



ST VINCENT'S



**Annual Impact Report**  
**2025-26**



ST VINCENT'S



**From fear and isolation to  
empowerment, independence and  
connection – Compassion in Action.**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Open Support acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work, and in particular the Gadigal, Bidjigal and Darug peoples of the Eora Nation.

We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We celebrate the enduring contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to Australian society and to the communities we serve.

# Contents

|           |                                                                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| P4.....   | Our Story                                                       |
| P5.....   | Our Vision, Mission, Values and Purpose                         |
| P6.....   | Messages from Chair of the Board and CEO of St Vincent's Clinic |
| P8.....   | Financial Highlights                                            |
| P9.....   | Your Impact                                                     |
| P10 ..... | Domestic and Family Violence Programs and Services              |
| P14 ..... | Community Connections Programs and Services                     |
| P18 ..... | Thank You to Our Supporters                                     |
| P20 ..... | Our Volunteers – The Shop - Our Team                            |
| P22.....  | A Call to Action - Into the Future                              |



ST VINCENT'S



## Our Story

For 35 years, Open Support has stood alongside people experiencing some of the most difficult moments of their lives. Established by the Sisters of Charity in 1990 as Sisters of Charity Outreach, Open Support was founded on a simple but powerful belief:

every person deserves dignity, compassion and the opportunity to thrive.

Today, Open Support provides specialist recovery-focused services for women and children escaping domestic and family violence and for people experiencing social isolation and loneliness. While the challenges facing our community continue to evolve, our commitment to supporting those most vulnerable remains unchanged.

As we celebrate our 35th anniversary, we reflect on a remarkable legacy of compassion in action. From the original Outreach services to the specialist programs delivered today, Open Support has responded to unmet need with flexibility, courage and innovation.

Over 35 years, services have evolved from information and referral

support, accommodation, childcare and community outreach, to sophisticated trauma-informed recovery programs and social connection services.

This year has been one of strong outcomes, continued growth and renewed confidence in our future.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, volunteers, partners and supporters, Open Support continues to transform lives every day.

### Governance and Support

St Vincent's Open Support operates as part of St Vincent's Clinic, a facility of St Vincent's Health Australia under the stewardship of Mary Aikenhead Ministries.

The St Vincent's Clinic Board provides governance oversight for Open Support and is supported by an Advisory Committee that offers strategic advice and guidance to the Clinic CEO and Open Support leadership team. Committee membership brings together people with relevant expertise and experience to support the ongoing development and sustainability of our services.

Open Support is led by Katie Viviers, CEO of St Vincent's Clinic, and is guided by a shared commitment to delivering compassionate, high-quality support to people experiencing vulnerability, isolation and hardship.

As a privately funded charity, Open Support relies on the generosity of donors, philanthropic partners, community supporters and grant makers. During FY26, our partnership with the St Vincent's Curran Foundation continued to strengthen, building on the success of the previous year and helping grow awareness, engagement and fundraising opportunities to support our work.

We are deeply grateful to every individual, organisation and community group that stands alongside us. Your support enables us to continue the mission first established by the Sisters of Charity, ensuring that women and children experiencing domestic and family violence, and people facing loneliness and social isolation, can access the support they need to build safer, more connected and hopeful futures.

## *At Open Support our services are unique.*



## Our Vision, Mission, Values and Purpose

Open Support exists because too many people continue to fall through the gaps of complex systems.

Domestic and family violence, social isolation, loneliness, poor mental health, financial hardship and cultural barriers can create profound disadvantage.

We recognise that many people need more than crisis support. They need long-term, personalised assistance that helps them rebuild confidence, independence and hope.

Our hope is for the people in our community to live free from violence, loneliness and social isolation.

*“Compassion in Action”.*

**Our mission** is to provide specialist comprehensive services that foster safety, empowerment, permanent independence and connection, with an emphasis on breaking the cycle of violence and social isolation.

# Chair of the Board and CEO of St Vincent's Clinic

## Message from the Chair of the Board

Dear Supporters and Friends,

As another year comes to a close, I would like to begin by acknowledging the many people who make Open Support's work possible. Your generosity, encouragement and belief in our purpose continue to have a profound impact on the lives of the people we serve.

