the Association Incorporation Act.



Signature of Auditor

12/09/2017
Date

Name of Auditor:	Karla Lee Eldridge
Professional Membership:	B.Bus MIPA 216588
Firm:	KARLA ELDRIDGE AND ASSOCIATES PTY LTD
Address:	Unit 4/458 Middleborough Rd Blackburn Vic 3130
Phone:	(03) 9898 3800

Highlights

Millions Missing Melbourne

Kerrie McCure

On Wednesday 12 October, around 70 ME/CFS patients and their family, friends and allies gathered on the steps of Parliament House in Melbourne to demand change. In one collective voice we requested government attention for a disease that has been underfunded and neglected for far too long.

Melbourne was the last of 25 #MillionsMissing protests held over a two-week period around the world. #MillionsMissing is a global movement to raise awareness of ME/CFS and demand health equality for sufferers. It represents the millions of people missing from their careers, schools, social lives and families due to the debilitating symptoms of the disease, as well as the millions of dollars missing from research, clinical education and healthcare funding. From Boston and Belfast to Buenos Aires, thousands of people joined voices to help make this invisible illness visible.

Melbourne turned on the rain but, despite getting drenched, the mood was buoyant and spirits were high. The crowd, dressed in red, held signs in one hand and umbrellas in the other. A symbolic display of shoes represented those missing from life and too unwell to attend. Emerge Australia President Sally Missing and CEO Elizabeth Logan were on the steps showing their support. There was a real feeling of purpose and community among this small sea of red.

The goal of Millions Missing Melbourne is to give up to 240,000 Australians with ME/CFS their lives back, and to prevent even more people from joining the ranks of the missing. And that starts with government funding for biomedical research, diagnostics testing and improved health care.

Greens MP Colleen Hartland, who provided invaluable advice and support to the campaign, kicked things off by reminding us that change doesn't happen overnight.

'These campaigns are long, and the best quality you can have for a campaign like this is to be stubborn and to not give in.'

Campaign co-coordinator Anna Kennedy made a passionate speech with a message to our government.



'Today we ask the Australian Government for equality; that our illness, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, be taken seriously and funded at a level commensurate with its high prevalence and cost to the economy, and at a level which is consistent with other similarly disabling diseases. This is our time! So let's raise our voices above this rain and let the government hear from the Millions Missing!'

Across social media, people took part in the virtual protest, spreading the message that more needs to be done for people with ME/CFS. In the lead-up to the event, organised by coordinators Anna Kennedy and Jenny Meagher, and a small campaign team, a huge effort went into contacting media and politicians, and that advocacy continues. With the support of Emerge Australia, Avalon House, Colleen Hartland and people with ME/CFS, it was a powerful example of community action and collaboration.

'What we may lack in physical strength, we certainly make up for in will and determination,' said Anna Kennedy on the day. We created an uprising from our beds - that's something to be proud of. Perhaps movements like #MillionsMissing signal the beginning of change for people with ME/CFS. That's something to feel hopeful about.

To find out more, visit millionsmissing.org and the Millions Missing Melbourne Facebook page, where you can watch videos of the day: www.facebook.com/MillionsMissingMelbourne

#MillionsMissing



Awareness Day Afternoon Tea

The Cube at ACMI in Melbourne's Federation Square was packed with an enthusiastic crowd attending our ME/CFS Awareness Day Afternoon Tea on Friday May 12.

Around 80 people heard from an array of speakers, including Senator Scott Ludlam, Emerge Australia President Sally Missing and CEO John Jeffries, who shared his own story of his family's experience with ME/CFS. Writer Naomi Chainey and Emerge Australia volunteer Louise De Pino each spoke movingly about the impact the illness has had on their lives. And Peer Support Coordinator Laura Bos shared the growing success of our One-to-One Program, which is connecting people with ME/CFS all over Australia.

Senator Ludlam finished up by highlighting the need for more programs to help people with ME/CFS, and announced plans to organise an event at Parliament House that would encourage interest in the issue with other parliamentarians. We are grateful to have had someone like former Senator Ludlam in our corner, advocating for and giving hope to people affected by ME/CFS.

