



KARUNA HOSPICE SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2016



"I'd rather be at home with Karuna..."

Heidi Roberts (RIP July 31, 2016)

## 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)

## ANNUAL REPORT

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## LETTER FROM THE KARUNA CHAIRMAN

Over the last 12 months Karuna has continued to deliver core palliative and bereavement care services following the retirement at the beginning of 2015 of our long-serving Director the Venerable Yeshe Khadro. In 1992 Ven Yeshe Khadro took up the leadership reins from Karuna's far sighted establishment Director, Venerable PendeHawter.

2016 has seen the Board continue to support the transition of the organisation following 23 years of FPMT leadership to secular leadership whilst remaining true to the Constitution and retaining the underpinning FPMT culture as a strategy to maintain Karuna's integrated Buddhist ethos.

2016 has seen ongoing continuity of organisational leadership with:

1. Re-appointment of our Chief Executive Officer Elisabeth Roberts at the end of January 2016. Elisabeth was appointed as a Karuna Board member in October 2015 and with Board support has undertaken Company Director training and is now a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).

FPMT linkages and recruitment for a new Spiritual Leader continuing:

2. Until such time as this recruitment is successful, a new FPMT representative Lozang Rigdal (Mary Ann Morrison) has been appointed to the Karuna Board following the resignation of Yeshe Khadro several months ago

3. FPMT connections strengthened by membership and participation in the SE Queensland Chapter of 4 members. This group was 2016 established in 2016, meeting location rotates between centres and are quarterly

4. Karuna co-hosted the annual FPMT conference for 26 delegates from across Australia.

The challenge of sustainable funding for service delivery and service development is a major focus for the Board and CEO particularly following the uncertainty of a difficult 2013-14 when major health service restructures impacted heavily on Karuna. In addition funding was received with:

5. \$211,738 'one-off' Queensland Health payment made at the end of June 2016, as a result of an appeal to government following the financial impact of the loss of the Helpline funding. The one-off sustainability funding is be specifically applied to the Karuna strategy to grow a 'for-profit' income and reduce reliance on government funding. The current government contract (2015-2108) has provided Karuna with immediate financial certainty.

The loss of the Metro North contract in November 2014 has not seen any diminution in referral numbers to the Home Care Services. Referrals from public hospitals, GP's, self-referrals, private hospitals and specialists remain strong.

Clinical Services expansion:

6. Following the 2015 appointment of a Nurse Practitioner with the subsequent development of Medicare generated income, 2016 has seen this further expanded to include Medicare rebated psychology clinics open to appropriately GP-referred bereaved people. These new income raising psychology clinics are balanced against the psychology needs of Home Care clients. The establishment of psychology clinics mean Karunaoffers services to people beyond those currently receiving bereavement care as part of our Home Care Service,thus meeting our FPMT goal to care for as many people as possible across our community.

*Catherine Mickel*

Catherine Mickel, Chairman





## LETTER FROM THE KARUNA CEO

I have had the honour of being CEO/Executive Director at Karuna for 20 months. Over that time we have reflected about the constitutional objective of Karuna services and their enduring relevance in today's society. Our work is to provide material, physical, emotional and spiritual support for those persons faced with death, dying or bereavement. We will all die sometime and where we die and how we die will remain in the memory of those who live on. Karuna provides care in the place people call 'home'. That we support people to achieve a peaceful death in the place of their choice remains more relevant today than ever. Hospital healthcare does not allow for personal autonomy, privacy or individuality. As well the hospital dollar cost to society is exorbitant and the distressing emotional cost of hospital death can be high. Karuna's model remains relevant – providing an alternative to hospital as place of death and the option of privacy and autonomy in one's own home.