This year has also been a significant one for Open Support as we mark 35 years of service to our community. Founded by the Sisters of Charity in 1990, Open Support has remained committed to supporting people experiencing some of life's most challenging circumstances. While our services have evolved over time, our mission remains unchanged: helping people move from fear and isolation towards safety, independence, connection and hope.

The need for our services remains considerable. Across the domestic and family violence sector and in the growing area of social isolation and loneliness, demand continues to place pressure on community organisations. At the same

time, funding environments remain challenging and expectations on service providers continue to increase. Open Support has responded by remaining focused on delivering high-quality services, strengthening organisational capability and ensuring that our resources are directed where they can make the greatest difference.

Throughout the year, the Board has remained focused on its responsibilities of governance, strategy, accountability and risk oversight. A key priority has been ensuring Open Support is well-positioned to meet current needs while building a sustainable foundation for the future. This includes careful stewardship of our resources, maintaining strong governance practices and supporting opportunities that enhance our long-term impact.

One of the most important developments this year has been the continued growth of our partnership with St Vincent's Curran Foundation. This partnership is helping strengthen our fundraising capacity, broaden awareness of Open Support's work and create opportunities to build sustainable funding streams for the years ahead. We are grateful for their commitment to our shared mission and the support they continue to provide.

Looking ahead, the Board's priorities remain clear.

We will continue to focus on financial sustainability, organisational resilience, measurable impact and responsible growth. We want to ensure that Open Support remains responsive to changing community needs while preserving the quality, compassion and personalised support that have become hallmarks of our services over the past 35 years.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our Advisory Committee, donors, partners, volunteers and the broader St Vincent's community for their ongoing support.

I also wish to acknowledge Katie Viviers and the Open Support team. Their professionalism, dedication and compassion continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of vulnerable people every day.

Together, we are carrying forward the legacy of the Sisters of Charity and helping create stronger, safer and more connected communities.

Thank you for helping us continue the work begun by the Sisters of Charity 35 years ago.

*Gail Hambly*  
Chair, St Vincent's Clinic Board



## Message from the CEO

In 2025, Open Support reached a significant milestone, marking 35 years of service to our community. This anniversary is both a celebration of our history and a reminder of the enduring importance of our mission.

Open Support began as Sisters of Charity Outreach, based on the powerful belief that every person deserves to be treated with dignity, compassion and respect, particularly during times of hardship and vulnerability. Over the past three and a half decades, that belief has guided our work and shaped the organisation we are today.

This milestone is an opportunity to acknowledge the many people who have contributed to Open Support's journey. We honour the vision and commitment of the Sisters of Charity, whose values remain at the heart of our organisation. We recognise the dedication of our staff, past and present, whose professionalism and compassion have transformed lives. We are deeply grateful to our volunteers, donors, Board and Advisory Committee members, whose generosity and guidance have strengthened our capacity to serve. Most importantly, we thank the clients who have trusted Open Support and allowed us to walk alongside them through some of life's most challenging circumstances.

While much has changed over 35 years, the needs within our community remain significant. Domestic and family violence continues to affect countless individuals and families across Australia. At the same time, loneliness and social isolation are increasingly recognised as profound social and health challenges. As systems become more complex, many people continue to struggle to find the personalised, consistent support they need. Demand for long-term, relationship-based assistance continues to grow, and too many remain at risk of falling through the gaps.

Open Support exists to respond to that need. What sets us apart is our holistic model of recovery that focuses on long-term wellbeing, not simply immediate challenges. We understand that rebuilding a life takes time. By walking alongside people for as long as necessary, we help them navigate challenges, reconnect with their communities and build sustainable pathways forward.

Every person who comes to Open Support is treated as an individual with unique strengths, aspirations and potential. By fostering confidence, belonging and hope, we help people move beyond crisis and towards greater stability, independence and connection.

