



## KARUNA'S VALUES

To serve others with kindness  
To cultivate wisdom and compassion  
To create a trusted place of refuge  
To imbue the joy of giving  
To be ethical in all activities



Karuna is an affiliate of The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition  
[WWW.FPMT.ORG](http://WWW.FPMT.ORG)

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STEVE PENTTI

Nearly twelve months prior, late February 2014, Steve found out his devastating diagnosis. It was bowel cancer, with secondary cancer in the hip, pelvis and lower spine. His fight to survive would be waged with great courage and strength. Initially he was not given long to live, but Steve was determined to battle on until the very end. Steve Pentti was always a battler, so much so that he had long ago become affectionately known by those close to him (especially those who knew his rugby skills) as 'The Punisher'. With every new adversity that life threw at him, Steve just kept stepping up to it and kept coming back.

Early on in his illness Steve made a very definite choice to be at home. He wanted to live life as normally as possible with his wife Allanah, sons Cooper and Arli, and beautiful baby Milla who arrived in the midst of Steve's illness. Karuna was the only service that could truly support Steve's choice, and give care and support to the whole family.

Steve received wonderful care from the treating teams looking after him when he went to the hospital for chemotherapy treatment. But with Karuna care, Steve lived his last year in his own home, amongst those he loved best - playing with his kids, going out with mates, eating at his own dining table and every morning waking in his own bed with his cherished Allanah beside him.

At home Steve had control over his life and with Karuna support he lived it just the way he wanted to.

It was because of Karuna care that Steve the sportsman and father could go out fishing with a son and mate.

It was because of Karuna care that he could be the host and life of the party at his 40th birthday celebration at the Brekkie Creek.

It was because of Karuna care that for his last Valentine's Day with Allanah, Steve was able to cook one last romantic dinner for his true love.

*"The strength and courage that he showed through this time was a true indication of his character"*

Karuna staff met him wherever he went and planned his individual care to ensure Steve could be that active man he was - husband, son, father, friend - as long as possible.

Protector and husband to Allanah, father to Cooper, Arli and Milla, brother, and a friend, gentleman, teammate to many. To those he knew and loved, Steve Pentti will always be remembered, because he battled so hard during his final days to stay here for them. As the wetland waters flow on and on, so will Steve's memory remain. A loved hero forever.







## MIETTE SKILLER

At the beginning of 2012 our family was struggling. Our "sweet little crumb" Miette was dying from a Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) a brain stem tumour buried deep within her pons region and it was inoperable.

This treacherous journey had begun eight months prior to seeing our Karuna counsellor. My husband Glen found it particularly hard beginning 2012 knowing that each milestone – New Year, the Woodford Folk Festival, Miette's birthday, Christmas– would be the last we would spend with her.

We couldn't understand the situation. How could this little girl who had just spent the week at the Folk festival in her glowing glory be so ill? She just beamed with excitement and was extremely happy. How could this child have less than 18 months to live?

Glen's depression and anxiety was so severe that he checked himself into to a mental health unit. They gave him medication, but other than that, they couldn't help. They didn't have the understanding and compassion needed for a family who was really struggling with losing their beautiful 6 year old girl.

In desperation I called our hospital social worker. She organised for us to become Karuna clients. For me especially, seeing a counsellor at first was daunting.

But our Karuna counsellor made us feel at ease within the very first session, and starting coming regularly to our house. She talked to us about the 'anticipatory' grief that we were going through and gave us practical tools to help.

Our counsellor was with us when Miette died on 22 April 2013. In fact, she went out of her way to come to our house on the day Miette died to reassure us. The kindness our Karuna counsellor has given us throughout our journey has been amazing. Nothing has been too much trouble. She has always shown us so much compassion and we feel extremely lucky to have received such care from her.

I didn't know grief until I knew it too well. 9 months on, things are still tough. But Our counsellor has taught us strategies to use for dealing with our grief. She has linked us into services to help us to continue on this journey.

