Vision
Optimum personal recovery and wellbeing.

Our Purpose
To provide opportunity for people living with mental illness and/or complex needs to enjoy a meaningful life by strengthening self-identity, personal responsibility and hope.

Our Guiding Principles
Recovery-orientated practice is a partnership where the person with the lived experience is the expert in their recovery and our staff bring their understanding and expertise to support this journey.

• Person centred
• Respect and dignity
• Acceptance of diversity
• Reflective practice
• Strengths based approach
• Flexibility and innovation

• Collaborative partnerships
• Community connection and participation
• Skilled, supported and informed workforce
• Evaluation, planning and continuous improvement
It’s been a challenging year for Mentis Assist

As we continue to explore the impact the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will have on the organisation, and wider community mental health sector, we have diligently worked to ensure readiness for the scheme as it rolls out across the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula areas in April 2018. Mentis Assist is now a Registered NDIS Provider.

Throughout 2016-17 we have focused on ensuring a smooth transition to the NDIS for our clients, while continuing to support them with programs and services to meet their current needs and expectations.

Preparing for change

Over the past year, we have actively worked with specialist consultants to guide and implement change throughout the organisation.

This has included:
- Developing a Business Transformation Plan that focuses on redesigning our business model to transform the organisation and its culture. The plan will provide a framework to guide the way in which we transition to the NDIS
- Reviewing our organisational strategic plan to reflect a changing business environment
- Identifying and strengthening marketing opportunities to position ourselves as a NDIS provider of choice. This will be complemented with a strategic online and social media presence.

Valued partners

Collaborative projects and corporate networking opportunities are vital to Mentis Assist, particularly when the relationship benefits clients, staff and each organisation.

Therefore, we were pleased to announce in March a new corporate partnership with Peninsula Hot Springs to promote better mental health within the community and to actively work to reduce the stigma and associated issues.

The partnership launch featured an official video message from the Federal Member for Flinders and Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP, along with presentations from both organisations. Highlights also included a personal reflection by Karen, a former Mentis client turned staff member, followed by the showing of a short film on mental health, directed by Steve Bastoni. An actor and filmmaker, Steve’s film ‘The Gift’ has won several awards, including the best short film screenplay at the 2016 Amsterdam Film Festival.

We value the ongoing collaboration with Beleura Hospital in Mornington and Peninsula Health Mental Health, which allows our staff to visit monthly to inform patients about Mentis Assist and what support programs are available to them.
When the Victorian Government recommissioned mental health services three years ago, it presented many challenging opportunities for organisations like Mentis Assist. These challenges will be further heightened when the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) rolls out across southern Melbourne and the Bayside regions in April 2018, impacting those clients we currently support.

As we prepare for this transition, we will be guided by learnings from trial sites and organisations already working with the scheme, particularly those in Melbourne’s north-east, who transitioned to the NDIS on 1 July 2016. These learnings will be used to inform the way in which we develop future programs.

To meet future challenges, over the past year we have strengthened work practices and increased our partnerships with other providers and funding bodies. Our Board and Senior Management team have spent time planning a new organisational framework to inform the way we will respond to the expected changes to ensure we continue to provide more services, in more locations, to more people, while remaining committed to our fundamental goals of supporting people living with mental health illness.

We have worked hard to consolidate our links with local GPs and service providers, particularly those working in clinical mental health, aged care, drug and alcohol and physical health. As Victoria’s mental health system moves to an uncertain environment, how we survive and thrive as a strong mental health and disability provider, will lie in our ability to broaden services to match the needs of clients.

Acknowledgments

In the face of significant business and organisational cultural change, it is comforting to report a better than budgeted outcome for the 2016-17 financial year. Thanks to strong financial management, our financial result was well above budget, supporting our ability to invest in strengthening the organisation’s capacity to provide individualised client services and maintain the necessary cash flow levels required for the NDIS.

To strengthen the organisation’s ability to manage the organisational changes, in February 2017 we appointed Mark Smith as Director of Services. Mark will lead the operational side of the organisation and the NDIS transformation process.