As well as being a symbolic day to recognise the impact of ME/CFS on hundreds of thousands of Australians, the event provided a welcoming and

accommodating space for those with ME/CFS and their carers to connect with each other. Over afternoon tea, stories were shared, networks made and friendships established. People enjoyed chatting so much that they lingered long after finishing time.

Sometimes, despite the preparation and payback that social events can cause, it's worth it just to be with those who understand and 'get it'.



CEO John Jeffries, former Senator Scott Ludlam and President Sally Missing.

Highlights

Knitting for ME raises \$1,100

A wonderful team of volunteers raised over \$1,100 on the Mother's Day weekend at Forest Hill Chase Shopping Centre. Our stall was superbly stocked with garments and goods that have been hand-knitted by Emerge Australia supporters all around the country.

Thank you Irene, Nola, Pauline and your team for a great effort!



Irene and Pauline at the Knitting for ME stall.

Volunteer information session

In May, we held a training session for our new volunteers, most of whom have personal experience with ME/CFS.

The session was designed to be two hours, but there was such enthusiasm in the room that it ended up lasting for three.

It was facilitated by Louise De Pino, one of Emerge Australia's Information Line volunteers. Louise also gave a speech at the Awareness Day Afternoon Tea on 12 May.

The new volunteers — Pauline, Emerly, Michael and Lauren — have already started to help us clear the backlog on the Information Line and incoming queries, and one is leading a revamp of the Emerge Australia website.



Louise De Pino - speech at Awareness Day.

Thank you to our volunteers!

National Volunteer Week, held from 8-14 May, is an annual celebration to acknowledge the generous contribution of our nation's volunteers.

Without the support of our volunteers, Emerge Australia would not be able to provide much-needed services, advocacy and information to the community. We want to thank all of you who donate your time to our cause — we're very grateful for the valuable work that you do!



Volunteers and Support Groups

Volunteers

Many loyal volunteers provided more than a 1000 hours of assistance in helping to keep programs and services going for Emerge Australia. Their dedicated roles included:

Committee of Management

President – Sally Missing

Vice President – Martin Wilkinson

Secretary – Andrew Bretherton

Treasurer – Russell Smith

Committee

Irene Herceg, Nola Miles, Leo Orland,
Caitlin Phillips-Peddlestone and Rebecca Davey

Editor (Emerge Journal)

Angus Tonkin, Kerrie McCure

Information and Support

Iris Kucuk, Louise de Pino, Pauline Huang,
Emerly Chau, Lauren Maiorana

Website Editor

Michael Yang

Administrative Support

Lauren Ginn, Kevin Li

Patron

Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau, AM,
Governor of Victoria

Life Members

Helen Clark

Jennifer Droop

Yvette Gebert

Lia Henry

Marie James

Maureen Jepson

Bernhard Liedtke

Nola Miles

Simon Molesworth AO QC

James Oakley

Margaret Pianella

Marianne Punshon

Pamela Saunders

Peer Support Groups

Peer Support Groups are running in the following areas:

Melbourne

- Bentleigh–Bayside ME/CFS Support Group
- Frankston FMS/CFS (Self Help) Support Group
- St Kilda Support Group
- Café Club (Inner Melbourne Social Group)
- CFS/ME/FM Café Support Group
- Mulgrave ME/CFS Support Group

Regional Victoria

- Café Connect for ME – Bendigo
- Geelong ME/CFS Support Group
- Shepparton Goulburn Valley ME/CFS/FM Support Group

Tasmania

- Hobart Support Group

New South Wales


- Inner-West (Sydney) ME/CFS & FM Support Group
- Laurieton ME/CFS & FM Support Group
- Tweed Heads Support Group
- Wollongong ME/CFS/FM (also MCS) Support Group
- Port Macquarie/Hastings ME/CFS/FM Support Group
- Whitebridge CFS/ME Support Group

If you would like to participate in any of these groups, please get in touch with us.





Membership & Information:

 03 9529 1344

Phone and leave a message at any time, and we will call you back.

Emerge Australia

(formerly ME/CFS Australia (VicTasNT))

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Email: information@emerge.org.au

www.emerge.org.au