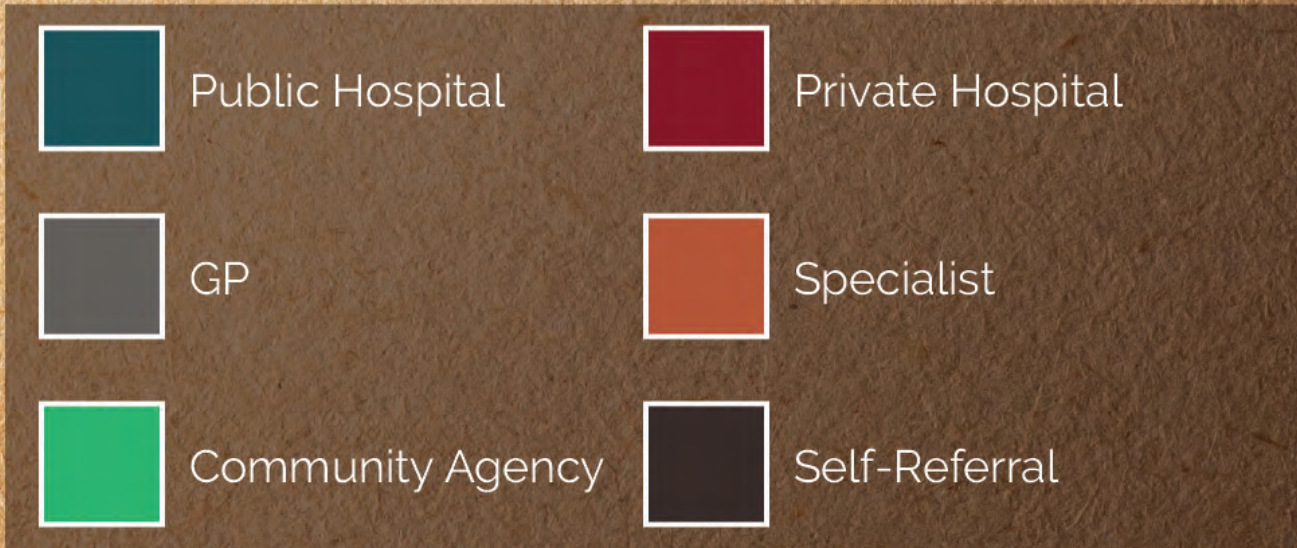
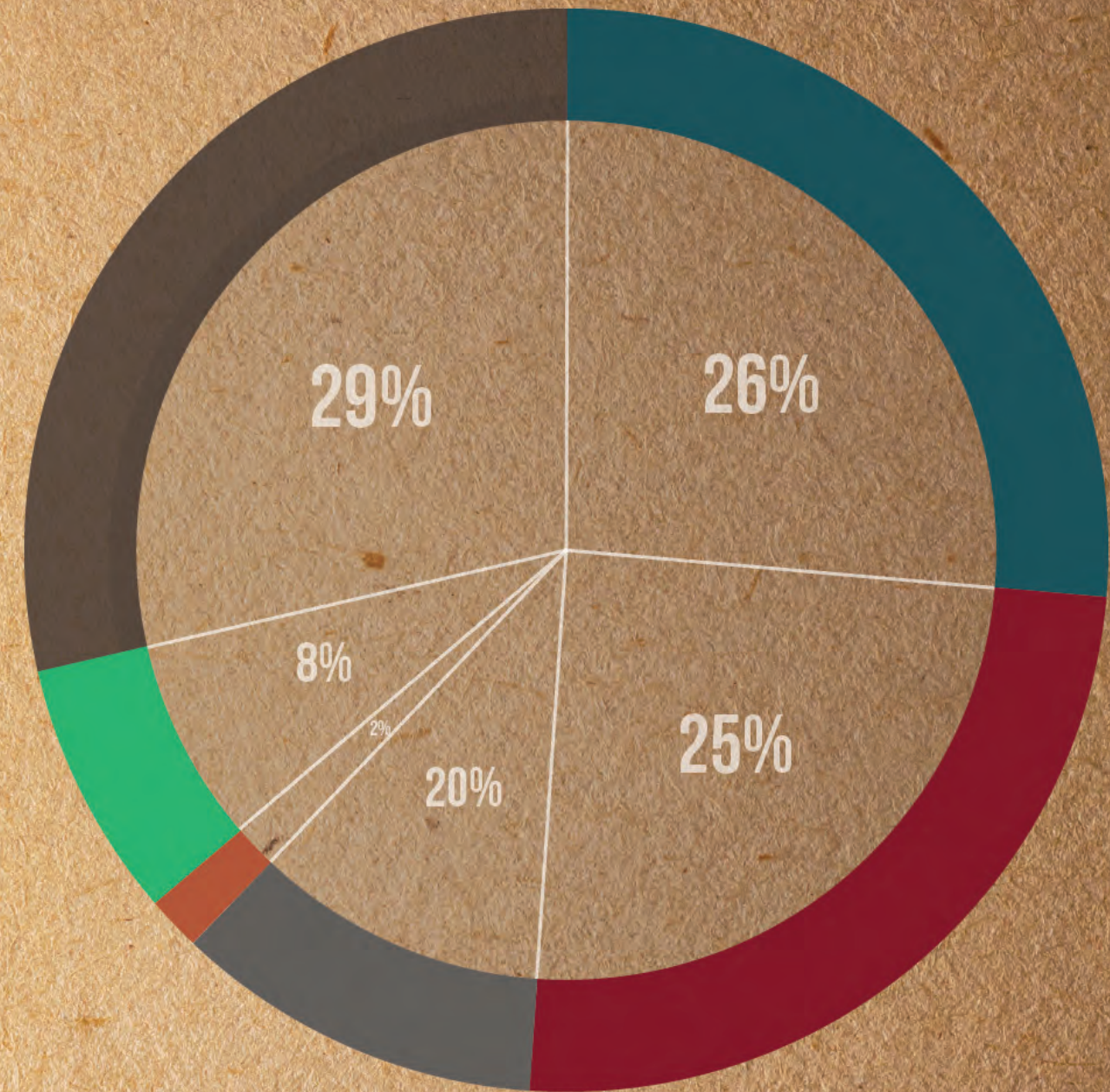
If you search Karuna in Google you will find three words associated with it – Kindness, Compassion and Courage. Karuna has gone above and beyond in showing our family kindness and compassion, giving us courage to continue.