In October, the Board welcomed new Director, Peter Brookhouse, who brings extensive executive management experience to the organisation. Along with his involvement with many local health and community boards, Peter was until recently, CEO of a Peninsula-based disability service organisation. We also welcomed Tracey May back to the Board following a brief time spent living in Canberra. Thanks must go to all Directors for the time, dedication and commitment they give to the organisation.

We acknowledge our wonderful staff who, despite uncertainty and unrest surrounding the mental health sector, have never wavered in their commitment to ensuring the best possible support and outcomes for our clients, and their families.

We welcome the future challenges and opportunities they will bring. And we look forward to continuing to work with Government and other agencies to offer programs for people living with mental health illness, giving each the chance to enjoy a meaningful life with purpose and direction.

We are aware of the competitive forces that will come into play with new NDIS funding arrangements, we remain committed to building an inclusive community that supports people to:

• Access services across South Eastern Metropolitan Melbourne, Bayside and the Mornington Peninsula
• Participate in programs to help gain employment and foster independence
• Create and maintain relationships
• Reduce stigma – where people’s own perceptions of how far people can progress are impeding their recovery

The changes present an exciting challenge for Mentis Assist as we continue to build on our 30 years of achievements. I am confident the organisation can, and will continue to provide high quality support to some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Mark Smith
Director of Services

Dawn Fisher
Chair, Board of Governance
Terry Paliopartas
Chief Executive Officer

Moving on

Despite significant lobbying, we sadly said goodbye this year to one of our amazing programs, Breaking the Cycle – Reducing Homelessness.

Funded for just four years, the program, which finished on 30 June 2017, was the result of a state and federal government initiative to support mental health reform. This extremely successful multi-agency assertive outreach program between Mentis Assist, Peninsula Health Mental Health and SalvoCare Eastern, achieved real life changes for clients. Employing a team of community mental health and housing specialists, a clinical mental health nurse and drug and alcohol clinician to work directly with clients saw remarkable outcomes.

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Chief Executive Officer
Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) Primary Mental Health Diagnosis

- Anxiety: 14
- Bipolar Disorder: 16
- Depression: 30
- Other Psychiatric Diagnosis: 6
- Personality Disorder: 13
- Schizo-Affective Disorder: 5
- Schizophrenia: 29
- Unclear Diagnosis: 20

Best practice

As the profile of people accessing our services changes - statistics show that 54% of clients have a dual diagnosis (alcohol and drug - AOD) - so too does the commitment we make to ensuring our staff are skilled to recognise and support those with complex and challenging behaviours. In the past year, staff received training and education in:

- AOD diagnosis
- Managing difficult behaviours
- Suicide prevention

In August 2016, the MHCSS Senior Practice Leader Jayne Parrish, presented at the TheMHS Conference in Auckland, New Zealand. Jayne’s presentation, *Whose client is it? Role confusion in cross-collaborative care and System Reform – Navigating the Private Rental Market for Consumers*, along with clinical and practice insights offered by other presenters, will be used to inform current and future program planning and staff training.

Program changes

With funding cancelled for our Mental Health and Homelessness-Breaking the Cycle program, central intake referrals were temporarily halted to accommodate participants transitioning to MHCSS. Senior practice leaders worked closely with clients to ensure this highly vulnerable group was supported at all times.

NDIS

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) will begin its roll out across the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula region in April 2018. Mentis Assist is committed to supporting clients to successfully transition to the scheme and will work with them throughout the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) assessment and planning process.

Over the past year, MHCSS practice leaders have worked with clients to better help them understand the NDIS and its impact on mental health services and how they will access appropriate programs in the future.

We also continue to work with staff to determine how the Scheme will impact programs: expecting a shift in the way services will be provided under the NDIS, we have begun planning for programs to be restructured or adapted to meet NDIS requirements. Mentis Assist will continue to provide NDIS education to staff with regular information sessions.

Community partnerships

Given the range of social and emotional challenges many clients live with, strong community partnerships with other service providers is essential to enable us to support people to access the breadth of assistance needed.