Our enduring holistic service of care for the dying continues to be very busy across north Brisbane with as many referrals as we can safely manage. High referrals reflect the high regard held for Karuna care and is due to our reputation for reliable, high quality care. The good care is achieved through our wonderful, valuable staff. Building, sustaining and maintaining a stable and highly skilled workforce takes effort. The importance of resilience within our teams is never underestimated and we work diligently to maintain the well-being and happiness of staff. Families and colleagues depend on our service being reliable, expert and kind. Clients and families are suffering exhaustion, loss and grief. The enduring calm kind compassion exuded by staff when they answer calls or step inside homes is reflected in the gratitude expressed to us by our families. The team is very capably led by a Nurse Practitioner who provides a high level of expert palliative care knowledge and practical help such as immediate access to prescriptions all of which reduces the need to call an ambulance to go to hospital. Over the past 12 months we have experienced zero turnover in our staff. This has allowed us to seamlessly deliver safe care to a larger population. Karuna has cared for clients as far north as Bribie Island this year. The 24/7 Home Care Service compromising spiritual, emotional and physical care is delivered by nurses, spiritual carers, counsellors and psychologists. They work independently visiting people wherever they live (private home, residential care and boarding house) bringing calm kindness and expert palliative care to compassionately support the dying and their families at end of life care. The Nurse Practitioner leads the clinical team to support the client to achieve their chosen goal to die in the place of their choice with as little disruption as possible.

Our Home Care team is in turn supported by a passionate group of palliative care volunteers who visit people at home giving compassionate companionship, practical respite support and many human kindnesses to those within. Other volunteers offer clients services such as the opportunity to record their life story in a biography, or enjoying a short respite break at a chosen destination where loved ones can forge new memories away from the reminders of the coming death, or having high quality professional photos taken for lasting visual memories. Each of these volunteers is supported themselves by a very experienced Karuna staff member who takes them through a training programme. Years of experience has built enormous capability and resilience into the team. Volunteers are generous in their time and giving natures and bring incalculable support to Karuna staff, the household and to dying clients and grieving families. We give deeply sincere thanks to our volunteers

*Continues next page.*



Another constitutional object of Karuna is to provide bereavement counselling service for those who are bereaved. This year we have extended Karuna's bereavement care (our Grief and Loss programme) from only those cared for by the Karuna Home care team to be accessible to those people whose loved one died while the care of other services and where 'after death' care for families does not exist. The counselling and psychology team provide support for people who are experiencing bereavement from any cause, at any stage of life, or to people who are coping with their own or a loved one's palliative diagnosis, or who are providing care to a loved one at the end of their life. This is also available to those working in a health profession where they are frequently dealing with dying and death. Access to this service at Karuna can be made directly as a fee for service or bulk-billed by referral from a GP under the Medicare Mental Health Care Plan. The Medicare rebate for services obtained from both the Nurse Practitioner and Psychologists provides a very small but growing income for Karuna to support our non-fee services. These staff are paid from generous donations and not from the Queensland health funding, allowing us to claim Medicare rebate for services provided by Karuna but not funded by government funding.

Queensland Health funding and donations have sustained Karuna for the past 25 years. Recent difficult economic times for our country with resultant high government deficits has left charities with less certainty on traditional funding pools. Many Not-for-Profits rely solely on government funding for their existence and survival and have no alternative income stream. Although Karuna does have an alternative fund raising history we have to be even more financially self-sufficient and thereby self-reliant. Uncertainty makes longer term business and service planning difficult and so we have decided to focus on increasing financial independence though creating a self-generated for-profit income stream that meets our constitutional objectives. We are currently developing strategic objectives to increase our financial capacity and sustainability through an education programme that meets the Karuna objective of providing information services for health professionals and the general public related to death, dying, grief and bereavement.

I look forward to working with the Board as together we tackle the challenges before us and achieve successful development and launch of the for-profit education programme in the financial year 2016-17.