As we look to the future, we remain focused on building a sustainable organisation capable of meeting growing community need. We are grateful for our continued partnership with the St Vincent's Curran Foundation and for the philanthropic support that enables our work. Together, we are committed to strengthening long-term sustainability, ensuring that Open Support can continue to grow its impact while preserving the quality, compassion and personal care that define our services.

I am sincerely thankful to our supporters, volunteers, partners and dedicated staff. The impact we create is only possible because of your shared commitment and generosity.

As we celebrate 35 years of compassion in action, I remain confident about the future. Together, we will continue to help more people experience safety, dignity, belonging and connection, ensuring that hope remains within reach for those who need it most.

*Katie Viviers*  
CEO, St Vincent's Clinic and  
St Vincent's Open Support



# Financial Highlights 2025-26

## How you have helped us

Revenue \$3.5M

56% Donations, bequests & gifts



32% Grants & subsidies



6% Retail shop



6% Investment income



Net Asset \$10.5M

**77%** of organisational expenditure directly supported programs

## How your donations supported us

Expenses \$2.1M

51% Domestic and Family Violence programs



17% Community Connections program



9% Retail shop operations



12% Fundraising



11% Organisational support



In FY26, Open Support remained focused on delivering high-quality services while continuing to strengthen the organisation's long-term sustainability. Through careful financial management and the ongoing generosity of our supporters, we maintained service delivery across our domestic and family violence and Community Connections programs while positioning the organisation for future growth.

Despite receiving no government funding, Open Support finished the year in a strong financial position, achieving an operating surplus of \$1.4 million and increasing cash reserves by \$1.5 million. Strong fundraising performance, together with prudent cost management, contributed to this result and provides greater certainty for the future. As our funding can fluctuate from year to year, maintaining adequate cash reserves helps ensure Open Support can continue delivering services without interruption, retain the experienced team at the heart of our work and help more people each year. Multi-year commitments from supporters play a vital role in providing this stability and helping us plan for the future.

During the year, we exceeded our fundraising target and continued to build momentum through our partnership with the St Vincent's Curran Foundation. This support is helping create a stronger and more sustainable funding base, enabling Open Support to plan with confidence and invest in future opportunities to expand our impact.

Importantly, these results were achieved while maintaining our commitment to directing the majority of resources to frontline services, with 77% of expenditure supporting program delivery. Throughout the year, our programs operated at capacity, providing specialist support to people experiencing domestic and family violence, social isolation and loneliness.

Looking ahead, we remain focused on growing our impact, strengthening organisational resilience and ensuring our services continue to respond to changing community needs. By building a sustainable financial foundation today, we are helping ensure that Open Support can continue delivering safety, connection and hope for years to come.

# Your Impact

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters and volunteers, more people were able to find safety, connection and hope this year.

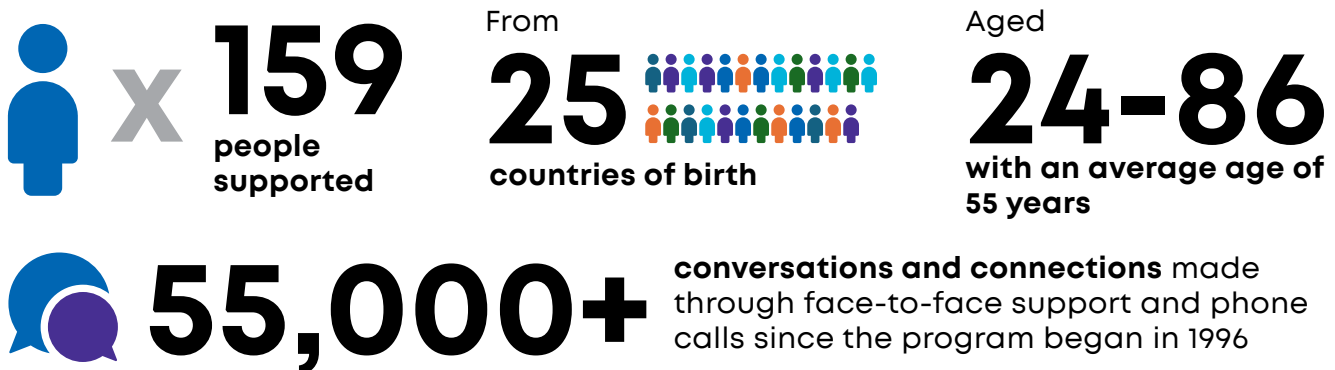
## Domestic and Family Violence



For every dollar spent, we return \$5.30 in community benefit

*"Thank you so much for all the support. I really appreciate everything you have done for my children and me. The staff are very kind and supportive and I felt safe and respected."*