Through outreach support, clients are referred or connected to services for:

- AOD counselling
- Housing support
- Legal issues
- Food services
- Financial counselling and budgeting

Program Referrals 2016-2017

- ICSP (Individual Client Support Packages): 79
- Carer Support: 31
- Access and Support: 21
- BTC (Breaking the Cycle): 8
- PIR (Partners in Recovery): 37
- SRS (Supported Residential Groups): 11
- PAG (Planned Activity Groups): 8
- Housing Access Project: 22
- Other (TAC, Workcover, ISP): 7
We also link clients to community support or psychosocial groups to attend appointments for:

- General health
- Mental health plans
- Diagnostic reviews
- Dietitians
- Optometry
- Dentistry
- Endocrinology and more

The MHCSS team particularly values its strong community partnerships that are instrumental in helping house our clients. These include: SalvoCare, which provides crisis support, brokerage, advocacy and support for finding and maintaining longer term housing, and WAYSS and Housing Choices Australia, who manage transitional houses, which Mentis Assist clients access. Our transitional housing portfolio leader and mental health practitioners work with clients who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, to stabilise their accommodation for up to two years and to assist in finding more suitable long-term arrangements. While in a transitional house, mental health practitioners work closely with clients to assist with independent living skills, including shopping, cooking, budgeting, sorting fines or legal issues and managing interpersonal relationships.

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<th>Referral Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers from other MH Support Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-referrals</td>
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<td>Peninsula Health Community Mental Health</td>
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<td>Headspace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alcohol/Drug Services</td>
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**CASE STUDY**

**Reaching true potential**

When Eliza* was referred to the Mentis Assist Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) program, she was on the verge of bankruptcy and living with depression and substance use.

Unable to see a positive future for herself, the 47-year-old’s view on life was one of negativity and a belief that she didn’t deserve any better.

In just nine months, with the gentle guidance and support of our MHCSS and Partners in Recovery (PIR) programs, Eliza completely changed her life.

By accepting help from and actively engaging in services she was referred to, Eliza slowly learned to trust again. She began to respect herself, make decisions and develop a belief that not only could her future be positive, but that she deserved no less.

As the Mentis teams worked with Eliza, they uncovered a smart, caring, likable woman, with a great sense of humour.

With new-found confidence and skills, Eliza learned how to manage life issues and depression without using any substances.

Eliza no longer sees herself as a victim, but rather as someone who has the capabilities to reach her potential.

While Eliza maintains she could never have come as far as she has without the support of Mentis, we believe she always had the capability and simply needed a supportive, encouraging team around her, guiding her towards whatever services or programs she needed to give her the opportunities she deserved.

*Not her real name

**With new-found confidence and skills, Eliza learned how to manage life issues and depression without using any substances.**
The Mentis Assist Carers Program offers one-on-one and education/social group support to almost 70 carers of those living with a mental or emotional illness, offering welcome respite from their demanding role.

The social/education support group assists around 30 carers, providing them with opportunities to socialise and connect with other local carers.

Specialist training and support

In May 2017, for the first time, carers were offered training in Mental Health First Aid. This was provided by a Mentis Assist staff member and trained Mental Health First Aid facilitator.

Responding to carer interests and needs, we introduced Crystal Bowl meditation, which uses sound vibration as a form of healing therapy.

Community networks

The Frankston-Mornington Peninsula area provides a strong network of carer support groups with which the Mentis Assist group can connect.

We welcomed the re-establishment of a bi-monthly meeting of carer services representing other primary health networks, including Alfred Health, Growth and Peninsula Carer Council. We also attended Peninsula Health’s bi-monthly carer support meetings.

To better assist carers and Mentis Assist staff in their roles of support to those with mental health issues, we joined member organisation Carers Victoria for education and training sessions.

Mentis Assist’s Mental Health Community Support Service (MHCSS) provides both one-on-one and psychosocial group support (residential and community-based) to some 40 clients aged from 16-24, living throughout Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula.

We also work in partnership with Frankston Youth Prevention and Recovery Care (YPARC), Mornington Peninsula Shire Youth Service and Headspace Frankston to provide clients with short-term support to help them access relevant community services.

In the past year our outreach workers assisted clients and their families with practical day-to-day essentials.

We also supported clients with educational costs (course fees, books, stationery, uniforms) and items associated with acquiring a new job (clothing, regulatory checks).