Each step we've been held by Karuna and I can never thank them enough.

**Natalie Skiller**







VOLUNTEER STORY FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM

One of the reasons for Karuna’s success is our team approach to caring for people and families touched by terminal illness. Together, our staff and supporters strive to provide quality of life and comfort to our clients and to support carers to make the experience a positive one.

The Family Support Volunteer (FSV) program was first introduced in January 1992 and continues strongly to this day. This band of volunteers go into the homes of clients to perform a variety of tasks - preparing meals, reading, driving people to and from appointments, playing board games, offering a foot massage, and being a willing and compassionate ear.

To assist these volunteers to better understand experiences of loss, change and grief in those with a terminal illness and their families and care givers, intensive training must be undertaken. The course covers such topics as the history and philosophy of palliative care, understanding dying, loss, grief and bereavement, family care and ethics, signs of suicide ideation and sharing the client’s and family’s experience from diagnosis to after death.

Our FSV’s embody our values of compassion, courage and kindness and with their tremendous help, clients are able to remain at home with loved ones.



17

PALLIATIVE CARE BIOGRAPHY VOLUNTEERS



30

PALLIATIVE CARE FAMILY SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS



83

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS



265

EVENTS VOLUNTEERS







## LETTER FROM KARUNA CHAIRMAN

2015 was certainly a busy year for us at Karuna as we embarked on a program of re-building and renewal following the uncertainty of the previous two years. Our first priorities involved a transition of leadership of the organization and a strategy to ensure financial stability.