## Community Connections Program



55,000+ conversations and connections made through face-to-face support and phone calls since the program began in 1996

Visuals: Two overlapping speech bubbles, one blue and one purple.

**Community Connections clients** reported improvements across key wellbeing measures, including:

- Lower social anxiety
- Increased self-esteem & confidence
- Renewed trust in services/programs
- Providing a sense of belonging
- Providing a sense of meaning & purpose
- Support to establish & maintain meaningful social connection with community leading to reduced social isolation & increased wellbeing

For every dollar spent,



*"The Community Connector instilled confidence, the right language to use and strategies for approaching social situations. I have strategies now to feel less lonely and know what to do when I have that experience."*



## Domestic and Family Violence Programs and Services

For women and children escaping domestic and family violence, reaching safety is only the beginning. Recovery takes time. It requires practical support, therapeutic intervention, stable housing, trusted relationships and the opportunity to rebuild confidence and independence.

At Open Support, our Recovery Model is designed to support exactly that journey.

### What is the Open Support Domestic and Family Violence Program?

The Open Support Domestic and Family Violence Program helps individuals and families escaping domestic and family violence move beyond crisis and rebuild safe, independent lives.

Open Support provides much more than emergency accommodation. Specialist workers help survivors navigate complex challenges including

housing, income support, immigration, and legal matters, while offering practical and emotional support tailored to each family's needs.

Families typically receive around three months of crisis support, focused on securing safety, housing, financial stability, and access to legal protections. Once permanent housing is secured, support continues for approximately 18 months through a transitional care program, however Open Support remains available to past clients whenever they need help again.

During their transitional care period, the team assists with immigration issues, child custody arrangements, property settlements, and rebuilding confidence and decision-making skills. The goal is to help survivors move from surviving day to day to thriving as independent members of the community.

The program has a strong focus on supporting people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, who often face additional barriers when seeking safety and support.

## Our impact this year

Over the past year, **50 adults and 60 children** participated in our domestic and family violence recovery programs. Every family received tailored support based on their individual circumstances, helping them to break the cycle of domestic violence and build lives defined by safety, independence and hope.

The impact of this work can be seen in both the numbers and the lives behind them.

This year, women secured employment, gained permanent residency, continued education and training, learned English, obtained driver licences and moved into homes of their own. Children accessed specialist psychological support, enrolled in school, developed friendships, improved confidence and built the foundations needed to thrive.

One measure we are particularly proud of is long-term safety. In FY26, **only 2 families who exited**

**our program returned to a perpetrator**, continuing a trend of exceptionally strong outcomes achieved through our trauma-informed, relationship-based approach.

Housing remains a significant challenge. Finding affordable accommodation can take months and often involves repeated inspections, applications and disappointment. Despite these barriers, **85% of families transitioned from crisis accommodation into safe housing** during the year.

Open Support continued to support women and families on temporary and precarious visas, a group that often faces significant barriers in accessing housing, financial assistance and specialist domestic violence services.

Our recovery programs continued to evolve in response to client needs. Women participated in counselling, domestic violence education, English language classes, employment support, driving lessons and health services.

We also continued to deliver trauma informed wellbeing programs, such as safe-touch therapy. For many women escaping violence, physical touch has become associated with fear, control or harm.

Safe-touch therapy provides a positive experience of consent-based care, helping women reduce anxiety, rebuild confidence and reconnect with their sense of self in a safe and supportive environment.

Children experience domestic and family violence differently from adults, but the impact can be profound. Many arrive at Open Support experiencing anxiety, developmental delays, difficulties at school, emotional distress, low confidence or challenges forming healthy relationships. Our recovery program is designed to help children feel safe, rebuild trust and develop the skills they need to thrive.