*Elisabeth Roberts*

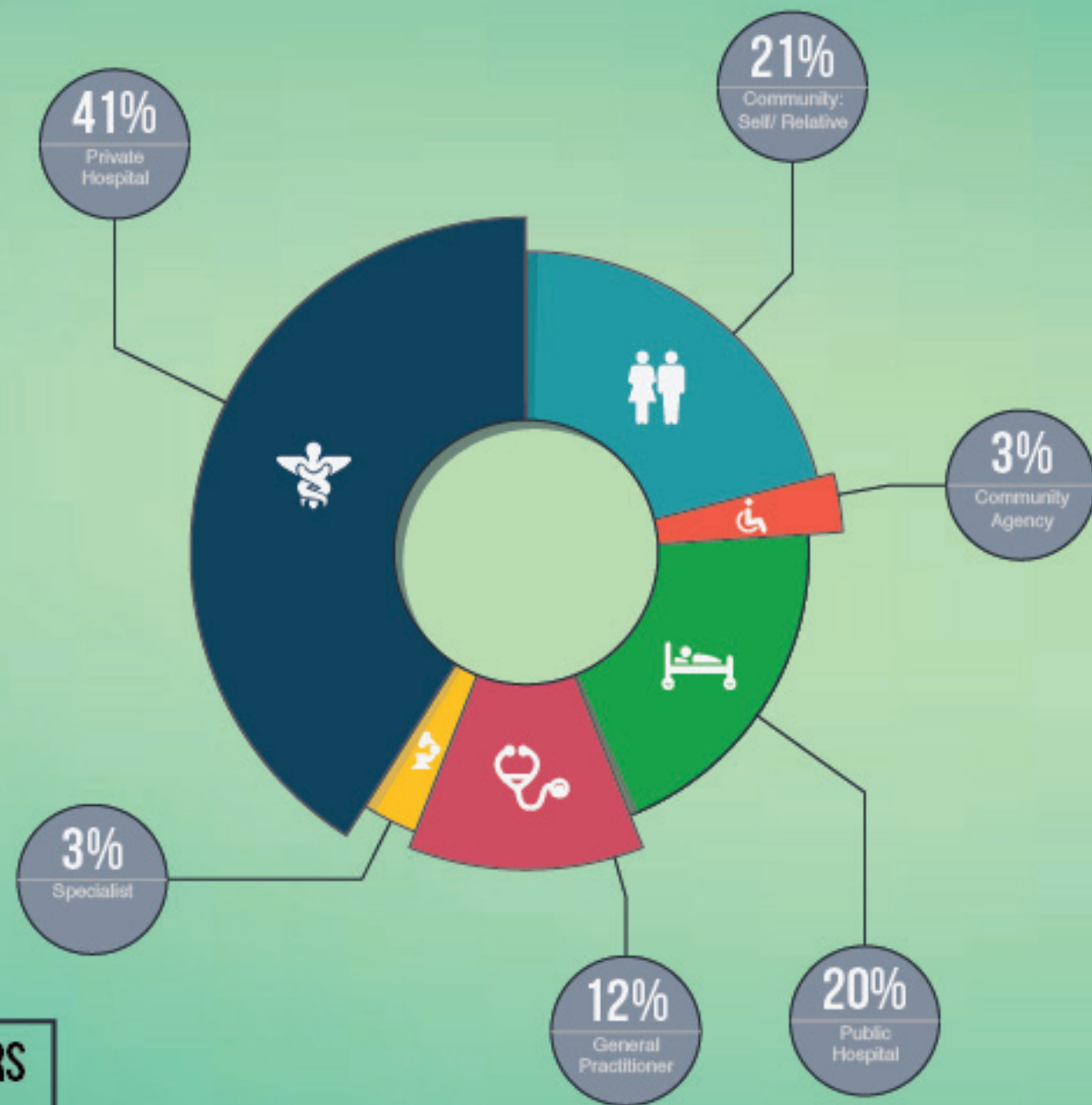
Elisabeth Roberts, CEO



Heidi and Michael Roberts at their residence



# 2016 HOME CARE ADMISSION STATS



19YRS



101YRS

**FEMALE: 46%**  
**MALE: 54%**



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Two-and-a-half years after being diagnosed with the most ferocious of brain tumours – a glioblastoma multiforme IV – the lively optimist was told he was at the end of the medical treatment road and his specialist medical team opened discussions about his palliative care options.

And while the news shook him to his core, Eric quickly decided to be proactive about the parts that he could control: if he had to die, he wanted to be at home on the marina at Sandstone Point on the Pumicestone Passage, overlooking the boats coming and going. It was where he felt connected to a world he loved. And the angels from Karuna helped to give him his wish.

With compassion and respect, Leanne, Kelly and Peppi from Karuna came alongside, freely providing advice and every possible support to enable Eric to stay at home, to make his final days manageable and to deliver the best possible death. Once the arrangement was in place, Eric said he felt calling in Karuna was the best way of making sweet lemonade from bitter lemons.