Success in action

Working primarily with young people experiencing psychiatric and/or emotional distress, we enjoy celebrating the achievements of clients who work hard to get their lives back on track. Therefore, we were excited to see one female client supported into detox following long-term substance abuse. The client also plans to enter long-term rehabilitation.
The Mentis Assist Mental Health and Homelessness Program (MHHP) works with people experiencing long-term homelessness, co-occurring mental and substance use disorders (dual diagnosis) and those who have high and complex support needs. People accessing our program range in age from 19-54, with the average client aged 34 years. Of these, 83% are male and 17% female. 73% of our clients have a diagnosed psychotic disorder. Partnering with multiple agencies across Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula, we provide a stepped approach to support what works with individuals to plan and coordinate their access to stable housing, psychosocial and psychotherapy support and clinical treatment.

Thanks to a strong partnership between our organisation, Peninsula Health Mental Health and its Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) programs and SalvoCare Eastern (housing), over the past year we have successfully:

- **28%** Reduced homelessness in our catchment area from 88% to 26%
- **34%** Noted a 34% decline in people sleeping on the streets, from 46% to 12%
- **46%** Increased access to drug treatment by 46%
- **100%** Supported 100% of clients to access clinical mental health treatment
- **34%** Reduced contact with the forensic system from 77% to 34%

**New initiatives**

Throughout 2016-17, every client who accessed the MHHP was diagnosed with a secondary substance use issue. As a result, we partnered with Peninsula Health’s AOD program to provide a fully-integrated dual diagnosis service for people with mental illness and long-term homelessness. The program was supported with the addition of a dedicated AOD clinician, providing clients with a more streamlined approach to access services.

**Community partnerships**

Mentis Assist supports an integrated assertive treatment model that works to engage with, and build trusted client relationships to help minimise the many problems they face, particularly those with a dual diagnosis (i.e. mental health and/or homelessness, drug use, etc) when trying to access services. Working with other agencies to provide a more holistic approach of using multiple services has been found to reduce psychiatric symptoms, hospitalisation and arrests, and improve housing outcomes and quality of life.

Our ongoing partnerships with Peninsula Health’s mental health and AOD programs and SalvoCare Eastern, has enabled us to provide a fully integrated team approach to supporting clients.

With the Mentis Assist MHHP set to close in September 2017, we will continue to work with our partners to ensure clients receive a continuum of care as they transfer to other programs offered by the organisation.

Mentis Assist was honoured to be selected by Peninsula Health Mental Health Services (PHMHS) to assist in developing a new clinical service model to educate PHMHS staff on understanding how the homeless, or those at risk of homelessness, can access appropriate accommodation.

Population health data shows the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula region is one of significant need with limited support services for those with mental illness and housing instability. The Australian Bureau of Statistics ranks Frankston as Victoria’s eighth most disadvantaged local government area, while the Mornington Peninsula ranks fifteenth.

The Improving Housing Access Project (IHAP) drew on the existing strengths and expertise of PHMHS and Mentis Assist to educate clinicians in understanding the homelessness crisis and how to support people to:

- Access and be referred to housing and homelessness support services
- Understand housing options and eligibility
- Access existing Peninsula Health homeless services

Almost 50 clinicians working in aged care and mental health attended the sessions. Positive feedback indicated increased knowledge and confidence in how to best address housing and homelessness issues. IHAP information sessions were also presented to a number of community support agencies.

Using existing information and research, and local knowledge, the project team developed an up-to-date housing pathways advisory guide that provided clinicians with ways to build and strengthen relationships with local public and private housing providers, ensuring an integrated team approach in supporting eligible clients to access housing.

With actual homelessness rates and housing instability difficult to ascertain given the transient nature of the group, coupled with lack of screening measures within the service system, anecdotal feedback from staff working within the sector, and from over 200 referrals to Mentis Assist’s Mental Health and Homelessness Program (MHHP), indicates transience, homelessness and housing instability are significant issues in the region.

Since the project was established in January 2017, 25 clients have been supported to access housing. Funding for IHAP will end in September 2017.
PARTNERS IN RECOVERY

Mentis Assist’s Partners in Recovery (PIR) supports people living with persistent mental illness and complex support needs, working with them to access a comprehensive range of services and programs to best meet their needs. As many suffer multiple substance use and/or physical health issues, they find day-to-day life challenging.