Elisabeth Roberts was appointed CEO at the end of January 2015. Prior to that Elisabeth had been in the role of Clinical Services Director at Karuna for 6 months during the period of government funding uncertainty. As CEO, Elisabeth has taken up the responsibilities previously held for 17 years by Venerable Yeshe Khadro. Yeshe is transitioning to her spiritual life but remains as Karuna's Spiritual Leader and a member of the Karuna Board for an interim period. Recruitment for a new Spiritual Leader is underway.

1. We were successful in achieving a three year Queensland Government funding contract (2015-2018) which provides Karuna with immediate financial certainty. Referrals to our Home Care Services from GP's, self-referral, private hospitals and specialists remain strong and we are providing what is increasingly referred to as the 'gold standard' in end-of-life care which includes spiritual care and a grief and loss (bereavement) service.

2. 2015 also saw the appointment of a Nurse Practitioner, Lea-Anne Tuaoi, to the position of Clinical Services Director. Paid out of donor funds, the Nurse Practitioner is able to Medicare bill (bulk bill) clients she sees. While the dollar rebate is not high, it does bring enough income to off-set the cost of this specialist role and pays handsomely in other ways. Lea-Anne brings very broad hospital and community palliative care experience to Karuna services and has specific practicing rights in the palliative care specialty which means she can refer patients for diagnostic tests, she can interpret the results and she can prescribe treatment including a wide range of injectable drugs. This

allows Karuna nurses rapid access to appropriate and timely treatment advice for clients at home and assists to keep them comfortable, stable and out of hospital. The entire nursing team has gained greater specialist knowledge and improved pre-emptive planning skills to better anticipate likely changes to clients condition that previously may have required an out-of-hours home visit or even an uncomfortable ambulance trip and hospital transfer. It is a legal requirement in Queensland that the Nurse Practitioner has a medical officer to supervise practice. Lea-Anne has regular clinical supervision with a highly respected palliative care medical officer who is very supportive of the Karuna nurse led model of care. Lea-Anne has an extensive professional network to support her and is developing her PhD research interests at Karuna which will also reap long-term benefits as we develop further as a learning organization.

We continue to build up our Support and Learning services which are designed to help people "live well and die peacefully" and which increasingly utilises new technologies as well as our traditional face-to-face courses.

The visit of His Holiness The Dalai Lama in June was a cause for much organizational activity and brought very great joy to the city. Karuna invited guests, including The Governor, The Honourable Justice De Jersey and Mrs De Jersey, members of the Queensland Parliament and the Queensland Police Commissioner to the Multi-faith Service held at St Stephens Cathedral where His Holiness spoke about world peace. It was a very special day and it was a privilege for Karuna to host so many people of goodwill.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank all the Karuna staff and volunteers and my fellow Directors for their tremendous efforts over the last twelve months and to thank the extended Karuna family whose donations of money, skills and time ensure that, although we may not be the biggest organization, we can be the best.

Catherine Mickel, Chairman



## REPORT FROM KARUNA CEO

Elisabeth reported to the meeting that 2015 at Karuna had been busy and very rewarding. She stated that Karuna has a wonderful, loyal and highly skilled workforce and we made rapid progress rebuilding organizational capacity. By reviewing the skills of Karuna human resources we were able to re-align and reallocate operational activities and create cost neutral opportunities for positive change. This has led to the establishment of a comprehensive Volunteer Services programme which places all volunteers under one Director, led by Kay Powell. Kay has great depth of experience and knowledge of all Karuna activities and has very ably and capably begun development of the programme that will position Karuna as a volunteering organisation of choice for many years to come. Current Karuna Volunteer activities include the Home Care Team volunteers such as Family Support and Biography, the legendary Craft Groups and loyal Garden Household and Office Administration volunteers and the Events volunteers. In total Karuna has 300 active volunteers and we attract daily inquiries seeking volunteering opportunities. Plans are evolving to broaden the range of volunteering opportunities that will support Karuna services to bring compassionate care to a wider range of people than ever before. Kay continues to hold the role of secretary to the Board. Her previous financial responsibilities are now led by our Accountant and Director of Finance Dessi Sandi. Dessi guided us through a very comprehensive and successful audit.