As a consequence, in the few days Karuna was in charge of his care before he died, Eric felt safe and calm, because the nurses had helped him face the inevitable and find answers to life's hardest questions. He was then able to be with and talk with his friends and family – including his father Allan, Allan's partner Jill and step-sister Chana – in his own home, in a familiar environment. With 24-hour, free and loving support from Karuna, his beloved Jane and mother Erika were able to attend to his medical, emotional and physical needs so that he was able to simply be. Importantly, it meant he, Erika and Jane never felt alone.

## CLIENT STORIES ERIC SCOTT

Strange as it seems, there was aching beauty, important truth and unexpected humour to be found in that space and time for Eric – and Jane and Erika felt blessed to be able to share it all with him without the restrictions of hospital visiting hours, intrusions or routines. For them, the word 'gratitude' will never seem adequate to those who helped them care for their precious 'beautiful boy' at home as he died.

Eric's way was always to meet life's challenges head on. He never shied from a fight. Eric had undergone surgery, radiation and chemotherapy treatments for the first of his brain tumours early in 2013. The diagnosis came as a bolt from the blue for the otherwise-healthy man, but he showed his true colours early, electing to walk in the Bribie Island sun after the daily bus rides to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital for radiation treatment, opting for healthy changes to his diet and choosing to excise as many negative elements and stresses from his life as he could.

*-he kept his head up, fought to stay positive and said he saw joy and beauty in simple things in ways he had not before.*

Despite having to wind up his plumbing business, losing his driver's licence and enduring the brutal effects of punishing treatments, he kept his head up, fought to stay positive and said he saw joy and beauty in simple things in ways he had not before.

Eric had a blessed window of good health before a second tumour was diagnosed late in 2014, and he embraced every chance to make nourishing memories with those he loved, to camp, fish and take on new projects. His lifelong love of fishing, of boats and the water deepened. His cheeky sense of humour sharpened. His fierce intelligence and thirst for knowledge – always part of his essential self – came to the fore.

Remarkably, Eric said many times that the final two years were the richest of his life, hands down – in his words "despite and because of" brain cancer. His bravery and his conviction that love was all that really mattered solidified.

The care shown not only to Eric, but to those at the coalface, continued after his passing, with ripples of compassion, understanding and connection reaching out from the Karuna team. In the best of lives – as Eric's was – and after it ends, love lingers.





*"I was also relieved to hear that Karuna was committed to keeping me at home, visiting me at home, assisting me and my family to live a normal life for as long as possible, and, ideally, making it possible for me to die at home."*



**CLIENT STORIES CORY TAYLOR**

I often think how different my life would be if I didn't have a terminal illness. I'd be making plans, travelling, starting new writing projects, imagining that I had unlimited time to do everything I want to do. And all the time I'd be pushing away the thought of death, as healthy people can, imagining it is something that happens to other people.

## LIVING WELL AND DYING PEACEFULLY

*Words by Cory Taylor*

When you have a mortal illness this way of thinking is no longer very useful. You have to recalibrate. You have to adjust to the knowledge that your time is limited. In my experience this means choosing whether or not to accept dying as a fact of life, the price we pay for the amazing gift of living. I often

tell people how relieved I was when my treatment options ran out and I could stop pretending there was a cure for my disease. This was the point at which I knew for sure my life was ending. It was also the point at which I found Karuna. At first I was simply grateful to have found people I could talk to about dying well. One's biggest fear of course is pain, so I was reassured by my conversations with the nurses at Karuna about pain relief, and about all of the other medical issues that might lie ahead of me. I was also relieved to hear that Karuna was committed to keeping me at home, visiting me at home, assisting me and my family to live a normal life for as long as possible, and, ideally, making it possible for me to die at home. Then, as my knowledge of Karuna deepened, I realised that a deeper philosophy was at work in the organization, that it was not just a question of caring for me as a patient, it was a commitment to honouring my life as a whole, as well as the lives of those I love.

One of the best illustrations of this commitment is Karuna's biography programme. Every Wednesday for over three months I met with a trained volunteer biographer, Susan Addison. Susan would record me telling the story of my life.

*I often tell people how relieved I was when my treatment options ran out and I could stop pretending there was a cure for my disease.*

She would guide me in the telling by asking thoughtful questions. She would then go home and transcribe her recordings so that eventually they could be compiled into a printed document, complete with photographs. The biography is there now, for my family to have after I'm gone. It is a great comfort to me to know that they have this record of my tale, but beyond that, it was a true

blessing to be listened to for all those weeks, with such respect and attentiveness.