The children's program includes child psychology, educational advocacy, specialist referrals, group activities, excursions and play-based learning designed to support emotional wellbeing and recovery from trauma. Younger children also benefit from childcare support, movement and bonding activities, and our Mum and Bubs program.

These outcomes are possible because supporters understand that recovery from domestic and family violence does not end when immediate danger passes. It continues through every counselling session, school enrolment, housing application and moment of regained confidence.

## Their stories

### From Survival to Independence

When Beth\* entered Open Support's Domestic and Family Violence program, she wanted to create a different future for herself and her children.

Working alongside Open Support and a career coach, she committed fully to the recovery process. She attended programs, participated in counselling and continued developing her English and employment skills.

This year, Beth achieved a milestone she once thought was beyond reach. She secured regular employment during school hours, five days a week. She is so happy and her two children are so proud.

For Beth, the achievement was about more than a job. Neither her parents nor grandparents had ever worked, meaning she had become the first person in her family to break a cycle of intergenerational unemployment.

Today, she is building financial independence and creating new possibilities for her children.

Her story is a powerful reminder that recovery is not only about safety. It is about creating opportunities to thrive.

### Supporting a Child to Thrive

When a mother and her nine-year-old son entered Open Support's Domestic and Family Violence program, both were facing significant challenges.

The child had autism and required substantial support, yet had never attended school.

His mother faced language barriers and was unfamiliar with Australia's education and disability support systems. Navigating assessments, specialist services and enrolment processes felt overwhelming.

Open Support's Family and Child Advocate worked closely with the family and local schools to ensure the child received the support he needed.

Today, he attends school full-time.

For the first time, he is experiencing the joy of learning, forming friendships and participating in a school community.

The family has also moved into a private rental home and is building a stable future together.

### Finding His Voice

When a mother and her young son arrived at Open Support, they were carrying the effects of trauma that had profoundly shaped their lives.

The six-year-old boy had additional needs and had never spoken. Building trust took time. Each afternoon, Open Support's Family and Child Advocate would sit with him, quietly building Lego together. There was no pressure and no expectation, just consistency, patience and care.

Then one day, the boy burst into the room and asked, "Excuse me, is Sharon here? It's Lego time!"

It was a huge breakthrough that was made possible because of the safe and nurturing environment provided at the cottage. Today, he is talking, reading, interacting with others and engaging confidently with the world around him.

*\* Names changed to protect privacy*



*Together, we are helping  
women and children move  
beyond survival and build  
lives defined by safety,  
dignity and hope.*

# Community Connections Programs and Services

Social connection is increasingly recognised as a critical determinant of health and wellbeing. In June 2025, the World Health Organization's Commission on Social Connection highlighted loneliness and social isolation as widespread global challenges with significant impacts on physical health, mental health, quality of life and community wellbeing. The report called for greater investment in programs that help people build meaningful relationships and strengthen their sense of belonging.

Open Support's Community Connections Program exists to do exactly that. Through personalised support, practical coaching and community engagement, we help people experiencing social isolation and loneliness build confidence, develop meaningful relationships and reconnect with their communities.

## What is Community Connections?

The Community Connections Program is a no-cost initiative providing social support to people experiencing social isolation or loneliness. The program helps participants establish and maintain meaningful community connections, leading to reduced isolation and improved wellbeing.

The program continues to evolve to meet our communities' needs.

We offer a social bridge to those feeling disconnected, helping them build lasting relationships and regain confidence.

Our skilled staff and trained volunteers deliver tailored support through:

- Our skilled staff and trained volunteers deliver tailored support through:
- Individualised case planning and social navigation
- One-on-one social support
- Capacity and confidence-building
- Group events and activities
- Phone-based support



## Our impact this year

In FY26, **159 people** participated in the program, coming from 25 different countries of birth and ranging in age from 24 to 86.

While every client's journey is different, many arrive feeling disconnected, lacking confidence or experiencing barriers that make social participation difficult. Some have experienced significant mental health challenges, while others have lost social networks through illness, ageing, life transitions or personal circumstances.