The number of referrals for those seeking our care to support them to die at home has kept the Karuna Home Care Team very busy all year. This is despite not receiving referrals from Prince Charles and Redcliffe Hospital and limited referrals from Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. Under the leadership of Lea-Anne Tuaoi, Director of Clinical Services and Nurse Practitioner, the Home Care Team is developing a more comprehensive spiritual care, bereavement counselling and psychology service. Offering this service will create greater opportunities for people not connected to the Home Care Service to access our skilled health care professionals. Our Medicare registered psychologists can now Medicare bill (bulk bill) for people with a GP referral under the mental health

package. Fee paying bookings will also be accepted if people wish to access Karuna's experienced grief and loss services. Such a service also offers an alternative income stream for Karuna. The Bereavement programme is under review and will develop a broader grief and loss programme.

Support and Learning Programme are under development and recent work on a comprehensive 3-4 year Karuna Services Strategy will see iterative process towards building well-integrated and sustainable programmes with an expanding range of products offered by Karuna that will allow us to offer more people Karuna care to live well and die peacefully. Priscilla Maxwell is leading the Support and Learning programme and our spiritual care service.

As the strategy develops forecasting will be undertaken by Dessi Sandi, Accountant and Director of Finance. Dessi works closely with each programme Director to ensure the budget is appropriate and efficiently managed to support the Board priorities. Funding is always a major consideration and Tessa Wilbe has been appointed as Fundraising Manager. Our regular Karuna fundraising programme is enhanced this year by the opportunity for Karuna to become one of two charity partners for the inaugural Brisbane Coot-tha Burn, a cycling sprint up Mt Cootha on February 13, 2016. This is a new Brisbane event, sponsored by the city council and has major prizes attracting international cyclists. Through this event the opportunity for Karuna to become more broadly known is exciting.

The November 2014 hail storm smashed several large windows on the southern side of the house. The windows were quite quickly repaired though it has taken longer to have full insurance assessment of the roof. We remain hopeful this will be completed and Karuna has a new roof soon. The huge old jacaranda was removed due to the split in the trunk and risk of falling over the house. This caused us much sadness and forced us to consider how to bring shade and shelter back to the garden. At very minimal cost and with the help of volunteers the gardens have undergone the refurbishment during the year and we are starting to see results of consistent watering through use of the soaker hoses slowly being laid under the soil. This method of watering allows for better water conservation through reduced water evaporation. A corporate volunteer day and a donation allowed us to make huge progress with the very hot western bed - compost, mulch, new plants, soaker hose and chicken wire was laid to deter the energetic scrub of turkeys. 20 volunteers and 1 donor and we have the prospect of a verdant new bed.

Elisabeth Roberts, CEO





Karuna Nurse Camille assisted Khon Kaen Hospital in North East Thailand



Jacaranda tree cutting ceremony



Bridge Day 2014



Xmas Market



Community Fundraising for Karuna - Springwood Police Station



Grill'd donation





11 SEPT 2014

LAMA ZOPA RINPOCHE



*Karuna offered lunch to our Spiritual Director, Lama Zopa Rinpoche, in September 2014. Fifty staff, volunteers and client families were invited to attend. On arrival Rinpoche was ceremoniously greeted by Ven. Yeshe Khadro, Phil Williams (CEO) and all our very excited special guests.*

*Rinpoche very kindly gave a small talk before he was whisked off to the airport to travel to Bendigo to lead a one month teaching retreat. While it was only a short visit Rinpoche's great kindness and words of wisdom inspired everyone in the room.*