There are many other ways in which Karuna has helped me to live well in these past few months. I have met with Karuna volunteers, of all kinds; all of them committed to assisting me, both practically and spiritually, to be the person I am right to the end. Without Karuna, I would not have been able to write my third book, a memoir about dying, due for release in May. The fact that I was able to concentrate and work on the book, free of anxiety and despair, is a testament to the power of the Karuna philosophy, which is to embrace mortality as a means of celebrating life.







## 2016 VOLUNTEER DATA



BIOGRAPHY WRITERS

19



PALLIATIVE CARE

29



EVENT STAFF

167



OPERATIONAL

65





For over a decade, Ricky has been the backbone of a small but very dedicated army of women who meet each Thursday come rain, hail or shine to make craft to raise money for Karuna. Ricky wasn't an experienced craftperson in the beginning but she did have a strong belief in the value of Karuna's work and wanted to make her contribution. And what a contribution she has made! The main sales avenues for the craft are the annual Christmas market and Karuna's Bridge Days.

Bridge Days are entirely organized and funded by the craft ladies, led from the helm by Ricky and are a hugely popular event held twice yearly at Karuna House. Together, these events raise approximately \$60,000 annually for Karuna and constitute hundreds of hours donated every year as well as contributions of funds and materials. The caliber of craft that Ricky and her amazing team produce is such that Karuna is regularly approach by members of the public in search of quality gifts throughout the year. Ricky is quick to acknowledge that their stocks are helped along by the generous donation of items made by The Gapladies, as well as other groups and individuals tucked away in the suburbs of Brisbane. Their contributions to Karuna are a welcome boost especially at Christmas time.

Members have come and gone over the years but Ricky says many stay in touch and contribute their time and effort in other ways. Some have had loved ones cared for by Karuna and others like Ricky just love what Karuna stands for.

Through their own kindness and generosity people want to make a difference. Thank you dear Ricky for your wonderful contributions to Karuna over so many years. You embody the true meaning of kindness and generosity.

Pst. By the time this Annual Report is up for printing, Ricky will have been nominated by Karuna for the FIA Volunteer of the Year Award 2017.

## FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEER STORIES ERICA "RICKY" SMITH





## BIOGRAPHY VOLUNTEER LEIGH OSBORNE



*It's such a small thing - to listen attentively to another - but it has wondrous results!*

*When our clients are told their lifespan will be limited, their thoughts naturally look backwards over the many layers of their life. They are delighted and grateful to know there is someone who will come and listen to those memories. After seven years, it still surprises me how quickly a bond is formed straight after our first introduction.*

*People develop an eagerness to tell as much as they can ... their conversation proclaiming, 'This is who I am; this is how I lived'. From that speaking out of*

*who they are comes joyous reliving of happy times, a peaceful healing of difficult times and a really deep appreciation that someone cared enough about them to record their stories.*

*I have been involved in a couple of biography roles where only one recording was made before death came and others where there has been six months of sharing - each as transformative and life-giving as the other. Although, in my first biography role, there was the incident of my translation that the man was "dragging cars" instead of "playing cards" when he was only twelve years old!*

*All my working papers are shredded, composted and spread throughout my garden so that the words of all those who so generously shared themselves, still give life - contributing to the nurturing earth.*

*With every new friendship, every new journey, every shared confidence, I also grow towards my own full expression of humanity. I have been warmly welcomed, accepted, embraced; shared many tears, belly laughs, confidences, moving moments of the soul and found the grace and beauty of human existence in every encounter.*

*Leigh Osborne*

John's health is failing and he's started telling stories. How he gave his wife a rifle instead of an engagement ring, the fun of being a kid and hiding under the kitchen table when the Japanese submarine snuck into Sydney Harbour, working at a leper colony in Papua New Guinea, and acting as a bagman in Kings Cross for Tillie Devine. Yes, John was a rogue...and only now from his stories do we realise how much of one!

People can disappear when they die. Their voice, their laughter, their flesh. All living memory of them can cease. Although this is natural it can be very sad. Yet for some there is an exception to this seeming loss. For in the books they write they continue to exist. We can rediscover them. Their humour, their tone of voice, their moods.