What makes the program unique is its personalised approach. Community Connectors work alongside each client, building trust and confidence before helping them take the next step towards

greater connection and independence. For some, this means attending a community group for the first time. For others, it means learning practical strategies to overcome anxiety, rebuild confidence or reconnect with activities they once enjoyed.

**This year our clients reported improvements** in key wellbeing areas, including lower social anxiety, increased self-esteem and confidence, renewed trust in services and programs, a greater sense of belonging, meaning and purpose, and lower social isolation.

This year, we were proud to introduce **Finding Your Voice**, a partnership with Belvoir Theatre designed to build confidence, communication skills and self-esteem. Participants described the program as transformational, helping them develop a stronger sense of self and a greater belief in their ability to engage with others and the wider community.

*"The last stage of healing isn't therapy focused, but rather engaging with others who may be bruised and are on the healing journey. We are all working on building confidence and positivity. Finding Your Voice was phenomenal and made a huge difference to my life. It is unique and truly amazing". – Finding Your Voice participant*

The program also continues to foster genuine friendships and lasting social networks. A small women's social group established by Open Support grew steadily throughout the year, with participants eventually choosing to continue meeting independently each week. What began as facilitated support evolved into a community of friendship, mutual encouragement and connection.

*"[The women's social group has] achieved the most wonderful outcome of true friendships and sisterhood!"*

Demand for the program continues to grow, with referrals increasingly involving more complex mental health needs and a greater requirement for intensive one-to-one support. Despite these challenges, our dedicated team remains committed to helping people build the confidence, skills and connections needed to participate fully in community life.

As loneliness and social isolation continue to affect people of all ages and backgrounds, your support helps ensure that more people can experience connection, purpose and belonging.

## Their stories

### Finding Connection, One Stitch at a Time

Sarah\* came to Open Support's Community Connections program feeling isolated and overwhelmed by social anxiety. Although she wanted to build friendships and reconnect with her community, taking part in social activities felt out of reach. Through personalised support from her Community Connector, Sarah was encouraged to explore her interests, develop practical confidence-building skills, and take gradual steps towards engaging with others.

By introducing her to crochet, accompanying her to a local knitting group, and providing ongoing encouragement, Open Support helped transform what once felt impossible into something achievable. Today, Sarah is a regular member of her local knitting and crochet group, has formed meaningful friendships, and continues to use the skills she learned through the program to navigate new challenges independently. Her journey demonstrates the life-changing impact that the right support, at the right time, can have on a person's confidence, connection and wellbeing.

*\* Names changed to protect privacy*

### Learning to Connect Again

When Belinda\* joined the Community Connections Program, even simple social interactions felt daunting.

Meeting new people, starting conversations and engaging in community activities all felt overwhelming.

With support from her Community Connector, she began developing practical strategies to navigate social situations and manage feelings of loneliness. Together they practised the small skills many people take for granted, from preparing for activities to building confidence in everyday interactions.

Reflecting on her experience, Belinda said:

*"I have strategies now to feel less lonely and know what to do when I have that experience. I used to have a lot of fears and now they have minimised... I am grateful to just be a person in the world, I couldn't even go for a walk in the park before..."*

Most importantly, she gained something she had struggled to find elsewhere: confidence in herself.

### Confidence Beyond Fear

For years, Peter\* lived with a fear that many people would never notice.

The gap between the train platform and the train had become a source of significant anxiety. Over time, that fear prevented him from travelling by rail and limited his opportunities to participate in activities outside his local area.

Working with his Community Connector, Peter gradually learned grounding techniques and strategies to manage anxiety. Together, they travelled to the train station, talked through his concerns and practised taking small steps forward.

Eventually, he boarded the train.

The journey itself may have seemed ordinary to others, but for Peter it represented something far greater: confidence, independence and freedom.

By overcoming a barrier that had restricted his life for years, new opportunities for social connection became possible.



*Together, we are helping  
people discover that  
meaningful connection is  
possible, and that they do  
not have to face life alone.*



## Thank You to Our Supporters

As we reflect on another year of impact, one thing remains clear: none of our work would be possible without the generosity of our supporters.