Since it was established in 2013, PIR has successfully supported over 220 clients and currently assists 68 clients, which places the program at capacity.

Due to decreased government funding in the past year, coupled with the housing crisis on the Mornington Peninsula, staff have noted a rise in homelessness numbers. Despite this, PIR successfully managed to secure transitional and permanent public housing for clients and relocate a number to country regions.

Key Highlights

Despite funding challenges and sector uncertainty, mainly due to the NDIS, we effectively:

- Worked with other service providers to increase client referrals with Individual Support Packages (ISP)
- Supported clients to navigate the range of services and supports across different sectors
- Supported all clients to consistently achieve their identified recovery goals
- Empowered families and carers to be better supported in the community
- Provided a more integrated and coordinated service response for clients tailored to meet their needs
- Worked jointly with other Mentis services to provide a more holistic approach to client support

To ensure staff are multi-skilled and educated to manage the increasing complexity of client behaviours, and to be across sector changes, in the past year the PIR team attended training in:

- Intellectual disability and mental health
- Acquired brain injury and mental health
- Hoarding and clutter
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- AOD (Alcohol and Other Drug) and advanced dual diagnosis

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Looking to the future

With the NDIS set to rollout across Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula in 2018, PIR is working closely with clients to prepare them for the transition. This has included assessing clients to ensure as many as possible qualify for a package.

The staged rollout of the NDIS has proved challenging for many, particularly those on, or being reviewed for Individual Support Packages (ISP). As the scheme will replace ISPs, many providers are scaling back services, creating uncertainty for those requiring bridging support until the NDIS is fully implemented.

We will continue to work with key partners and develop appropriate relationships and networks to best support these clients.

We value our community partnerships, which have continued to grow and strengthen. Teaming with local GPs, psychologists, Peninsula Health, Department of Justice and the Magistrates’ Court of Victoria (Assessment and Referral Court), has enabled us to increase staff skills and knowledge. Thanks to these collaborations, our work with dual diagnosis clients, particularly those with AOD challenges, saw an increased number of clients accessing and completing long-term rehabilitation programs, resulting in more stabilised mental health outcomes.

In the coming year, we will look to consolidate established relationships with providers and key stakeholders and where relevant, increase collaboration with services most needed by clients, particularly GP super clinics and community and women’s housing.

We value our community partnerships, which have continued to grow and strengthen.
Living with hope

When Emma* was referred to Mentis Assist in 2014, life for the 49-year-old mother of two was pretty grim.

She had substance abuse issues, owed rent on her home and had lost her licence from multiple driving offences, which included an accident with a luxury car resulting in a $10,000 damage bill. In addition, she had been diagnosed with bipolar and borderline personality disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety.

Is it any wonder Emma felt helpless and as though her life was not worth living?

The Mentis Assist Partners in Recovery (PIR) team, together with the Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) team, immediately began working collaboratively with Emma, first to help her identify the triggers associated with her mental health issues, and then to develop a recovery plan that would enable her to get life back on track.

In opening up about her life, Emma revealed she had a long history of self-harm (mostly laceration and/or overdose) starting when she was just nine years of age. This behaviour had lead to many hospital admissions.

In the five years leading to her arrival at Mentis, Emma had faced many personal and medical challenges which lead her to feeling paralyzed with heartbreak and suffering. She was stuck and didn’t know how to move forward.

It took two years, but thanks to the dedicated and determined work of those in the Mentis Assist’s Partners in Recovery and outreach teams, Emma slowly began to rebuild her life.

She was linked to many community agencies and was supported on her journey of abstinence, court attendances and gaining a greater understanding of herself. Hospital admissions decreased, substance abuse stopped and critically managing her behaviour became a new way of living. Thanks to ongoing support, today Emma has regained her driver’s licence, is drug free, has managed her debts and is looking to return to work.

For the first time in many years, Emma feels a sense of hope and purpose in her life.

*Not her real name
MENTIS ASSIST

Groups are based throughout Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula and provide older people with the opportunity to socialise and get involved in their community.