The volunteers who manage the Karuna Client Biography program help weave this magic for our nursing clients. Clocking up over 5,000 hours since the program began, they provide an opportunity for clients to reflect on their lives and record life stories for themselves and their families - oral histories captured for future generations.

Through the written word they can anger you or make you happy. They can comfort you. They can perplex you. They can alter you. All this, even though they are dead. But by the miracle of ink on paper, they can be preserved. It is kind of magic.

And it's not an easy task to become a Karuna Biographer. Existing volunteers who have already undertaken the comprehensive nine day palliative care volunteer training, must spend at least twelve months on the road prior to receiving an invitation to apply. Being "a writer" is not necessarily the skillset needed.

Each biography can take six to eight sessions with the client, recording, choosing photos, transcribing and editing. Each biography takes a total of 58-60 hours to complete and the finished document is bound and presented to the client and/or their family.

***"Every time an old person dies, it's like a library burning down."***

*~ Alex Haley*

Carmel Williams, a volunteer for over 13 years, is Karuna's Biography Coordinator, and heads our team of ten biographers and four editing buddies. Her vision is to expand the program to include video and audio options and even professionally bound biographies. This is another example of the important services Karuna can offer our clients, and of the tremendous energy and dedication of our supporters.

## THE KARUNA BIOGRAPHY PROGRAM







## PHUNTSOK RINPOCHE AND GESHE TENZIN ZOPA



*In August, 2015 we had the auspicious opportunity to invite 12 year old Phuntsok Rinpoche, the reincarnation of the late yogi and meditator Geshe Lama Konchog, and his attendant Geshe Tenzin Zopa to visit Karuna for afternoon tea with the staff.*

*Having recently finished his western schooling in Perth, Rinpoche visited Australian FPMT Centres before he returned to Sera Jey Monastery in India for formal monastic training.*

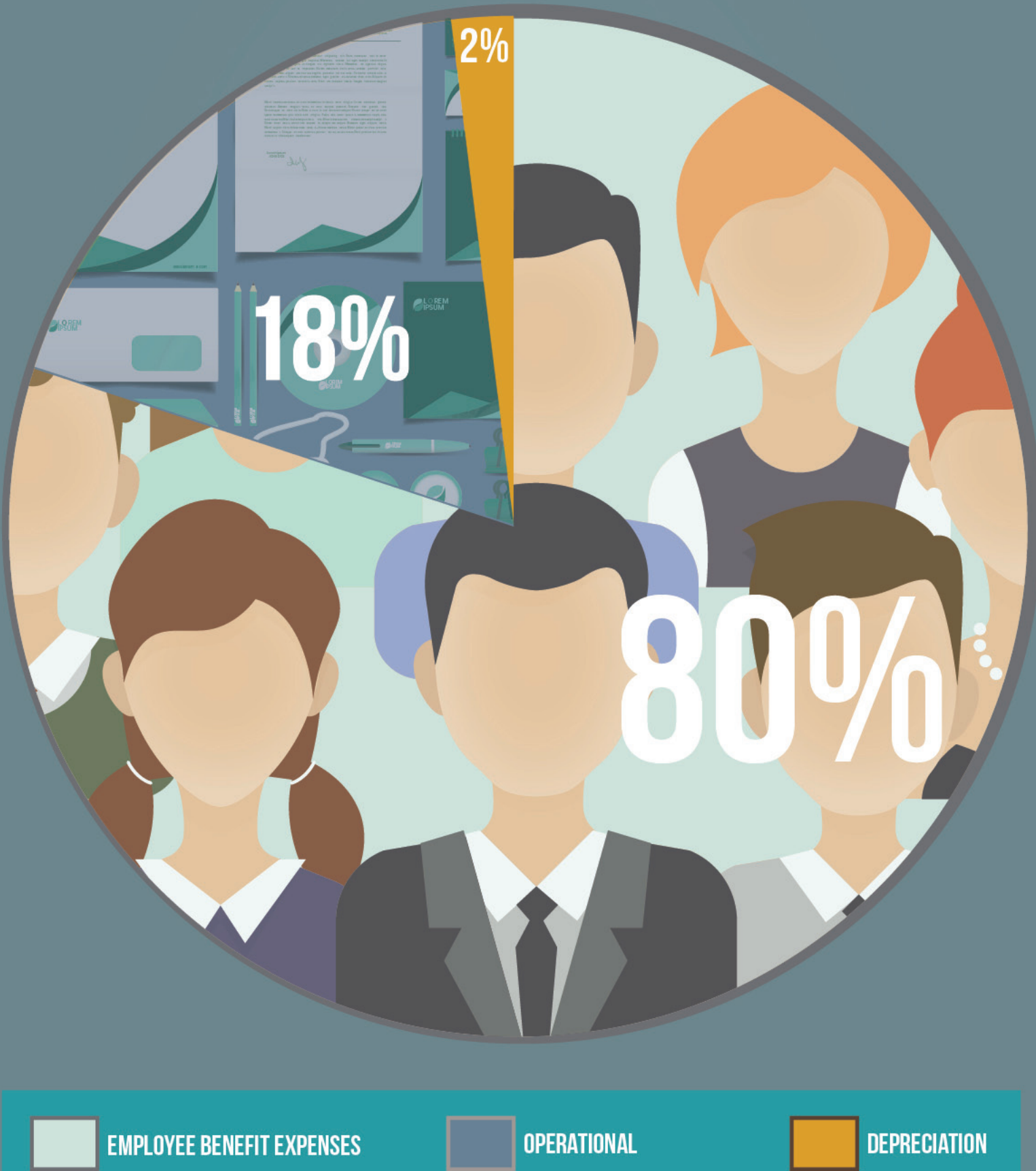
*Speaking fluent English Rinpoche answered many questions from the staff telling us that his favourite subjects at school were maths and philosophy and that, in common with HH Dalai Lama, he also had a great interest in science. Rinpoche won many hearts with his carefully considered answers to all questions, humour and beautiful smile, and promised to visit again one day.*