Whether you contributed financially, shared your expertise, volunteered your time, donated goods, opened your networks, attended an event or simply helped raise awareness of our mission, you have played an important role in changing lives. Your support has helped ensure that people facing domestic and family violence, loneliness and social isolation can access the care, connection and practical assistance they need.

This year marked a special milestone as Open Support celebrated **35 years of Compassion in Action**.

Since 1990, generations of supporters have helped carry forward the legacy of the Sisters of Charity, enabling us to respond to changing community needs while remaining focused on dignity, compassion and justice. We are proud that this legacy continues today through the people who stand alongside us.

We are grateful to everyone who contributes financially to Open Support, whether through a one-off gift, regular giving, major philanthropy, event participation or gifts in kind. Your generosity provides more than programs and services. It creates opportunities, restores hope and helps





people believe in a better future.

We are equally grateful to the many organisations, community groups and professional partners who support our work. Through referrals, collaboration, pro bono assistance, donated goods and shared expertise, you help strengthen the outcomes we achieve for clients and extend our reach across the community.

A special thank you to the supporters who contribute to our Gift Shop and raffle activities. From the talented knitters, card makers and craftspeople who donate handmade goods, to the loyal customers who continue to support the shop, your generosity contributes directly to programs that help people move from fear and

isolation towards safety and connection.

We also acknowledge the ongoing support of St Vincent's Curran Foundation. Through our partnership, we are building stronger foundations for the future, increasing awareness of our work and helping ensure Open Support remains sustainable and responsive to growing community need.

On behalf of our Board, staff, volunteers and the people whose lives have been touched by Open Support, thank you. Your generosity, trust and commitment make lasting change possible.

Together, we are continuing a 35-year tradition of compassion, community and hope.





## Our Volunteers

For 35 years, volunteers have been at the heart of Open Support. They continue to play a vital role in helping us turn compassion into action, providing practical support, raising essential funds and creating meaningful connections across our community.

Over the past year, **46 volunteers** contributed their time, skills and experience to support our mission. Together, they donated more than **2,364 hours** across our Community Connections, fundraising and retail activities. We were also delighted to welcome **18 new volunteers** to the program, bringing fresh energy, ideas and perspectives.

Our volunteers support people in many different ways. They provide companionship and

encouragement to people experiencing social isolation, facilitate group activities, assist with fundraising initiatives and help ensure the smooth operation of our Gift Shop and raffle activities.

We are deeply grateful to the volunteer members of the St Vincent's Clinic Board and Open Support Advisory Committee for their ongoing leadership, expertise and commitment. Through their stewardship, guidance and advocacy, they help ensure Open Support remains focused on delivering high-quality, sustainable services for people experiencing domestic and family violence, loneliness and social isolation. We thank them for generously giving their time and sharing their knowledge in support of our mission and the communities we serve.

Volunteer feedback continues to remind us of the value of connection, purpose and community. Many volunteers tell us they are drawn to Open Support because our mission aligns

closely with their own values of care, kindness and inclusion. In return, they create lasting impacts in the lives of the people they support.

### Finding Purpose Through Volunteering

For many Open Support volunteers, the impact flows in both directions.

Some volunteers join seeking an opportunity to contribute to their community. Others are looking for connection, purpose or a meaningful way to spend their time.

One volunteer reflected:

*"I found Open Support's mission aligned seamlessly with my lifelong dedication to compassion and kindness towards those in need."*

Whether supporting clients, working in the Gift Shop or assisting with fundraising activities, volunteers become part of a community built on compassion, dignity and service.

Their generosity strengthens Open Support every day.

## The Open Support Gift Shop

Located in the foyer of St Vincent's Clinic, the Open Support Gift Shop continues to be much more than a fundraising initiative. It provides a welcoming and friendly space where patients, visitors, staff and volunteers can pause, browse and connect.

The shop enjoyed another strong year despite challenging economic conditions, increasing sales by **more than \$15,000** compared to the previous year. Customers continue to value the unique range of gifts, cards, knitted goods and handmade items that cannot easily be found elsewhere.