The weekly activity programs target people who find it difficult to access appropriate services and supports them to maintain or improve daily living skills with a goal to increase independence and enhance their quality of life.

The seniors program currently supports 60 participants.

Key highlights

To enhance clients’ connection to their broader community, and to provide learning opportunities, the program bought two laptop computers, providing online access for those without the internet and training opportunities for those who had never used a computer. This proved widely popular, particularly with clients accessing senior-specific websites targeting interactive learning.

Over the 2016-17 year, staff underwent Aboriginal Cultural Competency training to give them a greater understanding of how culture plays such a vital role in providing Indigenous support.

Program changes

On 1 July 2016, Victoria’s Home and Community Care (HACC) services for older people transitioned to the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP).

While service delivery did not change for clients, Mentis Assist staff needed to modify the way in which they report program methods and schedules. Staff also expect additional changes when clients aged 65 years and under transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Our Planned Activity Groups still have a mental health focus, but are also open to the wider community. The aim is to assist clients to remain living independently at home (or in a supported residential home) for as long as possible.

PAG programs focused on:

- Physical health
- Cognitive and intellectual stimulation
- Good nutrition
- Social interaction
- Emotional support
- Peer support

Community connection

Mentis is an active member of the Peninsula Social Support Network, which meets regularly to share ideas and information, ensuring clients have access to whatever support they need. The Mentis Seniors Group also organises annual gatherings with other local PAG groups. The 2016 event, which saw 70 clients attend, featured an international theme with guests wearing costumes representing different countries.

The seniors group is a member of the Peninsula Care Planning Group and works in partnership with local dementia and LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex) groups to enhance their learnings of providing positive support in line with our diversity plan.

In readiness for the National Disability Insurance Scheme’s 2018 rollout in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula, in February 2017 Mentis Assist appointed a Training and Group Coordinator to manage the changes expected to impact the organisation and broader mental health sector.

As we move from a funded to user-pays model that promotes participant choice and greater say in who will provide their services, we need to rethink the way in which future programs will be delivered.

Within a more participant-centric and competitive market driven environment, the Training and Group Coordinator will look to enhance the organisation’s reputation as a provider of choice and give nonpartisan support to assist clients select appropriate programs and services.

The Training and Group Coordinator will also:

- Develop a mental health awareness and training model that incorporates a fee-for-service framework. This model will be used to provide training within the corporate and community sectors
- Coordinate and develop psychosocial groups for clients and their carers. Psychosocial groups offer clients and carers a comfortable space to develop new social connections and strengthen existing ones to help build positive relationships. Some psychosocial groups will also focus on particular skills development in a supportive environment.
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Community education

To position itself as a leader in mental health training, in March 2017, Mentis Assist worked with staff at Peninsula Hot Springs to develop mental health awareness training tailored to specific staff roles and responsibilities.

Mentis Assist continues to evaluate existing psychosocial groups to ensure client needs are being met and their progress towards recovery can be measured. These groups will play an important part in how we provide services within an NDIS framework.

As we look to a new working environment under the NDIS, we will continue to build our external training program to further assist corporate, community and carer groups. We will also ensure that regular evaluation sessions are held for clients to check their mental health and social needs are being met.

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Mentis Assist’s Participants Advisory Group (PAG) provides a client perspective for the organisation with its members made up of those who have experienced our support and recovery programs and services.

The group meets regularly to discuss issues associated with mental health and makes recommendations to the Board and staff about ways in which services can be modified or improved. The group also provides feedback on mental health policies and programs, particularly those it believes directly impact our clients and carers.

**Raising profile**

To better assist Mentis in its work and to enhance its advocacy for clients, the PAG met in August 2016 to discuss ways the group could raise its profile and increase awareness about its work and role within the organisation.

As part of its ongoing contribution in assisting Mentis to review its internal policies, PAG provided valuable input into the Client Information Kit, which included reformatting the document to make it more user-friendly and adding inspirational quotes to provide a more personalised approach. To ensure its work and role is known to all those who connect with Mentis, PAG brochures and a welcome letter will now be included in new client folders.

In the past year, PAG attracted three new members to its group as a result of an information day held in March 2017. The group welcomes Bronwyn Hillhouse, Kerwin Jones and Howard Sanders. We also farewelled Chelsea Bleasby, Brent Medson, Michelle Neilson and Murray Jackson and thank them for their valuable contribution.