PROFIT (LOSS) FY16, FY15, FY14



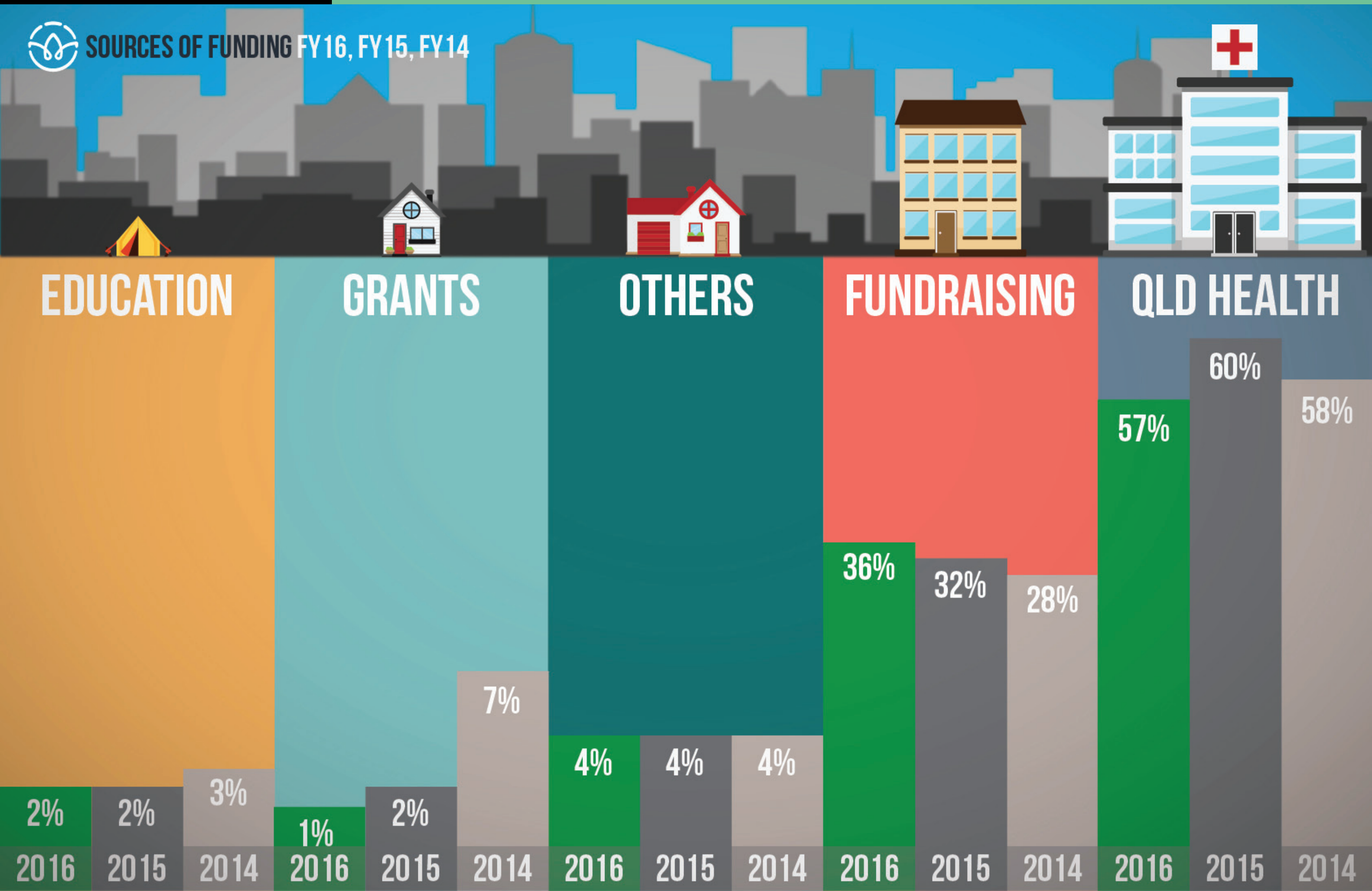
EXPENSES PROPORTION FY16







# SOURCES OF FUNDING FY 16, FY 15, FY 14





## STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenue	2,297,497	2,321,541
Other income	77,987	71,918
Employee benefits expense	(-1,790,689)	(-1,703,677)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(-42,027)	(-45,730)
Other expenses	(-461,739)	(-455,700)
Profit for the year	<b>81,029</b>	<b>188,352</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>81,029</b>	<b>188,352</b>

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

	2015 \$	2016 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from customers	\$2,524,999	\$2,359,393
Payments to suppliers and employees	-2,222,466	-2,192,560
Interest received	53,848	54,257
Net cash provided by operating activities	<b>356,381</b>	<b>221,090</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	-103,179	20,808
Proceeds from sale of investment	-	38,335
Net cash used by investing activities	<b>-103,179</b>	<b>59,143</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents held	253,202	280,233
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,872,220	1,591,987
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	<b>\$2,125,422</b>	<b>\$1,872,220</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2016 \$	2015 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,125,422	1,872,220
Trade and other receivables	3,678	5,207
Inventories	15,532	16,133
Other assets	24,029	16,207
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<b>2,168,661</b>	<b>1,909,767</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	286,982	225,832
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	286,982	225,832