## 2015 SOURCES OF FUNDING



EDUCATION 2%



GRANTS 2%

4%  
OTHER



FUNDRAISING  
ACTIVITIES 32%



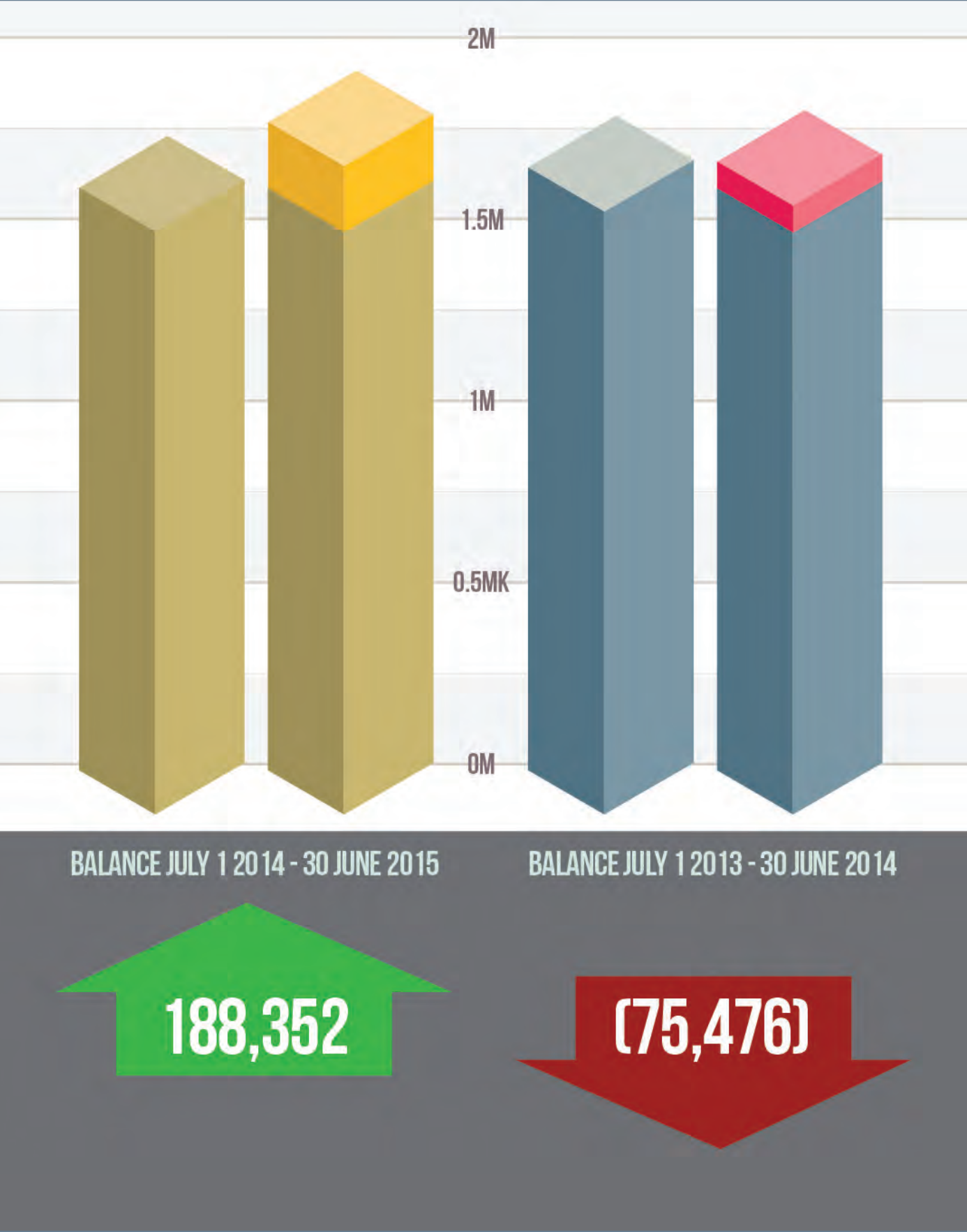
QLD HEALTH

60%





STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY



EXPENSES PROPORTION