As the group looks towards the coming year, it does so with an understanding that as the sector changes, particularly within an NDIS environment, it will need to evolve and adapt to ensure it continues to play a valuable part in advocating for those the organisation supports.
Mentis Assist has recorded a healthy surplus of $125,529 for the financial year. In addition to our previous year balance sheet reserves, the surplus puts us in a good position to tackle the challenges for 2017/18.

In relation to the year’s activities, Total Income was slightly less than the previous year due to a reduction in carried forward funds from prior years as disclosed in ‘Other Grants’.

Although it appears that Dept. of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Grants were reduced by $167,000 this was due to the split of Home and Community Care funding between the DHHS and the Dept. of Health (DoH) funding.

Total Expenditure was higher than the previous year in large part due to employee costs on programs which were part-funded from prior year grants. Administration expenses were also higher due to planned investment in marketing and business development activities in preparation for the transition to NDIS funding.

Cash and Cash Equivalents reduced from the previous year, in part due to the utilisation of previous years’ Grants in Advance (this also reflects within a reduction Current Liabilities). A major review of our fixed asset register revealed some obsolete items that have been removed from the Balance Sheet. These items were all fully depreciated and there was no impact on the profitability or retained equity.

With the addition of the year end surplus, our Total Equity is now $1,810,911.
The Mentis Assist Board consists of eight volunteer Directors. The Directors bring to the organisation a diversity of knowledge and skills gained from a combination of professional practice, management and corporate governance experience in areas such as health services, community services, human resources and finance across government, not for profit and private sectors.

The Board meets on a bi-monthly schedule as well as at other times as required. We extend our thanks to the Directors for their support and guidance.

Board Members

Dawn Fisher (Chairperson)
Kevin Clarke (Treasurer)
Ila Howard (Deputy Chairperson)
Sue Kavanagh (Secretary)
Elain Bakker (Director)
Tracey May (Director)
Warren Cecil (Director)
Peter Brookhouse (Director)

Executive Committee Members

Dawn Fisher (Chair)
Ila Howard (Deputy Chair)
Kevin Clarke (Treasurer)
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Mentis Assist is privileged to receive the support of our community to assist in influencing the lives of all those associated with our agency — even in the face of an uncertain economic environment, our partners have remained steadfast with their generosity.

Their commitment to Mentis provides an immediate and significant impact and enables our consumers to continue to benefit from our programs.

Peninsula Hot Springs

A special thank you to our Corporate Partner Peninsula Hot Springs, for its support in raising awareness of mental health and its associated impact upon the community.

The partnership was officially launched at an event held at Peninsula Hot Springs in March 2017 with a video message by the Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP.

With a common goal of improving mental and physical wellbeing for those within the community both locally and throughout Victoria, the partnership is a perfect synergy between Mentis Assist and Peninsula Hot Springs.

Mentis Assist recognises and thanks our partners in:

Funding
• Department of Health
• Department of Health & Human Services
• Department of Social Services
• South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN)
• Mornington Peninsula Shire

Corporate and Philanthropic
• Board of Governance of Mentis Assist
• Volunteers of Mentis Assist
• Peninsula Hot Springs
• Manyung Gallery Group
• Steve Bastoni (Actor, Director, Writer)
• Jessica Robinson (Singer/Songwriter)

Alliances
• Frankston Mornington Peninsula Primary Care Partnership (FMPPCP)
• Peninsula Model Alliances
• VICSERV

Services
• Alfred Health
• Frankston City Council
• Frankston Mornington Peninsula Aboriginal Action Group
• Headspace
• Housing Choices
• Monash Health
• Peninsula Carer Council
• Peninsula Health
• Peninsula Youth & Family Service
• SalvoCare Eastern
• Skillplus Employment and Training
• Southern Peninsula Community Care Centre
• South Eastern Drug & Alcohol Service
• South Migrant Resource Centre
• Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre (Rosebud & Mornington)
• Turning Point Drug and Alcohol Services
• Wise Employment Service
• Wayss Housing and Support Services

Our Partners

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