The success of the shop relies on the dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of individuals and community groups who donate goods throughout the year. We are particularly grateful to

the talented knitters, card makers and supporters whose handcrafted contributions help make the shop such a special place.

Every purchase helps generate vital funds that are reinvested into Open Support's domestic and family violence and Community Connections programs, ensuring support reaches those who need it most.

### More Than a Shop Volunteer

Every week, Adriana takes her place in the Open Support Gift Shop.

At first glance, her role appears simple: welcoming customers, arranging stock and assisting with purchases. But the impact goes much further.

Many people who visit the shop are patients, family members or visitors navigating difficult circumstances. Some stop for a gift, while others are simply looking for a moment of normality and conversation.

For Adriana, it is those interactions that matter most.

*"It gives me great pleasure to help people," she says.*

Volunteer Tana describes it this way:

*"I love to interact with the customers, regular and new, that like to have a chat. Knowing that you are helping Open Support is a very worthy cause."*

Through countless conversations and acts of kindness, volunteers like Adriana and Tana help create a welcoming environment where people feel seen, valued and connected. Every purchase also contributes directly to programs supporting people experiencing domestic and family violence, loneliness and social isolation.



## Our Team

At Open Support, our greatest strength is our people. Every day, our staff combine expertise, professionalism and compassion to support individuals and families experiencing some of life's most challenging circumstances.

Our team may be small, but its impact is significant. Across our domestic and family violence services, Community Connections program, fundraising activities and operational support functions, staff work together to provide personalised, relationship-based support that helps clients achieve meaningful and lasting change.

We are proud of the skill, dedication and resilience our team demonstrates every day. Guided by the values and legacy of the Sisters of Charity, they continue to create opportunities for people to move from fear and isolation towards safety, connection and hope.



## Together, We Can Create More Safety, Connection and Hope

For 35 years, Open Support has stood alongside people experiencing domestic and family violence, loneliness and social isolation. Guided by the vision of the Sisters of Charity, we continue to provide support that is compassionate, personalised and focused on long-term outcomes.

Today, the need for our services continues to grow.

Women and children escaping violence face an increasingly difficult housing environment and cost-of-living challenges. At the same time, people experiencing loneliness and social isolation are presenting with more complex mental health needs and require greater levels of individual support before they can reconnect with their communities.

Despite these challenges, Open Support remains committed to helping people move from fear

and uncertainty towards safety, confidence, independence and belonging. This year alone, we supported 110 women and children through our domestic and family violence programs and 159 people through Community Connections. We did so without government funding, relying on the generosity of our donors, volunteers and partners.

As we look to the future, we are focused on growing our impact while maintaining the quality, compassion and personalised support that define our services.



Join us to create connection,  
safety and change.

Continued support from St Vincent's Curran Foundation is helping strengthen our fundraising capacity and build a more sustainable future for Open Support. This partnership is creating opportunities to increase awareness, grow philanthropic support and ensure we can continue responding to community need for years to come.

Every day there are people who need support, safety and connection. There are women seeking freedom from violence, children needing specialist support to recover from

trauma, and individuals experiencing profound loneliness who simply need someone to help them take the first step towards community and belonging.

To ensure we can be there for everyone who needs us, we continue to build a stronger and more sustainable funding base for the future.

Your support makes this possible.

Every donation helps provide practical assistance, therapeutic support, advocacy, housing

outcomes and meaningful social connection. Every volunteer hour strengthens our capacity to serve. Every conversation about our work helps raise awareness and build a more compassionate community.

Together, we can help more women and children live free from violence. Together, we can reduce loneliness and social isolation. Together, we can ensure that people facing some of life's greatest challenges do not have to face them alone.



ST VINCENT'S



## Help us deliver care and support where the need is greatest

You have the power to make an impact. By donating to Open Support, you help us to assist those most in need – and to go beyond.



### St Vincent's Open Support

438 Victoria St, Darlinghurst  
NSW 2010, Australia

[info@opensupport.org.au](mailto:info@opensupport.org.au) | (02) 8382 6430

[opensupport.org.au](https://opensupport.org.au)