TOTAL ASSETS	<b>2,455,643</b>	<b>2,135,599</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	148,867	150,225
Employee benefits	145,708	113,648
Other financial liabilities	249,333	39,676
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<b>543,908</b>	<b>303,549</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Employee benefits	7,921	9,265
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	7,921	9,265
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<b>551,829</b>	<b>312,814</b>
NET ASSETS	1,903,814	1,822,785
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained earnings	1,903,814	1,822,785
TOTAL EQUITY	<b>1,903,814</b>	<b>1,822,785</b>





Karuna is fortunate to have been asked by Martin Corkery to be a beneficiary charity of the 2016 Brisbane Coot-tha Burn Mountain spirit cycling event. In February 2016 corporate cyclists, weekend warriors, elite and professional riders from across the world participated in this first ever sprint race up Mt Coot-tha. Different race categories provided fun and opportunities for all levels and ages of cyclist participation.

Two corporate teams from Procella Sports wearing the Karuna jerseys raced 2 kms up Mt Coot-tha. They excelled in their race categories and the U19 elites won!!

Thank you to amateur weekend warrior cyclist Ernie Tye who raised \$2085 for Karuna. Ernie got to ride the Mt Coot-tha circuit with Jens Voight and have breakfast with him on the top of the mountain. Thank you also for the wonderful corporate support from **Morgans Foundation** and **De Groot's Lawyers**.







TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY @ VANILLA ZULU DECEMBER 4 2015







VOLUNTEER LUNCH MAY 2016



PALLIATIVE CARE WEEK CELEBRATION - KARUNA & STAKEHOLDERS MAY 2016

